

CORCAN-MEADOWOOD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Regular Meeting Held December 16th, 2015 at 1670 Meadowood Way, Qualicum

Attendees: Elaine Peligren, Bob Donald, Allyson Wight, Alf Jablonski, Gerry Anderson, Diane Anderson, Annie Donald and Tim Peligren

Regrets: Dwayne Miller

Approval of Agenda: Moved by Bob Donald to approve the Agenda, seconded by Diane Anderson, Carried.

Approval of Previous Minutes: Moved by Gerry Anderson to approve previous minutes of November 11th, 2015, seconded by Alf Jablonski, Carried.

Treasurer's Report: Diane Anderson reported the following balances:

General Account: \$2,584.68 Highway Access Account: \$31,203.38 We have received a cheque from Return-It Depot for bottles/cans Refundables in amount of \$2,238.95 which will be reflected in next month's balances. Our thanks goes to Meadowood Store for their on-going contributions and to Bob Donald for all his work in collecting/sorting/returning refundables for credit to fund our association's general costs, etc.

Highway Access: Elaine Peligren moved to include a Progress Report in the minutes (Exhibit A) and to post same on the website, seconded by Diane Anderson, Carried.

Park Progress & Community Centre: Various options for a Community Hall have been developed and presented to the Regional District of Nanaimo. Progress is delayed due to the seasonal holidays. A meeting is to be set for early January with all the stakeholders to determine "next steps" in an attempt to put this project on a defined path with firmer timelines.

Special Events: Canada Day falls on a Friday in 2016 which will create the "long weekend" syndrome for many folks to take advantage of a mini-holiday versus the usual one-day stat holiday. Also, the Lighthouse Bluegrass Festival is being held at the Meadowood Community Park on July 1st, 2nd & 3rd, 2016. Therefore, the C.M.R.A. plans to host a simple celebration over the lunch period for a couple of hours with hot dogs, children's activities and Canada Day cake. Further details will follow.

Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness: Other than a couple of Weather "Alerts" issued and posted recently, there have been no significant activities to report. Residents are encouraged to follow Dashwood Volunteer Fire Dept. Face Book posts for up-to-date local events, road conditions etc. - <https://www.facebook.com/dashwoodvfd/> Other websites to follow for weather & storm alerts: <http://www.theweathernetwork.com/ca/weather/british-columbia/qualicum-beach>; http://weather.gc.ca/forecast/canada/index_e.html?id=BC "ShakeOutBC" is once again hosting its 'Show Me ShakeOut' poster and video contest for K-12 BC students.



IBC-2015-Shakeout-Contest-info-Poster-v05.pdf

Please help spread the word by sharing details of this poster:

<http://www.shakeoutbc.ca/index.html> and forms/instructions at

http://www.shakeoutbc.ca/2013postercontest/?WT.cg_n=HootSuite Contest closes Feb. 1st, 2016.

Fundraising: A "Beer 'n Burger" night is being arranged for late February or March, 2016. Further details to follow. The large sign at the end of Corcan (at Dorman) is being changed to reflect the new Membership Fees with instructions for payment. Deposit instructions/envelopes available at the Meadowood Store for folks to register.

Media & Communications: Nothing to report

Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, January 13th, 2016 – 6:30 pm at 1670 Meadowood Way, Qualicum

Adjournment of Regular Meeting: - Bob Donald moved to adjourn regular meeting at 6:55 pm, seconded by Alf Jablonski, Carried.

CMRA HIGHWAY ACCESS PROJECT**Page 1****PROGRESS REPORT**

December 14, 2015

INTRODUCTION

When the Vancouver Island "Inland Island Highway" was being planned/constructed in the early 1990's, the few residents living in the Corcan Road area at that time voted against highway access onto Corcan Road. Since then, the "Meadowood Neighbourhood" of Electoral Area F (Arrowsmith Community) has grown to include Little Qualicum River Village and the Meadowood Corridor. In 2006, the population of Area F was 6680 and Meadowood was estimated at 27% of that census figure. Based on the 2011 census, the number of residents living in Meadowood is now estimated to be over 2000 individuals. With on-going growth in both Area F and Area H in close proximity to the Corcan Island Highway underpass, access directly onto the Highway from Corcan Road will continue to be an important issue to be addressed.

THE CMRA

As the Meadowood Community began to grow, a group of concerned citizens banded together and worked with the RDN to have a local fire hall constructed as part of the Dashwood fire protection area. The success of this initiative at the local community level became the inspiration to do more. In 2009, another group of local residents banded together to form the non-profit Corcan Meadowood Residents Association (CMRA). Membership was open to all individuals who had invested in homes and property in the local area who were interested in developing community amenities to improve their lifestyle. The initial focus was on holding local events to create community spirit and a feeling of belonging to a unique and vibrant rural community. Addressing growth issues in the isolated community became a top priority item. Over time, key local projects were identified by the CMRA including upgrades and improvements to a trailhead and parking lot with signage providing better direct access to Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park; ramp access from Corcan Road onto the Inland Island Highway #19; and the phased development of a local Meadowood Community Park. The CMRA, working with local governments, has been able to identify key funding opportunities to complete trail access upgrades to the Falls and install a playground in the Meadowood Community Park. Funding for the construction of a Meadowood Community Hall in the community park is now confirmed and is in the final tendering process. The CMRA is confident that hall construction in the park will begin in early 2016.

Gaining access onto Highway #19, however, has turned out to be a much more challenging CMRA community project. The CMRA has a proven track record of getting things done and is determined to stay focussed on defining the long term feasibility of this project for the Meadowood neighbourhood.

CMRA HIGHWAY ACCESS PROJECT**Project History**

From the outset, the CMRA and most residents clearly understood that gaining highway access would be a difficult uphill battle with the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure (MoTI), particularly after the community said "no" to access during the original highway construction. In the early stages, the CMRA, the RDN and various sub-committees worked diligently, presenting many facts and figures to justify the need and benefits for this project, both for the local residents and for the BC Government. However, the MoTI decided the project was not justified using their volume requirements and that there was no provincial funding available for this request. The CMRA then considered several alternative options. The current option, a request for highway access on an "independent community basis" at Corcan Road is now perceived as a "pain in the neck" by the MoTI, but is, however, now viewed by the CMRA as a longer term project that needs to move forward today with the completion of a feasibility study.

The MoTI Ten Year Transportation Plan.

The CMRA initiative for this project is not currently being considered by the MoTI as a BC tax payer funded highway project and is therefore, not included in their Ten Year Master Plan. However, the MoTI have agreed in principle, that if the CMRA and the local residents can prepare a reasonable plan to move forward on an independent contractor basis, they may reconsider approving the project. The MoTI has confirmed their position to the CMRA with a letter to provide some guidance with this process. This letter outlines eight basic MoTI report and design requirements, including engineering designs, to move to the next step in the request process. The objective of the CMRA is to keep the pressure on the BC government to reconsider this project in a more positive fashion.

Community Support

At the outset, there was very strong interest from the local community for Highway Access to and from Corcan Road onto Highway #19 at the current underpass. In 2010, the CMRA conducted a survey to determine the support level for a study on providing highway access. Although some residents were opposed, there were enough local residents who expressed an interest to proceed with discussion with the MoTI. When the MoTI opted out, the CMRA prepared a strategy based on using an independent contractor to build the Highway Access that would be financed locally on a taxation basis approved by referendum. At that time, the CMRA introduced the \$100 fund raising campaign to determine the level of community support to proceed with the study.

Fund Raising Donations

Initially, the CMRA estimated it would need \$100,000 to complete the engineering report required and proceed to the next study phase. To-date, \$36,000 has been raised through fund raising efforts and resident donations of \$100 each. Currently, the CMRA is confident the amount raised to-date is sufficient to move forward to prepare a feasibility study based on the eight MoTI requirements. Consequently, \$4000 has been allocated from the money donated by the community to get the highway access project underway.

The CMRA is now working with an engineer who is doing a preliminary report and drawings for the proposed highway access. The CMRA fully expects that by the end of 2016, the community will know if the Highway Access Project will be able to proceed or will have to be abandoned.

Study Result Alternatives

If it is determined that it is not feasible to proceed with the Highway Project at this time, then registered donors will be refunded a proportionate amount of their donation once all engineering and associated expenses have been paid. If the Highway Access Project is able to proceed, then any balance in the initial donation fund will be used to proceed with the Highway Access Project. If the project is deemed to be feasible at a reasonable cost, then all residents in the Highway Access area will be asked to participate in a local referendum for approval to proceed. The mandate to proceed would be based on a defined financing program based on a local taxation package. If the referendum is defeated, the Highway Access Project will then be abandoned.

Grant Opportunities

There is also hope that some Regional, Provincial or Federal grant funding opportunities may appear in the future to help fuel this project. The immediate objective is to determine if this Highway Access Project is feasible and if it is, then to hold a local referendum to proceed. Another key objective is to try and position this project as a "shovel ready" status. Opportunities of this nature often show up on short notice. The CMRA has a strong track record of taking advantage of grant opportunities in the past. As an example, the funding for the Meadowood Community Hall is coming from the Union of BC Municipalities Community Works Fund which was created as a result of the Federal Gas Tax program. The new Liberal Federal Government of Canada has promised \$125 billion in infrastructure spending over the next ten years. It may be possible that some of this spending could trickle down to the local level in the form of grant funding for projects like this in the next few years.

Conclusion

The CMRA and the Highway Access Project has strong community support and acknowledges that not everyone is in favour of this study or long term project. However, it is the intention of the CMRA to continue to work with concerned businesses and residents in Area F and Area H to move forward and determine the feasibility of this project.

The CMRA is also committed to implement a methodology to help keep all local residents current on the status of this project as it continues to move forward. Your patience and continued support for this initiative is greatly appreciated.