

Meeting Minutes - Corcan-Meadowood Residents' Association, January 26, 2010

Meeting convened at 0900 am

In attendance:

Elaine Pelligren, President

Ozzie Jimmo, Information Officer

Sylvia Jimmo, resident

Ramona Jones, Secretary

Dave Jones, Information Officer

Alf Jablonski, resident,

Betty Jablonski, resident.

Jutta Mainland, resident

Reg Nosworthy, Area F appointee to District 69 Recreation Commission

Rob Roberts, resident

Hans Hofer, resident

Trish Curtin, resident

Bob Donald, resident

Annie Donald, resident

Scott Fraser, MLA, Alberni-Pacific Rim

Barbara Thomas District Manager, Vancouver Island Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Dave Edgar Planner (Highways)

Lou Biggeman Area F Director

Carol Mason Chief Administrative RDN

John Finnie General Manager RDN

This meeting was arranged so the CMRA could present all research, opinions and information supporting highway access to our area. Invited but absent were Barbara Thomas, District Manager Ministry of Highways, Dave Edgar, Ministry of Transportation, Lou Biggeman, Area Director F. Carol Mason, RDN, John Finnie RDN. Scott Fraser introduced himself and described his experience with our issue. He is in his second term of office, MLA for our area, He meets with the Ministry of Transportation twice a year and highway access has been a standing item for 5 years. It is one of three agenda items. Only 8% of local taxes collected are earmarked for cities, communities, etc. Other than real estate taxes, local governments have no means to collect money. The government has recognized that a safety issue exists here in because emergency vehicles cannot enter or leave the area quickly. The government has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure the safety of our roads and that is the highway access issue to bring to the government in March for funding consideration.

Round table introductions were made.

The CMRA had prepared a 40 page booklet presented and explained in this meeting. Another meeting was arranged for January 26 to describe the same issues to the

Ministry of Transportation. We made our case for highway access to our expanding area. The main points were as follows:

Elaine Peligren introduced herself as President of the Corcan Meadowood Residents Association. In October, 2009 CMRA was incorporated, 300 residents joined who said highway access is the most important issue for them. Our goal is to lobby the government so we can get access. She read from Ministry of Transport Annual Service Report: The Ministry is committed to opening up B.C. through innovative forward thinking transportation strategies that move people and goods safely throughout BC while helping maintain our provincial economy..... Improved road access for resource industries and rural residents...Interior and Rural Side Roads Program - Invest \$55 million in 2008/09 and \$50 million per annum for 2009/10 and 2010/11. CMRA has goals in keeping with MOT objectives.

Reg Nosworthy, Area F appointee to District 69 Recreation Committee, presented a short history of Area F. This area includes Coombs, Hilliers, Errington, Whiskey Creek and Meadowood. In 1994, Area F totaled 4610 residents, and Meadowood was 11% of that total (549). In 1995, the Inland Highway project began. In 2006, Area F represented 6680 people, and 27% of that total lived in the Meadowood area (1771). Growth in the area has exceeded RDN projections.

Alf Jablonski presented Carbon Footprint data to support Highway access from Nahmint. Vehicular traffic estimated to be 1610 trips per day, based on survey conducted at Baylis and Highway 19A on October 29, 2010. If we would save 1045.10 tonnes of CO2 (conservative estimate).

Dave Jones presented build out information and estimated taxes. Building in the area generates taxes for the government. Taxes pay for roads. Future commercial and residential lots that are zoned and ready for development have commercial value = \$135,487,324.21. Value of homes built in area to date = \$362,646,639.00. Taxes paid on our 738 properties = \$1,107,000.00. Costing information came from RS Means, 2010, RS Means, 28th edition 2009, Hanscomb Yardstick for Costing, Cost Data for Canadian Construction Industry 2009, 2008 National Construction Estimator.

Ozzie Jimmo, president of Little Qualicum River Village residents' association, presented our diagram of Nahmint Road access. A light at Nahmint would be cheapest option and is the most direct and sensible access from our point of view. It would save significant time and pollution if in place and would take pressure off Corcan Road as the major access road to the Meadowood area. It is 5.4 kms. from Horne Lake, and would serve residents better than RDN proposed route, south side of Little Qualicum River. The majority of civic addresses on Corcan Road and 509 petition signatures wanted freeway access.

Dave Jones presented other access possibilities. CMRA looked at north and south ramps off Koskimo and Nahmint, more expensive options than lights. We looked at the RDN proposal and that option is 3.5 kms. away from any paved roads involving a bridge

over the Little Qualicum River. Percy Road, north of Courtenay is the same type of access we want, an on demand light system at Nahmint Road.

Trish Curtin provided the health and safety implications of highway access. We have several letters of support. Two are from residents who waited over half an hour for an ambulance to arrive. We also have a letter from Mr. Kinistry, Superintendent of Ambulance services. He commented on the blocked gate off Nahmint preventing emergency vehicle access. It takes 15 - 20 minutes for ambulances to arrive from Bowser, the dispatch centre. We have difficulty getting medical care for our residents within the golden hour (the period for most positive outcomes to medical emergencies, such as stroke or heart attacks). With highway access, an ambulance can transport a patient to Nanaimo, Port Alberni or Comox within an hour. Obviously fire trucks and police vehicles are delayed also. On Corcan Road, we have a narrow corridor, called 'the chute' a road with no set backs or shoulders for hydro poles. A school bus and large truck would have difficulty passing one another. If this road is blocked for any reason, we lose our exit from the area. Children taking the school buses face a long commute to Bowser or Qualicum, too long for the younger children.

Hans Hofer referred to OCP 4 village plan designed to minimize urban sprawl. The four areas of Little Qualicum River, Hilliers, Coombs and Errington would be the villages and reduce demand for increased infrastructure. The Meadowood area has seen an increase in population that warrants more than one road out of the area. We have a new firehall, in keeping with growth, and need highway access to optimize the use of the service. What? Highway access. Where? Nahmint Road Why? We need it.

Elaine Peligren opened up discussion, inviting representatives from the Ministry of Transportation, and area F to speak. MLA Scott Fraser joined in discussion.

Barb Thomas, District Manager, Ministry of Transport, Vancouver Island, has put proposal to director to look at priority for funding. There are more requests than funding provided. Highway access proposal requires cost/benefit analysis: there is a design manual for highway creation, specifying speed limits, and distances between access points, etc.

Dave Edgar, planner, stated that adding a light to the freeway presents some challenges. Intent of the new highway was to provide 4 lane corridor with as few lights as possible. 1999 Highway agreement between RDN, Parksville/Qualicum, Nanaimo was not to have signals for entry to highway. MOT does not want to lose functionality of highway. Highway access will bring the pressure for commercial development, and change the complexion of our area. Other projects have been approved because the volume of traffic was significant and the province entered into partnerships with developers to help with the cost. For example, the interchange at Bear Mountain was funded by the developer for 18 million dollars, and highways contributed 4 million. Another joint venture was the McTavish interchange in Victoria, Partially financed by the airport authority with cost of 24 million.

Scott Fraser, MLA meets with Barb Thomas regularly. Shirley Bond now has mandate. Scott visited Minister Bond and handed her our materials. Scott will arrange meeting with minister, 15 to 30 minutes for our representatives so we can summarize our arguments. He will read our petition into Hansard, February 8 or 9, formal record keeping of our activities. He states that safety issues are the strongest issues we have. Our growth is in keeping with OCP (Official Community Plan)

The RDN plan for access (interchange south of Qualicum River) to our area could be revisited if the OCP was reopened and reviewed. Lou Biggeman, area F Director, stated that the document is quite contentious, so opening it up could create other issues, such as building code requirements for Area F.

ACTION

Dave Edgar will send us copy of Vancouver Highway Agreement.

Barb Thomas and her staff will do cost benefit analysis.

Reg Nosworthy will review Highway document to clarify role of RDN.

Scott Fraser will set up meeting with Shirley Bond for end of February/ early March

Meeting concluded noon