



## Area D – Cowichan Bay OCP

### Meeting Notes OCP Steering Committee

Monday, August 9<sup>th</sup> 2010  
Cowichan Valley Regional District – CR2  
9:00 am – 1:00 pm

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1. Adoption of Agenda
  - The agenda was adopted without changes.
2. July 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting Notes
  - Notes from the July 12<sup>th</sup> meeting were adopted without changes.
3. Community Planning Best Practices
  - There was discussion about the importance of best practices for education and inspiration. The committee agreed to discuss best practices throughout the process – allowing relevant best practices to emerge as the group moves ahead.
  - There was brief discussion about shoreline management in relation to protection of forage fish spawning habitat. Islands Trust is moving forward with development permit area guidelines for habitat protection.
  - Samso, Denmark was referenced as an island that became carbon neutral in 10 years – largely due to wind energy production. It was noted that the island residents had to overcome significant bureaucratic challenges to implement their system which involves selling energy back to the grid. The island has become a laboratory for sustainability measures.
  - CVRD staff will reference best practices in upcoming presentations to the public.
4. Workshop – Draft OCP Goals
  - There was discussion about the role of a vision statement vs. goals and principles. The vision is the big picture statement about the future of a community and ideally a succinct



statement. Goals help to achieve the vision by focusing on specific aspects (e.g. affordable housing).

- There needs to be a balance between thinking big and creating policies that are achievable.
- The committee discussed the option of including a set of principles in the OCP including the “precautionary principle” where an activity raises threats of harm to the environment or human health, precautionary measures should be taken even in the absence of scientific evidence.
- The committee discussed the following in relation to draft OCP goals (see Appendix A).
- CVRD staff will take the input from goal areas discussed by the committee and draft a series of statements for further review and discussion by the committee.
- The committee agreed to follow up on the draft goals via email.

#### 5. Next Steps + Closing Remarks

- A community meeting has tentatively been planned for the evening of Wednesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>. CVRD staff will begin preparing newsletter no. 2 and supplementary advertising. In addition to the community meeting, staff and the OCP committee will conduct a series of community workshops in to support the development of a vision statement and OCP goals.
- The next OCP Steering Committee meeting will be held Wednesday, September 8<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 – 11:00 am at the CVRD.



## Appendix A – Discussion Notes Regarding Draft OCP Goals

### Managing Growth

- Match growth with availability of water and sewer- infinite growth not possible.
- Manage growth patterns/ design. e.g. energy efficient technology should be used for servicing
- Managed growth issues-Government CO2 (GHG reduction) policies
- Transportation is a huge part of this. How does our OCP link to the government's goals? We are legislated to link our policies to government policies- may be in over their heads
- The traffic system should be considered during design
- It could be useful if people from the water board could talk to us- people don't understand how the water process works
- By law, no independent water company can contradict local government policy.
- The OCP is required to specify the location of servicing with maps. We can identify boundaries for water and sewer service areas in the OCP.
- 3 different ways to get water: well, CVRD and improvement districts. We aren't face to face with how the water system works/ we don't understand it. We are under the belief that there will always be water for us when we need it.
- We don't know how much water is being used on agricultural land.
- We need to know how much water there is to regulate development but the amount of development we want should also play a role in deciding how much development should occur.
- Should there be a moratorium on further development?
- Zoning is an issue (the zoning allows for further development to take place)
- We have no idea what the aquifer capability is.
- Could we determine what percentage is allowed to be developed then re-assess later
- Can we limit development to an average growth until we do a study?
- OCP must accommodate residential growth for at least 5 years. In area D 85-130 units are needed over 5 years to accommodate the demand for growth. Cowichan Bay Estates alone will more than meet the need. There are several vacant lots which are zoned to be developed, however, are not in service areas.
- Need discussion about how/ where service increases should occur- servicing leads to subdivision. Which areas should be down-zoned?
- Down-zoning = minimum lot size increases to prevent subdivision



- Can't shut down developers who have already gotten approval
- In theory, no additional development is needed for the next 5 years because of Cowichan Bay Estates.
- Positive side of development is that developers can provide things that community needs- e.g. services and facilities.
- We need to discuss the potential for infilling existing areas rather than developing raw land.
- "The OCP doesn't tell people how to get their dream house"- A checklist for people to go through when they want to do certain developments would be useful.
- Sustainable policies need indicators to monitor/track progress. Ie) how transparent is our process? Creating and monitoring communication goals.
- Limit growth until we understand the availability of our resources
- How can we limit development? Saanich example -They calculated the average development that occurred in the area and limited development to that average.
- Address stormwater management and slope management – environmentally sensitive approaches

### **Managing Growth – Nodes/Neighbourhoods**

- Area D contains many different neighbourhoods/nodes (e.g. 4-ways, Whippletree, Village, Chaster)
- Function of the neighbourhood/commercial nodes- How to protect/ enhance-?
- Each neighbourhood/area has its own needs
- 4ways- Centre of Area – develop the node. Could be a community centre.
- Question for public- do you want 4 ways to become a true node? (The steering committee seems to think "Yes")
- "We need 4 ways [to become active commercially again]" "But not as a 711"
- Potential for commercial development at 4-ways
- Economic development analysis of 4 ways could be useful

### **Managing Growth – Maintaining Character**

- Reflect cultural/ historic/community values in design of developments
- Define acceptable development characteristics to retain rural character/neighbourhood character. Character should be decided for each individual area - the DPA downtown does this



- Advisory design panel would be good.
- Designate heritage buildings- Recognized by the Cittaslow manifesto
- Tree protection bylaw
- Regulation of formula businesses (i.e. chain stores)
- Strict architectural controls/ heritage designations would be good
- Ban chain stores

### **Economic Development**

- Foster economic development without sacrificing character.
- Growth patterns as they relate to economic development e.g. could the Cherry Point Marina detract from Cowichan Bay Village?
- Sometimes new business is seen as competition, but often businesses (even if they are the same kind) can have a symbiotic relationship
- People shop in Valleyview or Duncan
- Need bigger economic base.
- Fishing/ agriculture/small business/ tourism/ services are the main industries in Area D
- Limited space for additional commercial development in the Bay; development in the Bay requires some ingenuity
- Critical Mass needed –Hard for new businesses to start up in the Village –Boardwalk could be good –A kiosk in the Village with information about all businesses in the area
- Economic incentives needed to implement any of these ideas
- Economy key to a healthy community
- Are we welcoming to boat traffic?
- Marina only has a couple of slips for visitors.
- Regulate marina- how many slips/ what kinds of business development permitted?
- How do we blend and balance residents/ economy/ visitors/ quality of life?
- Do more to welcome visitors from waterfront/ in turn limit road traffic.
- Tourism question- Should tourism be limited like we are proposing to limit residential growth?
- Should we let residential development occur around Whippletree to keep it alive? Put some public recreation attractions there...?
- How will you get people there without a car?
- Green Grocer is missing in Area D



### Transportation/Parking Management

- Need to have alternative transportation/transit opportunities
- Need an enhanced/connected transportation network
- Don't have a park and ride
- Transit/ bus not economically viable
- Van pool was economically feasible, but buses are still used/ potentially detracting from van potential-?
- Park and ride exists in area E
- Walking trails should interconnect and “make sense”
- Rail, pedestrian, bike, horse, scooter etc. – options to get to Victoria and Nanaimo (not using the car) should be in place
- If it takes 20 minutes longer to get to a place on the bus, 99% of the people will drive. The reason it takes longer is because it is slowed down by making stops.
- Trails are currently used for recreation/ health not for transportation to services.
- Accessible trails. Scooters can be used on the present trails but there are problems when the trails aren't maintained
- Should incorporate transportation into planning / transit-oriented design
- Traffic calming needed. Best practices example from Europe- use single lanes/ one way traffic lights/ “Spanish traffic light” where a light will turn red if someone approaches it speeding/ Automatic ticketing. Volunteers could research these options.
- Shuttle parking/ music festival parking

### Cowichan Bay Village

- Develop a traffic/ pedestrian plan for the bay
- Village could almost use its own plan. It is the heart of the community.
- The Village might be a “Victim of its own success”
- First Nations land (Kilpalas/ Theik) – How much say if any do we have in the operations of First Nations land/ resources?
- Public beaches are lacking. Kilpahlas used by public
- Support more water traffic as opposed to vehicular traffic
- Are trails into the village dangerous? Some have big drains/ steep slopes
- Pedestrian safety in the village an issue



- Parking- more efficient parking by liveaboards could help.
- Boating traffic- accommodate so they can visit local businesses.
- Business/ tourism drives parking issue
- Visitors often want to get to Duncan from Cowichan Bay
- Opportunity for a summer shuttle from the Bay
- Parking meters are in the works for the Village.

### **Community/Social Fabric**

- Volunteerism- defines a community
- If we are a retirement community/ bedroom community how do we keep volunteers?  
Some sort of community centre could work
- People work elsewhere and aren't involved in our community- Community centre could facilitate a sense of community
- A community centre could alleviate concerns of seniors and others
- Provide for all demographics – age-friendly
- Meeting spaces/ indoor and outdoor venues/bandstands/ market kiosks
- Bench is closest thing to a community centre- It may be free but it lacks atmosphere.
- Maritime Centre is a potential venue for a community centre but needs funds
- Opportunities to participate in agriculture etc. Cittaslow-ish ideas, but not called Cittaslow...
- Culture/arts
- Lack of public art in the area

### **Sustainable/active agriculture**

- Most of the land in Area D (70%) is agricultural but much of the land is not being used. How can we increase productivity?
- Provide incentives for market gardening
- Promote garden allotments/small scale agriculture/market gardening
- Potential to provide affordable housing in conjunction with agricultural land and employment
- Potential to support a local market at 4-ways
- Opportunity to lease farm equipment that is currently underutilized to small farm operations



- Government money should go towards incentives for farming ie) subsidize the purchase of land for community gardens/ alternative ways to be involved in agriculture (outside of buying expensive land).

### Environment

- Green space/ wildlife corridors require connectivity
- Protect/ restore marine environment- Foreshore, bay, estuary
- 2 stroke motors are terrible polluters/ bad for fish eggs etc. Should be restricted from estuary
- Must work with other communities ie) Lake Cowichan to ensure health of estuary
- Suggestions for upstream areas regarding their role in protecting the estuary
- District energy- loop it back
- Heat pumps etc. Other green design initiatives
- Celebrate/ Enhance the environment
- use the available technologies for improving habitat
- Colorado example of recycling water from a brewery
- Limit light pollution / dark skies policy

### Decision-making Process

- Uncomfortable with present APC process. No policy framework for decision making
- Advisory committees for different issue sectors
- Eg-Subcommittee to monitor ongoing issues
- Form committee from a representative sample of the stakeholder group in question. Area director must liaise with the group during decision making
- Could be a committee for each goal in the OCP

### Safety

- sidewalks/ lighting/ speed limits/ community watch/ emergency response plan