

**DRA Board Meeting Minutes
October 16th 2018
Victoria City Hall
5.30 p.m.**

Board members present: Paul Gandall (chair), Wendy Bowkett, Doug Boyd, Robert Florida, Ruth Annis, Dianne Flood, Marv Gandall, Nick Harrington, Ian Sutherland

City Councillor Liaison: Charlayne Thornton-Joe

City Staff: Mike Hill

Approval of Agenda:

Wendy moved, Paul seconded, and carried that the agenda be approved.

Approval of July 17th, 2018 Board Minutes:

Wendy moved, Paul seconded, and carried that the the Board Minutes of July 17th, 2018 be approved.

Councillor's Report: Charlayne Thornton-Joe

Charlayne reported on several development applications brought to Council, including 1314 Wharf, withdrawn pending resubmission; 1400 Quadra, rezoning application declined, although DRA sees it as supportable; 515 Chatham, height variance approved, and Broad St. properties, referred back for amendment to setbacks.

Charlayne also arranged for the City to purchase a shipping container to provide secure storage for the belongings of homeless people at the Our Place shelter on Pandora St., relieving them of the stigma and need to store and transport their belongings in shopping carts and makeshift trailers.

She reported that the Johnson St. shelter is experiencing problems with use of opiates in front of the building, conflicting with the policies regarding consumption sites established by the BC Centre on Substance Abuse.

Board members thanked Charlayne for her support to downtown residents during her past term on Council and looked forward to her re-election and reappointment as Council liaison to the DRA.

City Liaison Report: Mike Hill

Mike reported on several downtown community events in September, including the public open house regarding the Centennial Square redesign, consultation with North Park neighbourhood residents concerning the proposed new Crystal Pool development, and the volunteer graffiti removal effort east of Blanchard St. organized by city staff in conjunction with the Our Place and Portland Hotel societies.

Board members expressed interest in participating in future graffiti removal events, and Mike said "graffiti removal boxes" were available from City Hall.

The Board agreed to consider sponsoring another paint-over event and promoting it to DRA members.

Standing Committee Reports

Land Use Committee

Ian reported.

a) The DRA has been invited to add its name to an open letter to Council from a local working group of prominent planners, academics, and heritage planners.

The signatories are concerned that "the heritage program in Old Town is slipping out of balance...in return for limited conservation of heritage fabric, new additions and structures threaten to overwhelm the character of Old Town." The letter calls on Council to support the 3-1 floor space ratio and 15-metre height limit in Old Town, as mandated by the Official Community Plan and Downtown Core Area Plan.

Ian is a participant in the working group and its concerns are shared by the DRA.

The Board agreed the DRA should sign the open letter to Council and that the signatories should be invited to comprise a DRA subcommittee advising the board on heritage and other applications.

b) Proposed Townline development (Seventh Day Adventist site) - No application yet. Similar to Hudson Walk II.

c) 1314 Wharf (Northern Junk) development - As noted above, the application was pulled by the developer, citing public criticism of the project by the DRA's LUC.

The Board agreed the DRA should resume its intervention when and if Reliance resubmits its application.

d) CALUC - Ian reported that he will again encourage CALUC at its next meeting to press for public notification of application permits as a check against the current arbitrary power of city staff to interpret and apply land use policies and bylaws.

e) New firehall - Ian noted that Jawl's application conflicts with density, height, and parking space requirements.

The Board agreed that the DRA should propose that Jawl apply for a rezoning variance rather than trying to "game the system" in its calculation of the development's Floor Space Ratio (FSR).

Community Development Committee

Wendy reported.

a) VicMatters election event - An estimated 220 people attended the debate between the leading mayoralty candidates at the Victoria Event Centre. Wendy complimented Matt for doing an outstanding organizing job on behalf of the committee.

b) Get Downtown event - Scheduled for 5.30 pm October 24th at The Flying Pig on Wharf St. 15 tickets have been sold so far.

c) Wicked Victoria event - The DRA will have a tent on Government St. for this annual children's event sponsored by the Greater Victoria Festival Society on the Sunday before Halloween.

d) Christmas Cocktails event - Scheduled for 6 pm December 18th at Zambri's. The committee has budgeted \$700 for the event. Meal tickets are \$43 for Board and \$10 for committee members.

Governance Committee

a) Policy book - Wendy reported that the committee will meet on November 13th to review the updated policies before submitting them to the Board for approval at its next meeting.

b) Community Gardens grant application - Nick reported that the group had submitted an application for another city grant to add new raised garden beds and a vertical trellis among other improvements.

Nick moved, Wendy seconded, and carried that the DRA approve the application.

Ad Hoc Committee Reports

Membership Committee

Dianne reported she is in the process of revising membership forms in consultation with Wendy and Nick.

Victoria Community Association Network

Paul reported that he was appointed to fill VCAN's vacant Vice Chair position, and was also one of four representatives named to a subcommittee charged with drafting new terms of reference for the group.

In the round table discussion, the DRA identified inappropriate downtown development resulting from the lack of consistent planning and enforcement of Heritage designation status as a major concern.

900 Block Pandora Good Neighbours Association

It was agreed to appoint Dianne as DRA representative to the Pandora GNA which provides for consultation between service providers and businesses and residents concerning the operations of Our Place and its effect on the surrounding community.

Late Night Action Committee

Paul reported that the committee is urging city and transit authorities to expand bus service to 3 am in order to reduce noise and other disruption following the closure of bars and restaurants in the downtown core.

It was agreed Paul would communicate to Council the DRA's support of the committee's position.

Downtown Service Providers

The DRA does not presently have a representative to this group. As it mainly comprises service agencies, it was agreed the DRA would concentrate its participation on the Pandora GNA.

Business Arising from Minutes

Internet Service Provider overcharge

Nick reported that the DRA's ISP had agreed to credit the Association for \$200 resulting from an overcharge. The Board agreed to forego a balance of \$14 owing, and thanked Nick for his effort in securing the recovery.

Truth and Reconciliation grant

Paul reported on the \$3000 Truth and Reconciliation grant from the city to the DRA. Discussion ensued on how to allocate it, and it was agreed Wendy would consult with Charlayne and local indigenous organizations and report back to the board with a recommendation.

Yates Street Community Garden branding

Paul noted that the YSCG was still identifying its policies as "bylaws". Nick agreed to follow up to correct the information on the website.

Excessive noise from vehicles

Charlayne reported that the Victoria PD referred to its limited authority to effectively address this issue under the Motor Vehicles Act. Paul said he would raise the issue at the next VCAN meeting to enlist other neighbourhood associations, possibly tying the issue to excessive noise resulting from the lack of late night bus service.

New Business

Centennial Square redesign presentation

Dianne reported that the city had offered to make a presentation to the DRA on the Centennial Square redesign.

The Board agreed both the Land Use Committee and the Community Development Committee should consider the offer and report back to the Board. One possibility suggested was to arrange for the presentation and membership discussion of the issue at the AGM.

Guidelines for Social Media Posts and External Communications

Doug said there was a need to ensure that all policy pronouncements on behalf of the Association on social and mainstream media had prior clearance from the Board.

It was agreed to table the issue to the next meeting where it could be addressed in the discussion of the Policy Binder.

Public relations and outreach

It was agreed Doug and Marv would consider a DRA newsletter and other forms of external communication and report back to the next Board meeting.

2019 DRA AGM

It was agreed to hold the AGM at the end of January, including approval of the DRA budget. In addition to the Centennial Square redesign, members could also be invited to discuss the proposed Ship Point Master Plan.

Adjournment: 7.45 pm.

Marv G.
Recording Secretary