

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PLAN NANAIMO ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THURSDAY, 2006-NOV-21 IN THE BOARD ROOM,  
CITY HALL, 455 WALLACE STREET**

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<b>Present:</b>	Gail Adrienne	David Hill-Turner
	Brian Anderson	Councillor Bill Holdom
	Carey Avender	Shirley Lance
	Stu Donaldson	Darwin Mahlum
	Chris Erb	Ralph Meyerhoff
	Bill Forbes	Gord Turgeon

Staff

Andrew Tucker  
Deborah Jensen  
Fran Grant (Recording Secretary)

<b>Regrets:</b>	Jolyon Brown	Edwin Deas
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<b>Absent:</b>	Michael Schellinck
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<b>Guest:</b>	Michael Geselbracht	Peter Law
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**1. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair B. Holdom at 5:10 p.m.

**2. Adoption of Minutes for 2006-Oct-17:**

MOVED by S. Lance, SECONDED by S. Donaldson, that the minutes of 2006-Oct-17 be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

**3. Approval of Agenda and Late Items:**

MOVED by R. Meyerhoff, SECONDED by D. Hill-Turner, that the Agenda be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

A. Tucker introduced and welcomed two new members of PNAC:

- Darwin Mahlum – representing the Vancouver Island Real Estate Board
- Peter Law – alternate representative for the Advisory Committee on Environment

**4. Presentation:**

No presentations.

**5. Outstanding Business:**

- a) RAC minutes 2006-Oct-05 – were attached to the Agenda package for information.

## 6. **New Business:**

### a) OCP 10 Year Review – Review of Nov. 18 Conference

A. Tucker gave a brief overview of the Conference and noted:

- Thank you to PNAC members who participated.
- 200 people participated in the day's events with approximately 160 of those being the general public.
- Most of the feedback was positive in terms of having an opportunity to give input.
- Positive comments about the quality of presenters.

### b) Nov. 18 Conference Break Out Session Results

D. Jensen distributed copies of the comments transcribed from the flip charts used at the tables.

Committee members identified the following key areas of concern they heard at the discussion tables:

- Concern about the UCB and what types of applications are being submitted to change it. How firm do we need to be?
- Concern about parks and how they are being protected. Where is the park zoning?
- Keep talking about how much land is available inside the UCB and feel that less than half of available land is actually developable. We still need that information and this information needs to get out to the public.
- Green B.C. ideas are liked by the consumer but they are not ready to pay for it.
- Most felt that the plan is working with only a few areas that need to be changed.
- UCB is very important. However, some people only want single family homes and don't care about sprawl.
- The new building code makes building affordable housing even more difficult.
- Affordable housing is needed but high-rise is not the answer. It is no longer cheaper to build.
- There is a real shortage of affordable housing.
- Support idea of densification but do not know where it should go or what type.
- Do not want to see high-rises over 12 storeys.
- Reduce vehicle use.
- Encourage use of local suppliers.
- Identify ESAs and protect them.
- Develop park zone. Work with RDN so they do not conflict.
- Have significant review every 10 years but smaller scale review should be more often.
- Need flexibility to modify every two or three years.
- Need to do one hundred year plan to see further ahead. What is the legacy we will leave behind.
- What are the social ramifications of our decisions.
- Services – stormwater management – need more creative ideas to protect fish.
- Transportation – could the E&N railway be used as a corridor making commuter stops along the way. Could commuter rail cars carry commuter's bicycles.
- More permeable surfaces needed.
- Wider roads are a mistake.
- More traffic calming (i.e. roundabouts).
- Social housing and homelessness – social costs of these problems not being addressed. Need to look long-term at this issue.
- Was a lot of information to cover in one day.
- Transit – having large buses empty most of the time. Why not smaller, more efficient buses?

- Does not seem to be much communication between the City and RDN on transit.

B. Holdom noted that:

- Transit – 90% of bus trips are inside the City of Nanaimo.
- Starting to use smaller buses but we have to take what B.C. Transit gives us.
- Have requested more hybrid buses.
- Currently have some new smart diesels which are more efficient and cleaner than the old ones.

Comments (cont.)

- Traffic calming better than traffic lights.
- Parks, Recreation and Culture Department should be commended for the improvement in biking and walking trails interpretation: many of the policies in the OCP are a matter of interpretation – need to be more specific or put into context.
- What is neighbourhood character and how to direct it.
- People come to these events with preconceived perceptions and how do we educate them?
- A lot of discussion around the UCB and do we really have enough land for the next 25 years?
- No physical awareness between what people want and what they are willing to pay.
- Neighbourhoods feel they should drive the plan. Do not think this is right. This is a plan for the City that neighbourhoods need to fit into.
- UCB containment is important.
- Keep nodal development model.
- Parks and lack of zoning for them.
- How to change ideas people have and get to look at things in a broader sense and long term.
- One important result was the feeling that the Engineering Dept. is inflexible. They need to become more aware and sensitive to the issues.
- People like the idea of Town Centres but they need more work.
- Very adamant that we keep the UCB and do not expand the City too much.
- Economic and social issues need to form part of the Plan.
- Traffic circles were mentioned as they work very well and need to be encouraged.
- Most people do not look at the big picture.
- Environment is not all about parks but should include air quality and other health issues.
- Might want to look at performance targets – what do we want and what are we achieving?
- Strong UCB support. Some struggle with the concept of some properties being inside the City but outside the UCB. They want water and sewer and to be able to subdivide.
- Orientation of Town Centres.
- Feel that malls are not Town Centres. More focus on the neighbourhoods.
- People are feeling disconnected within their neighbourhoods.
- Density and good transit go hand in hand.
- High cost of services for low density.
- Too much impervious surface.
- There are plans for emergency water and energy resources but what are we doing to secure food resources?
- Problems with air quality.
- Push for more formal policies around urban design. Greater mix of housing types.
- Environment – water and air quality, conservation areas, more recycling.
- More public education about the OCP.
- Urban agriculture, neighbourhood garden plots, could some of the street trees be fruit trees?
- Would like to see this type of process more often and not just once every ten years.
- Challenge is one to take a land use document and address environment and social issues.

- Need more density.

General comments from Committee members:

- Need to open the UCB to improve the south end.
- Three to four storey buildings are not cost effective.
- Public does not know what the true costs of development are. They think the City pays for servicing.
- Development costs are actually hidden in the price of a new home. Perhaps instead we should itemize the costs.
- Of the lots that are available for development, how many are already sold and not being developed?
- The amount of land available for development is a factor as people want to keep the UCB but do not know what is actually available.
- The rezoning process to build higher density is very difficult for developers, and Council does not always support them even if they fit with the OCP.
- The City should do some of the rezoning to higher density themselves.
- Issue may be design and not density.
- The public needs to look at comprehensive neighbourhoods and not just a bunch of single family homes.
- Cannot compare development in Nanaimo to Vancouver. People move here for the life style.
- Have to be careful as what is the cost to the community of that life style? We as a community have to look at that.

#### Vacant Land Use:

D. Jensen advised that the final report on the Land Use Inventory should be completed soon.

A. Tucker noted that:

- Concern is that the report's calculations are theoretical. Does not do a cost benefit analysis for bringing that land into development.

#### c) OCP Amendment Applications – Review of November 2006 round

A summary outlining the applications received by the 2006-Nov-01 deadline was distributed to Committee members.

A. Tucker gave an overview of each of the OCP amendment applications and noted that:

- Because these applications will be considered as part of the OCP 10 year review, there was no restriction on UCB applications.
- Four of the applications are requesting changes to the UCB.
- The current policy for changes to the UCB is once every three years, which allows Council a chance to change the UCB once during their term of office.
- The RDN is also reviewing the applications requesting changes to the UCB.
- Two of the applications have also been referred to the RDN because of servicing issues.
- The Province was advised of the opportunity to review the UCB but they did not submit an application for DL 56.
- More detailed information will be gathered on all applications and presented to PNAC when it is available.
- The Public Hearing that is usually held in January for OCP amendments will be deferred until the updated OCP is ready, probably in May or June.
- We have requested that property signs for OCP amendment applications be erected before the PNAC meeting scheduled for 2007-Jan-16.

- For the application that wants to add another Town Centre, they would still have to provide services and roads. It currently has a Rural Resource designation.

Comments from Committee Members:

- Feel we are jumping the gun with these UCB change applications and could put a lot of pressure on the review process, especially the two mega projects. Could create a bias in the review.
- Perception is that some applicants seem to have to abide by the once every three year rule and others do not.
- Shopping centres are currently considered Town Centres and this is not necessarily true. We need to take a closer look and come up with a new concept that is people friendly, not just a bunch of stores. Look at a more comprehensive vision.
- Some people in the south end want to see more stores in their area.
- Thanked staff for all their hard work in organizing the Conference, and thanked Ted Swabey for attending.

A. Tucker outlined the next steps in the process and noted that the following open houses are being held:

Thursday, Nov. 23 at Dover Bay Secondary School, Multi-Purpose Room

Wednesday, Nov. 29 at Beban Park Lounge

Tuesday, Dec. 05 at John Barsby Community School, Library

- All open houses are running from 6 – 9 pm. They are informal drop in sessions and comment sheets will be available.
- PNAC members are welcome to attend and help out at the open houses.
- The consultant's report is expected to be presented to Council on Dec. 18 and we will be seeking authority from Council to continue with the next steps.
- January – workshop sessions will focus on specific issues. Two of the most requested are the UCB and density in Town Centres.
- First draft of the Plan is expected some time in March.

**7. Late Item:**

A. Tucker attended a B.C. Healthy Communities Initiative workshop and gave a brief report:

- The initiative is being brought back by the provincial government but with broader terms which take in all aspects of community health.
- Workshop looked at range of considerations.
- Trying to get communities to sign on with this initiative of collaborative leadership and also fitting it in with sustainability.
- How do we engage stakeholders?
- People attended from all over Vancouver Island.

**8. Next Meeting:**

- The next regular meeting of PNAC is scheduled for 2006-Dec-19 (end of year dinner).

**9. Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.