

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PLAN NANAIMO ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON TUESDAY, 2003-MAR-18, IN THE BOARD ROOM,  
CITY HALL, 455 WALLACE STREET**

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**Present:**

Gail Adrienne	Chris Erb
Wayne Anderson	Bill Forbes
Suzanne Andre	Helen Johnston
Robert Borden	Shirley Lance
Councillor Diane Brennan	Joan Perry
Stu Donaldson	Gunter Zimmer

**Neighbourhood Reps:**

Jim Young	Shari Young
Barry Lyseng	

Staff  
Sharon Hvozdzanski  
Sharon Fletcher  
Fran Grant (Recording Secretary)

**Regrets:**

Neil McNiven	Mark Stanley
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**1. Call to order:**

Chair D. Brennan called the meeting to order at 4:47 p.m.

**2. PNAC Budget:**

S. Hvozdzanski noted that PNAC current budget balance is:

Balance Forward	4615.00
Meeting Expenses	398.00
Total remaining	<u>4217.00</u>

**3. Adoption of 2003-Jan.-23 Minutes:**

MOVED by B. Forbes, SECONDED by G. Zimmer, that the minutes of 2003-Feb-18 be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

**4. Update of Current OCP Amendment Applications: (approx. 5 mins.)**

S. Hvozdzanski advised that all of the current OCP amendments have received 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading and are proceeding to a Public Hearing which is being held on 2003-Mar-27 at Beban Park Auditorium, 7:00 p.m. They will then go for 3<sup>rd</sup> and Final Reading at the regular Council meeting 2003-Apr-14.

**5. Neighbourhood Planning:**

S. Hvozdzanski did a brief presentation on the Neighbourhood planning process. She noted that plans have been done for the following neighbourhoods:

- Old City (involved rezoning properties as well) adopted in 1992
- Chase River

- Rocky Point, Hammond Bay, Stephenson Point

She also noted that the following neighbourhoods have indicated an interest in undertaking a neighbourhood plan:

- South End
- Departure Bay
- Brechin Hill

In answer to questions from the Committee, S. Hvozdzanski noted that:

- Neighbourhoods wishing to do a plan need to submit a proposal to Council for their consideration.
- There are no specific boundaries set for neighbourhoods. It is important that a neighbourhood have a population of at least 2000 so that census information can be used.
- Statistics Canada has indicated that the boundaries for data collection areas in the City should now remain constant, unlike in the past. This means that to benefit from better census data for their area, neighbourhoods should try to take into consideration the boundaries of these census information blocks, when developing their boundaries.
- If resident groups are conflicted over neighbourhood boundaries, staff would work with them to resolve the matter if necessary. To date there has been no boundary issues that resident groups couldn't solve themselves. Neighbourhood boundaries only really become an issue when developing a local land use plan.
- The budget for the Chase River and Rocky Point, Hammond Bay, Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Plan was \$45,000 each (\$30,000 from the RDN and \$15,000 from the Province). This amount does not include staff time.
- A higher service level request for neighbourhood planning has been put forward for review as part of Council's budget deliberations for the past couple of years.

General Committee comments:

- Fund raising should not be part of the neighbourhood planning requirements. It was very difficult and time consuming.
- Some people who joined the planning committee left when they found out so much time was being spent on fund raising.
- Funds should come from taxes, as this is a community wide issue.
- If a neighbourhood has a very complex issue to deal with (such as steep slopes) it makes the process more difficult.
- The Committee agreed that having facilitation training for neighbourhood planning committee members before the process starts would be very helpful. However you need to make sure any training is not too onerous or volunteers may be deterred from joining a steering committee. Joining the committee at a later date would still be allowed, even if someone hasn't completed the training.
- Problem with some residents see the planning committee as a 'clique'
- Neighbourhood committee members could also use some training in understanding the OCP concepts.
- There have been two neighbourhood plans complete without Council including them in their budget deliberations (higher level of service), so the money is there if the will to see them (neighbourhood plans) done is.
- We (Chase) had an initiating committee that went out into the neighbourhood to find people who were interested in working on the planning committee.
- Might find it useful to have public meetings facilitated by an outsider who will be seen as impartial.

- Try not to over bureaucratize the process.
- Some features of the OCP, such as Town Centres, could be used to set boundaries.
- Need to avoid the adversarial undertone between staff, Council and planning committees.
- One reason for poor acceptance of the neighbourhood plan by Council could be that the plan was started under one Council and finished under another who felt 'stuck' with the plan.
- Unnecessary delay in dealing with some departments of the City.
- Did not feel that senior staff supported the neighbourhood planning process.
- Some City staff and Council do not buy-in to Plan Nanaimo.

Comments on setting planning boundaries:

- Need to define neighbourhood boundaries at the very beginning to avoid any misunderstanding.
- Publicize reason for neighbourhood planning boundary locations at the beginning of the process.
- Need to make sure that no area of the City is left out of neighbourhood planning boundaries.
- Could also use school catchment areas or other social dynamic which brings people together to set boundaries.
- Some areas have traditional boundaries that need to be accounted for when developing a neighbourhood planning areas.

Pros and cons identified by the Chase River Neighbourhood representatives:

Pros:

- having a planning office gives the Committee a public profile and a place where people can come and give their thoughts and comments when it is convenient for them.
- A "wants/needs" board" where the committee and public can write down what they would like to have in their community works really well.
- Excellent support from planning staff although sometimes different answer were given by different divisions/departments.
- Really like the idea of having a Mainstreet but it is a difficult concept to sell to developers, and to try and maintain in the long run.
- Must have a cohesive committee that can work together and compromise.

Cons:

- Where would the funding come from for neighbourhoods that don't have issues the RDN or province will supply?
- Need to update Council more often on progress being made, as it is very time consuming redoing what they don't agree with.
- Timeframe much too long.
- Need to improve getting information out to the public to get more feedback.
- Needed more volunteers
- Housing projections need to be scaled back to reflect the new information being looked at as part of the 5-year review.
- We were required to include mixed-use development in our plan and we are still getting negative feedback from the public on this issue. The neighbourhood struggled with maintaining its rural character.
- Council needs to make up their mind that they will or won't support neighbourhood planning before the process is started.

S. Fletcher added that:

- We have learned a lot from the two neighbourhood plans that have been completed and will be able to put those lessons to use on the next plan.
- Having the Standing Committee involved as part of any future neighbourhood plan and its review may help, as there will be three members of Council who will become part of the process.

S. Hvozdzanski advised that staff would also need to meet and discuss the neighbourhood planning issue amongst themselves. The results of the staff and this PNAC meeting will be used to improve the neighbourhood planning process in general.

Chair D. Brennan summarized PNAC's main areas of concern in neighbourhood planning as:

- financing and costs
- neighbourhood boundary setting
- facilitation training
- timeline

#### **6. Information/presentations the Committee would like:**

S. Hvozdzanski asked PNAC what information they feel they need to better carry out their duties. The Committee suggested the following:

- structure of Council's standing committees
- process to move issues from the sub-committee to Council
- negotiations for land development
- DCCs and how they impact development
- Steep Slope Development Permit Area Guidelines and Zoning Bylaw in general and what aspects are controversial (e.g. green space development and road widths)
- changes to the Local Government Act
- major projects being undertaken by the City
- key transportation corridors
- who has jurisdiction for what (e.g. waterfront, major roads)
- harmonization of Port Plan with OCP
- waterfront revitalization

#### **7. Other Business:**

Chair D. Brennan and S. Hvozdzanski thanked H. Johnston and S. Andre for their time and commitment to the Committee.

#### **8. Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of PNAC Tuesday, April 15, 2003. 4:45 p.m.

#### **9. Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.