

Hillside - Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee Meeting
September 11, 2017
Minutes (draft)

1. **Welcome and Introductions. 28 community members. Invited guests. Councillor Isitt. CoV staff Gary Pemberton**
2. **Approval of Agenda**
3. **Review and approval of June 2017 meeting minutes (Chair)**
4. **Hillside-Quadra precinct discussion (re: public land—BC Housing, CRD, SD 61)**

A discussion about the future of the publically owned land adjacent to the intersection of Hillside and Blanshard, including 950 Kings (CRHD), Evergreen Terrace (BC Housing) and the SJ Willis lower field (SD 61).

Confirmed attendees to date:

- Mark Walsh – School District 61 Secretary Treasurer
- Marianne Alto – Chair Capital Regional Hospital District (CRHD)
- Dave Howe – Past Chair Capital Regional Hospital District (CRHD)
- Geoff Young – City of Victoria Councillor
- Ben Isitt – City of Victoria Councillor
- Jonathan Tinney, City of Victoria, Director, Sustainable Development and Community Planning

Regrets:

- BC Housing

Meeting format: comments from landowners, question and answer period with community members, and general discussion on community vision (as time allows).

Jonathan Tinney the City of Victoria has not begun to plan for this neighbourhood; this might be a stand-alone project ahead of the LAP. Humber Green Village (in Burnside-Gorge between Douglas and Blanshard bordering Hillside) and Quadra Village are large urban villages—there may be linkages. The City owns none of the land, other than the Quadra Village Community Centre, adjacent to some of the other parcels. The transit corridors support mid-density residential development which would improve affordability.

Marianne Alto (CRHD) there have been no formal discussions. 955 Hillside is being developed in conjunction with Island Health. 950 Kings is leased to CDI with a sublease for the next 5 years on the gym (to QVCC). A working group has been formed but there have been no formal discussions to date. Whatever happens the site at 950 Kings will be re-developed for health-related purposes. If sold, any proceeds of the sale would need to be redirected to health related uses.

Mark Walsh (Secretary Treasurer SD 61) École Quadra has doubled in size in the last 5 years. One or more portables are being built onsite by district employees. The district is trapped for space (due to the impacts of the Supreme Court decision on class size); priority is given to kids who live in the catchment area.

They are in preliminary discussions about moving support staff to the space currently occupied by the Vancouver Island School of Art.

SJ Willis will be used starting in 2019 for schools undergoing seismic upgrading—foresee a ten year period.

The lower playing fields are not needed—they currently use the fields at Topaz.

The district is in the midst of a land assessment from a needs perspective. There may be some flexibility with the lower field (in regards to a sale), but there have been no conversations yet. There has been no discussion with Anomura about locating micro-housing on the field.

Geoff Young (councillor CoV) has been on a committee of the CRHD and chatted with BC Housing about uses of the sites. We need more housing in the region and some sites need to be denser. 950 would be the logical site. Evergreen Terrace site could be used for market housing and a new non-market site developed—SJ Willis lower field for instance. It would also allow for the replacement of basic community facilities—gym and playing fields.

Link the villages (Humber Green and Quadra Village) by opening up Kings Road to traffic (and crossing Blanshard).

There are no firm plans. There are real opportunities and real needs.

Ben Isitt (councillor CoV) the vision needs to begin with the community, not be imposed from without but move with the neighbourhood. What are the needs for the precinct—housing, respectful of the neighbourhood. Non-market is currently a small percentage (7%). Not in favour of redeveloping sports field. There has already been densification with the Summit project, and the school field lost. A win would be the green space at 950 Kings converted to park land with allotment gardens, permaculture like Wark Street Commons and a skate park (perhaps portable like in Fernwood). It's important this be a win-win. People need to get involved.

Questions/Comments from the Community

- Each of the land owners is looking at their own interests but no one has any responsibility to help us build a heart to the neighbourhood. Cultural facilities are being evicted.
- The closure of the school was engineered and now the demographic is shifting, young families moving in. Many don't have transportation to travel distances to get kids to school.
- This is the last greenspace in Hillside-Quadra and we don't want to lose it. We need amenities that aren't necessarily money-makers but that draw the community together.
- It's notoriously difficult to get institutions to work together.
- Is the vision for condos? (Geoff says it's a market necessity).
- Jonathan Tinney mentions there are opportunities when they do. There are OCP goals other than density. There could be planning independent of the LAP (a master plan).
- Hillside Avenue also splits the community.

- Think for a minute that the Hillside-Blanshard intersection (one of the busiest in the city) is being considered for family housing—it should be marketing or light industrial. (Ben mentions ground oriented retail/mixed use with housing above).
- Ben states the City could acquire land at SJ Willis (in a land swap) and at 950 Kings (for a community centre).
- What is the zoning? 950 Kings is currently zoned R3 multi-dwelling and the SJ Willis field is zoned for single family housing.
- People are proud of the neighbourhood, but it's fragile. Would like the decision makers to take the lessons from other jurisdictions. They are needs to be caretaking of the existing community on the site(s). Moves are detrimental in the long run.
- The mandate of the CRHD is getting in the way of creative solutions. The willingness to take different steps is limited. It's difficult to get the institutions to shift. We're relying on the institutions to break up the silos and come up with something different. We don't want innocuous uses that don't take the needs of the community into consideration.
- Consider the fiasco that was Little Mountain (Vancouver).

CoV has a role to play and is willing to be part of the conversation; happy to come again. The SD expects to be a partner and hopes to bring institutions together.

5. New executive members for NAC

- Jenny Fraser, Jon Munn, Vincent Gornall, Janis La Couvée. The executive is vetted by the community association (Downtown Blanshard Advisory Committee who runs the Quadra Village Community Centre) at the AGM (September 25th)

Reminder: Support the Downtown Blanshard Advisory Committee by becoming a member

Next NAC meeting: October 2, 2017 at 7:00 p.m., 901 Kings Rd.

To join the Hillside Quadra email list and receive weekly updates contact

nag@quadravillagecc.com.

Contact the Hillside Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee at nag@quadravillagecc.com.