

Neighbourhood Action Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, May 17, 2021

Time: 7:00 pm **Location: Zoom**

We would like to acknowledge that we are on the homelands of the Coast Salish and thank the Lkwungen (Songhees) and Kwsepsum (Esquimalt) Nations for sharing land on which we live, learn, work and play. Hay'sxw'qa si'em!

NAC Executive Board Members: 5

DBAC Board Members: 2

QVCC Staff Members: 2

Number of Community Members: 15

Minutes by: John Hall

Meeting started at 7:00 PM

1 Welcome

2 Approval of Agenda

Approved as circulated.

3 Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Approved as circulated.

4 Topaz Park improvements (Alia Johnson, City of Victoria Senior Parks Planner)

Presentation by Alia, who is the project manager. Topaz Park is one of the largest parks in the city and the main recreation park. The Topaz Park plan lays out the amenities that are intended over the next 10 years. The turf field project will expand the current field capacity, including a softball pitch and team and attendee areas, with construction starting in June, 2022 and completion in September, 2022. The next project will be to design and build a skateboard park and asphalt pump track with attendee gathering areas. The concept design will be posted in June for feedback, with construction starting in October, for completion in the summer of 2022. An integrated art component will incorporate public art in the skate park.

Question: A concern about the lighting which has illuminated the neighbourhood. Can it be limited to the ball field? It's a waste of energy and has health impacts.

Response: Alia indicated LED lights that will not illuminate beyond the field itself will be installed.

Comment: Also a concern about lights which currently go directly into my kitchen so happy to hear it will be improved.

Question: Wondering if Highland Games will continue to be held in this park.

Response: Alia understands it will, though the layout may change. The middle fields aren't changing much and amenities will be added to support events like this. However, the location of the heavy event is where the skate park is going to be.

Question: Wondering if an "age 13 and up" field, which requires a larger field, has been discussed?

Response: Alia does not recall hearing many survey responses regarding youth ball field requirements and would be happy to hear what is needed.

Question: Who is the artist? Can you send the design to the QVCC?

Response: Alia will request the contact information. The artist is Germaine Koh of Vancouver.

Question: What opportunities are there for youth engagement in planning the skate park?

Response: When the plans go up online, they will have options for skate features that will have been selected by the advisory committee which includes connected people with their own networks.

Question from chat: Can we have solar-powered lights?

Response: It was discussed but this project is unlikely to be a good fit for that.

Question from Councillor Isitt: He has received questions from the public about protection of the southern Garry oak area and the alignment of the bike skills park.

Response: Alia indicated the bike skills park will wind through the trees and the design team will be carefully reviewing this. The Garry oak area tends to be higher and the bike track will be lower.

Comment from QVCC staff: A request to encourage consultation with local youth who may not be formally involved in the skate community, as well as a local focus group for the bike skills design. It is important to get local feedback for what has been a regional amenity.

Response: Alia will work with Kelly at the QVCC to reach out to those groups. She remarked that it has been challenging with COVID-19. The City's online survey has been our best tool.

Question: Is the perimeter pathway still included and will it be lighted?

Response: Alia indicated that the perimeter pathway does not go all the way around the park. Pedestrian lighting is flagged on the design. Alia indicated that people being able to do a walking loop is definitely in the plan.

Comment: I was happy to hear about the careful use and inclusion of the natural area.

5 Improvements behind VISA update

This is regarding the backyard of the old schoolhouse in the 2500 block of Quadra St. There was a zoom meeting on May 3rd to share feedback from the original proposal by Aryze for this public land, which is owned by the City but leased to the school district. We now have modified plans to review. Feedback included the need for playgrounds for older children, garden boxes,

food forests, through access, and the resurfacing of the basketball court. Leigh Stickle of Aryze showed some plans, which included a trellis to cover the seating area.

Question from QVCC staff: I recall from our review there was a basketball/ball hockey court combo?

Response: Leigh thought that was correct; however, some elements would require City or other funding. Leigh indicated it is a three-phase project. Phase 1 is the playgrounds, and that is funded by Aryze, in tandem with the Fifth St development. Phase 2 is the garden and other area, and is proposed to be funded by Aryze tied to the planned Kings Rd development. Phase 3 is the ball court that would be funded by the City.

Question: It is City land so what does the City Parks Department have to do with it.

Response from Justin Dykstra City of Victoria Manager of Park Design: He indicated that his involvement has been minor and he thought that the ownership was by SD61. He reviewed it early on and provided general feedback.

Response: Leigh indicated that Aryze had approached the City and Parks Department and SD61 to firm up plans that work for everyone. This comes as part of the two projects Aryze is working on as a community benefit funded by the projects. The City would do the maintenance on the park via the Parks Department.

Comment from Councillor Isitt: As far as he knows SD61 has managed it as their responsibility and the area has never been managed as a park area. This proposal would essentially entrench the use of that area as park use. It is good to hear the ball court is part of the plan. The City has its own asphalt plant so this could be less expensive than contracting it. In the past CUPE local 50 has volunteered their time to do community improvements.

Question: What fencing is planned between the basketball court and the garden?

Response: Leigh indicated that no fence is currently proposed for the garden area though one could be added based on feedback.

Question: What does Aryze get out of this?

Response: Leigh indicated that it is not linked per se, although two Aryze developments are right there and a prospective daycare might be included in the Fifth St development. There is no *quid pro quo* per se, just that Aryze sees a benefit from improvement to the block.

Comment from QVCC staff: Deer fencing might be needed for the allotment gardens.

Response: Leigh can see how that might be challenging if not fenced.^[1]_[SEP]

Question from QVCC staff: If the neighbourhood association provides a letter of support this might go ahead, understanding that there are other agencies involved, including SD61. Does the community support this or is additional review needed? No adjacent neighbours appear to be present at the meeting. We could seek support from those neighbours here to write a letter of support based on this conceptual design with implementation based on feedback at the meeting.

Response: Leigh asked if Aryze should send a document over to Kelly at the QVCC to review and sign off on for QVCC's comfort - addressing phasing and funding.

Comment: Our NAC emails had responses from some young families next door. Would anyone who is here, who is not from NAC Executive, DBAC, or QVCC please comment on the proposal.

Response: Mike - I live on the north end so am away from this area but have been in the neighbourhood for 15 years so this sounds like a nice improvement, especially for young families. Lots of children are in the neighbourhood now. This neighbourhood appears to be emerging as a family neighbourhood. I support this project.

Response: Boma - I agree with Mike. I have lived here for 10 years, and I support it as well.

Response: Gillian - I just wanted to make sure there was a place for neighbours to go and relax and it sounds just perfect.

Response from NAC executive: Barb - Having more green space and parkland would seem like a good thing to support.

Response: Ryan (in chat) - I have not had a chance to review the detail but I love the concept.

Comment from QVCC staff: It seems clear now in terms of support and feedback. Folks were glad to see the revisions. I think what Leigh is proposing in terms of laying out the terms of the arrangement is good; then we could take that to the DBAC.

6 Quadra Village Day Report

We just ended the 9-day event to bring focus to the Quadra Village. There were 28 "make a scene" villages that were displayed in local business windows, "chalk your block" using chalk that had been distributed, there were also roving musicians, selfies, and more. It would be really useful if people have comments on how this worked for them, so the committee can hear back.

Response: Gillian - I really loved the displays. I especially liked the African Market display.

7 Comfort Inn Housing (Muncey Place) 3020 Blanshard Update from Meeting

Normally we would present a report from the Community Advisory Meeting, however it has been rescheduled. Last week local residents, a Burnside Gorge representative, and the Victoria Police met in Topaz Park. We discussed graffiti. Barbara indicated that block watch, ongoing cooperation with Vic PD and Bylaw is planned for the Advisory Committee.

8 VCAN - Neighbourhood Boundary changes

VCAN has formed a committee to look at the City proposal for boundary adjustments, that came directly from City Council, and give coordinated feedback. No changes were proposed for the Hillside Quadra neighbourhood boundaries. Neighbourhood Coordinator Gary Pemberton indicated there is a 'have your say' survey now available on the City website splash page. It ends June 7th and results will be reported to Council in September. The City will pass survey results to neighbourhood associations before that.

9 Updates from Council Liaison Ben Isitt/ Neighbourhood Coordinator Gary Pemberton

Gary let us know that Wednesday, May 18 is the next Community Virtual, this time on placemaking. The Planning Department is rolling out a placemaking tool kit, to help with

neighbourhood grants, seed and plant libraries, and a key speaker. “Get Growing!” seedlings are available, and the QVCC is a distribution hub.

<https://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/neighbourhoods/community-virtuals.html>

Ben has been working with Kelly at QVCC on a proposal for a housing outreach pilot project. The QVCC is hearing from a number of community members facing homelessness and housing insecurity. Ben will bring a proposal to allocate \$60,000 to QVCC to house this resource. Councillors Potts and Dubow are also sponsoring this proposal. There are various letters of support from other neighbourhoods. This should support a new hire and an additional practicum student to deliver this project. The budgeting process for 2022 is already starting, although it will not come to Council until October, with formal feedback in January, 2022. Early stage feedback is welcome.

Comment from NAC: There are a lot of people for whom the shelters will not work. They check in but need to stay elsewhere. Where is the community hub proposal at?

Response from Ben: It was a top priority of Council before COVID-19, which has stalled most facility work, and funding is tighter now and likely will be for the next 3-4 years. Even the Crystal Pool project is similarly stalled. Therefore enhanced facilities for the community centre are not really on the Council radar, so we would have to work to put it there. It would be good for the neighbourhood to make the case for expanded facilities and the need, and include equity data. This would take time and resources.

Comment from QVCC staff: We are really looking at this housing position to go beyond responding to crisis, to prevention and support and to advocate. It is tricky for people to compete and navigate the competitive housing market so support is needed for this.

Response from Ben: Regarding the QVCC there has been some staff-to-staff discussion with the City real estate people to find a place to house the expanded hub. This is an ongoing process, with checkins.

10 Summit Noise Attenuation kit to be installed by late May

There has been a lot of concern about the noise from the Summit facility. The installation has been delayed but should be installed soon. Neighbour Byron has launched a facebook group to rally community support around this issue. They are hoping for strength from numbers and will be posting content as well. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/5450748644998174>

Response from Ben: Let me know directly how this is going once the shield is installed.

Response from Byron: The CRHD motion included a report back with monitoring results.

Comment: It is really disappointing that the CRHD, in the planning phase in the gym, said that they had moved so far along in technology that noise would not be a problem. So how did this happen, given all the awareness and reassurance prior?

Comment: They are putting \$30,000 into the noise attenuation kit whereas it will cost one long-term neighbour \$60,000 to move away from this.

11 Community Updates: None

12 Upcoming CALUCs: None

Next meeting is on June 21st, the summer solstice. Let nag@quadravillagecc.com know of any issues.

Meeting adjourned 8:45 PM