

DRA Board Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2022

Location: ZOOM

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Present: Sandra Severs (President), Dianne Flood, Sherry Lee, Jeremy Zhao

Regrets: Doug Boyd, Michael Demakiling, Jordan Royer, Ian Sutherland, Colby Young

DRA Neighbourhood Engagement Co-ordinator: James Davis

DRA Land Use Planning Advisor: Daniel Lake

City Council Liaison: Councillor Geoff Young

City Staff: Mike Hill (sent regrets)

Guests: Kathleen Rawlinson

Call to Order/ Welcome of Guests/ Approval of Agenda

Sandra called the meeting to order and as there was not a quorum, the meeting proceeded on an informational basis only. Introductions were made, our guest was welcomed and the agenda was amended and approved to move discussion of the election events from the Executive Report to the beginning of the meeting.

Election events: James updated some of the information set out in the Executive Report:

- Mayoral debate: 101 tickets have been requested, a media release distributed, he and Sandra met with and briefed Shannon Waters as moderator. Jeremy offered to bring his laptop as a “countdown timer” that will be visible to candidates and the moderator.
- Candidates forum: 200 folks have viewed the blog post, with some Facebook interest expressed. Dianne will send out a short outline of table moderators’ roles and expectations.
- Candidates questionnaire: Three candidates have responded so far, with the deadline for submissions being September 23.

James left the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Councillor’s Report- Geoff Young: Councillor Young mentioned the DVBA’s Clean and Safe Committee draft report, which highlighted the problem of repeat offenders and the problems with graffiti.

Sandra acknowledged that this would be our last meeting with Councillor Young as our council liaison and expressed the Board’s gratitude to Councillor Young for his very forthright and helpful insights and comments about matters of interest to the DRA. Councillor Young’s many years of dedication to the City and its residents were much appreciated, not just by the DRA, but by all Victorians.

Downtown Update – Mike Hill: Report attached. Sandra noted that the intake for *My Great Neighbourhood* grant applications is now open.

Councillor Young left the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Follow-up from the July Minutes: None required

Executive Report - Sandra Severs: Report attached.

Standing Committee Reports

- **Urban Livability Committee:** Report Attached.
- **Land Use Committee:** No report attached.
- **Community Engagement Committee:** Report attached.
- **Communications and Membership Committee:** Report attached.
- **Governance Committee:** Report attached.
- **Urban Ecology and Agriculture Committee:** No report attached.

External Meeting Reports

- **Victoria Community Association Network (VCAN):** No report
- **Late Night Advisory Committee (LNAC):** No report.
- **Greater Victoria Harbour Authority Community Liaison Committee:** No report.
- **DVBA Clean and Safe Committee:** No report
- **900 Pandora Working Group:** Sandra reported this Group met and decided that advocacy efforts should continue, with the provision of washrooms as a possible focus of their efforts.

Board Discussion/New Business:

Proposed Developments at 900 Yates and 1045 Yates (Starlight Investments):

Council has proposed this go to public hearing in November. The difference in roles between the CALUC (“non-partisan”) and the Board’s (which may take an advocacy position) was re-iterated. Daniel will begin preparing a submission and some media materials from the Board. Some of the issues that need to be addressed were discussed. Interested Board members will form a working group to provide direction.

Survey results: These are still being compiled and will form the basis for a submission to the new council on the wants and needs for our Downtown neighbourhood.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, October 18, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. by ZOOM.



DOWNTOWN

Municipal Election

The local election is coming up on Saturday, October 15 from 8am to 8pm. Voters will be electing 1 Mayor, 8 Councillors, 9 School Trustees (School District 61) and 3 CRD Directors. Electors can vote anywhere on Election Day, though Downtown residents have several nearby voting places including Central Baptist Church - 833 Pandora Avenue and Central Middle School - 1280 Fort Street. Advance polling is available at City Hall on October 5 and 11 from 8am-8pm and on October 12 from 9am-6pm.

Voters must be 18 years old, Canadian citizens, BC residents for 6 months and current Victoria city residents. Nominations closed on Friday, September 9 and the full list of candidates as well as other information on the election can be found on the [City website](#).

You're invited to the

NeighbourHub Open House!

Thursday, September 15, 2-6 p.m.
Crystal Garden, 711 Douglas Street

Light refreshments available

Discover how this NeighbourHub creates community!

The City created the NeighbourHub as a gathering and meeting space to foster community involvement.

Organizations and non-profits that work with residents and their neighbourhoods can book the space for events and meetings. It's a welcoming place where residents can connect and learn from different neighbourhoods, or discover a program or initiative to support their community.

Amenities include a boardroom for meetings and a lounge area with casual seating for talks, workshops and small events. On the street-level patio, there's fun outside seating to gather with neighbours and a free lending library.

Discover the NeighbourHub and all its possibilities, meet the Neighbourhood Team and learn more about the City's My Great Neighbourhood Grant program and all the other programs that can support residents.

victoria.ca/neighbourhoods

Missing Middle Housing

After receiving public input on the Missing Middle Housing initiative, Council has decided to "...refer (the) matter to a Committee of the Whole meeting in the last quarter of 2022 to consider in the context of new provincial legislation with respect to increasing housing supply that has been signaled by the Province and other considerations of concern to the new Council." It was clear to Council that the initiative would be defeated and referral to a new Council was preferred to determine if there was a path forward without



Your Neighbourhood Liaison
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abandoning the work completed on the initiative to date. The initiative would have effectively rezoned properties zoned for single family residences to allow smaller multi-family dwellings without an individual rezoning requirement.

Reconciliation Dialogue - Going Forward Together

In this Dialogue, members of the City Family will present actions for the City and the community to carry on the work of reconciliation for decades to come. Participants will be asked to make a reconciliation commitment of their own. The session will be on Monday, September 12 from 6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. (Doors open at 5:30 p.m.) at the Victoria Conference Centre, Carson Hall.



From Around the City

Community Celebrations Season

Annual community festivals can be a signature event for neighbourhood associations. It's a great opportunity to show residents how creative you are when putting on a fun, engaging event.

And if you are going to go to all the effort and expense, make sure you are getting everything you can out of your event! What is your goal with the event? What assets does the neighbourhood have that can contribute to its interest and success? Are you getting your association's message out now that you have the community's attention? At the end of your event, you could conduct an evaluation to assess your success. Maybe a survey during the event would help inform any changes you want to make for next year!

Richmond Hill put together a [Community Festivals and Events Planning Guide](#) that includes the fundamental ingredients of successful event planning.



Speaking of community celebrations, **Fall Fairfield** is back on Sunday, September 25, from noon to 5pm and join at Porter Park! The event includes live performances, foods trucks, workshops, vendors, and a beer garden! More information can be found on the [Fairfield Gonzales Community Association](#) webpage.

As well, the **Gorge Waterway Cleanup** is taking place Saturday, September 24th, from 10am to 12 noon at Selkirk Green Park (350 Waterfront Crescent). Every year, volunteers pitch in to clean up the water and shoreline along the Gorge. This improves the habitat for local wildlife and the look of the area for residents and visitors. We invite everyone to participate and make a difference in our local environment! If you are interested in participating in this great event as a volunteer, a participating group, or a community sponsor, contact the Burnside Gorge Community Centre at 250-388-5251 or email vanessa@burnsidegorge.ca



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Humans of Your Neighborhood

What better way to capture the diversity in your neighbourhood than to go out and photograph it? North Park has recently completed the first stage of a [project](#) modelled after the Humans of New York. Professional photos were taken at their spring multicultural festival. The subjects received a digital copy of their photograph, and the community association is permitted to use the photos for promoting diversity and inclusion in the neighbourhood. Contact the [North Park Neighborhood Association](#) if you would like to know more (photos courtesy of NPNA).



Street Murals Make Great Community Art

A new street mural is complete in Vic West. The garden-themed mural was painted by community members during a paint-in guided by mural designer Kay Gallivan in collaboration with the [Greater Victoria Placemaking Network](#). The mural and crosswalk enhancements are part of the City's Greenway Enhancement Program. Check it out on the William Street Greenway at the Langford Street crosswalk, next to Vic West Elementary. Further down the greenway you can explore playground stencils installed by Vic West Elementary students.



Burnside Gorge Graffiti Fighters

Graffiti isn't just ugly. Left unaddressed, it invites more graffiti until eventually the neighbourhood looks uncared for and residents in the area can begin to have a negative impression of their block. The Burnside Gorge Graffiti Fighters are a small team of neighbours working to make the neighbourhood a better place by removing graffiti from the neighbourhood. In just a few weeks, a remarkable change on the streets has taken place. They are currently looking for new recruits!

Residents removing graffiti are enjoy making the streets look better! If you would like to join them, contact the group graffitifighters@burnsidegorge.ca and they will provide you with the kit, a partner and the information you need to get your block graffiti free. If you would like to start your own neighbourhood clean-up, reach out to the Neighbourhood Team at the City and we'll get you set up.



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Ideas from Further Abroad

Little Free Rock Library

Here's a fun take on the Little Free Library trend. To redress social bias and elite preference for books over rocks, Pierre Jardin has added the first Little Free Library to his neighborhood in Los Angeles dedicated to the sharing of pebbles. Every rock tells a story; it hides nothing of its history, leaving it traced on its surface. Library patrons have a rich array of rocks to choose from, and instructions for selection are provided. Click [here](#) for the full story and details.



Umbrella Alleys

What a way to make a statement out of a traditionally negative space in most cities. Umbrellas draw people into your placemaking space and offer shade as well. [Louisville OH](#) lays claim to the original umbrella alley and makes theirs a multi-purpose, multi-use space, all year long with different décor, music, murals, vendors, food, and festivals. They've even got a line of merchandise. Many umbrella alleys have been popping up around North America in the last few years. Take a trip out to Sidney (off Beacon Ave) to see one up close and personal!



And...



The My Great Neighbourhood Grant program is still accepting applications until October. If you have an idea, reach out and talk to us about how to proceed. We've got lots of helpful information on our [webpage](#). Your idea + City funding = great projects!

Looking for more ways to stay in touch? Sign up for our [City e-newsletter](#) for monthly updates on City programs and initiatives. Find the latest issue of [Connect](#) here or check out recent new items [here](#).

Looking to stay engaged? Register with our [Have Your Say Engagement Portal](#). You'll get a monthly update about current engagement opportunities to participate in surveys and other online engagement opportunities.



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EXECUTIVE REPORT SEPTEMBER 2022

2022 Civic Election Task Force

Update on the two events that are planned:

- The Mayoral Debate on Sunday September 25, 2-4 p.m. at the Vic Theatre
- The All Candidates Forum on Monday September 26, 7:09 p.m. at the Atrium

The Mayoral Debate:

The group short-listed candidates for the Mayoral Forum based on four criteria: work experience, platform development, on-line presence and evidence of public service or civic/community engagement. Four candidates were invited to participate in the Mayoral Debate with the remaining four invited to the All Candidates Forum.

- Invited candidates are: Marianne Alto, Stephen Andrew, Rafael Fuentes and Brendan Marshall
- The capacity of the theatre is 213, with 175 tickets are being made available so that there will be room for DRA volunteers, the candidates and their campaign workers.
- The event has been advertised on our web site, by emails and on our social media. A press release will be sent out one week in advance. Posters have been made available for posting in condos and other buildings and are also being posted by Metropol. Please spread the word.
- Attendees are being asked to pre-register on Event Brite. As of September 14, 78 people have registered to attend.
- Pre-registered folks will be asked to arrive by 2:00 or their seat may be given up to anyone waiting to get in without having pre-registered.
- People can also attend by Zoom or can watch a live stream on YouTube.
- Close captioning will be provided at the theatre (by projecting on screen behind the speakers) and also on Zoom and YouTube for the deaf, hard of hearing and those with other hearing issues.
- Childcare will not be provided as the logistics proved to be too difficult, given the constraints of the theater space and the provincial regulations.
- The moderator will be Shannon Waters, Capital Daily's municipal reporter. Sandra will do a brief introduction and a territorial acknowledgement.
- The committee will be pre-determining the questions to be asked, with limits on response time, and a limited opportunity to respond to other candidates. Questions from the floor will not be allowed and attendees will be advised of that, so that there will be no expectation of that being available.
- People have been offered the opportunity to submit questions they want to be asked in advance, for the committee's consideration, but there has been limited uptake so far.
- We will be posting signage that no discrimination or disrespectful conduct will be permitted. If by candidates, James will have control of the candidates'

microphones and the moderator should be able to manage any issues. If by an attendee, the moderator will take first steps, James and Sandra will take any second steps.

All Candidates Forum:

- After discussion about the adequacy of the space given the large number of candidates, it was decided to proceed at the Atrium as planned.
- All of the candidates will be invited, including those mayoral candidates who are not invited to the Debate.
- Sandra will do a brief introduction and overview of how the event is structured.
- Six discussion tables will be set up, each with an assigned topic as indicated by the table stand/placard. Candidates and attendees can circulate from table to table as they choose.
- A Board member will moderate each table, to try to ensure, as much as possible, all attendees and candidates have an opportunity to ask and answer questions about the table topics. The Board member may need to prompt some of the discussion about the topic, so should come prepared with a question or two about the topic. For example, a question might be to ask a candidate what they see as the most pressing issue about (the table topic) as it relates to our downtown neighbourhood, and as a follow up –what specific steps will they initiate or support to make that happen.
- The topics and Board members are:
 - Community Safety - Colby
 - Urban Liveability/Green Space and Parks - Michael and Sherry
 - Land Use: Jordan and/or Ian
 - Housing: Jeremy or Doug
 - Reconciliation: Sandra
 - Climate change: Jeremy or Doug
- A DRA volunteer will greet attendees at both the Blanshard and Yates entrances. Dianne will be responsible for arranging that.
- A table will be available for candidates' literature. James will be responsible for obtaining that and the other tables and table placards. And we will need a microphone for Sandra.

Meeting with Candidates

Sandra has been meeting with candidates individually to talk about issues of importance to the Downtown neighbourhood and working to establish relationships for the future.

Urban Livability Committee Report
Victoria Downtown Residents Association
September 20, 2022

Updates

900 Pandora Block Bench Project

Over the summer, both co-chairs Colby and Michael met with Heather from the Neighbourhood Solidarity with Unhoused Neighbours (NSUN). The purpose of the meeting was to generate ideas of how we can make the lives better for everyone on Pandora. From the meetings, we decided that we could begin by helping the various systems in place by working on small achievable community projects to provide support to our neighbours on Pandora. We hope it will inspire residents to consider taking on small roles to support the various systems in place to tackle the complex issues of our unhoused community and those struggling with toxic drug poisoning. As a result, the 900 Pandora Block Bench Project was born. The Urban Livability Committee hopes the project to be completed by the end of September. A report will be provided once the project has been completed.

Naloxone Training

Part of the mission of the Urban Livability Committee is to provide resources to residents of Downtown Victoria that will enhance their livability. An important resource is training. In early August, the DRA partnered with SOLID Outreach to provide Naloxone training at the Yates Street Community Garden. The success and positive feedback from the training have encouraged the Urban Livability Committee to continue with Naloxone training for the Downtown Victoria residents in the future. Colby, the co-chair and certified in Naloxone training, is working on a Victoria Downtown Residents Association Naloxone training program that will be available for the residents of Downtown Victoria in the future.

Promoting more Green Space

Green Space design in the city is an integral part of the well-being of the residents of Downtown Victoria. The Urban Livability Committee is working on a unique approach to enhancing green space by converting downtown spaces that are infrequently used to functional spaces. The proposal is to consider using the rooftop space on View Street Parkade for a possible multi-purpose second community garden. The community garden will function as an additional space for residents to grow their fruits and vegetables, provide vegetables and fruits for local businesses and food security systems, and provide a green space for residents and those working in the Downtown Victoria area. The Urban Livability Committee will update the board on the progress of the proposal.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2022

1. Recent activities:

Music by the Shore: The second concert in our summer series took place in Reeson Park on July 14th and featured performances by folk musician (and Downtown resident) Sara Rose and bilingual singer-songwriter Sophia Sol. Approximately 75 people attended the event. The park proved to be a good concert venue, with the grassy slope providing great views of the harbour in the background.



Bicycle Music Festival: The DRA partnered with the organizers of the Bicycle Music Festival to bring this event to the Downtown neighbourhood for the first time on August 14th, with the first portion of the mobile festival taking place in Harris Green Park. TEALIYE/Brianna Bear welcomed attendees to Lekwungen Territory and her husband, Gordy Bear, drummed and sang. Next came a poetry performance by Lee Ingram, followed by a stirring solo set by reggae musician Caleb Hart.



Music in the Park: The final concert of the summer took place in Cridge Park on August 24th and was attended by approximately 70 people. It featured a short opening set by Simon Russell and Alastair Pursch, a poetry reading by Erika Finestone, and a headlining set by folk singer Richard Garvey.



Pop-Up Smoothie Giveaway: James set up his bike-powered blender on the sidewalk on the south side of the 1000 block of Yates Street (opposite the YSCG) in the afternoon on September 8th and gave away free fruit smoothies. Many passers-by declined the offer, but good conversations were had with a number of Downtown residents and James also passed out handbills advertising the two upcoming election events.

2. Upcoming activities:

Reconciliation Books in Little Free Libraries: The committee intends to purchase books by Indigenous authors at a Downtown bookstore by the end of September to leave in the Little Free Libraries in the neighbourhood, in recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Election events: Planning is going well for the two election events that the DRA will be hosting later this month. The mayoral debate is scheduled for Sunday, September 25th from 2 to 4 pm at the Vic Theatre. The all-candidates forum is scheduled for Monday, September 26th from 7 to 9 pm at The Atrium (Yates and Blanshard).

3. Welcome Package For New Residents:

This project was discussed earlier this month and the decision was made to aim to have a brochure ready for distribution to incoming residents of Hudson House, along with a DRA postcard and possibly a fridge magnet. The brochure will serve as a guide to living Downtown, with key services and non-profit organizations highlighted.

Submitted by:
Dianne Flood
Committee Chair

Communications and Membership Committee Report – September 2022

Update on Committee activities:

- **Newsletter / Other Communications to Members:**
 - The July newsletter was issued on July 21 and the August newsletter was issued on August 18. Statistics from Mail Chimp indicate that it was opened by a 43.9% and 45.8%, respectively, of subscribers. these were both lower than our average of 47.3%. We intend to put together a newsletter by September 23 and welcome contributions from Board members.
 - An invitation to our Naloxone Training event at the Yates Street Community Garden was sent on July 29, and was opened by a 54.2% of subscribers.
 - A reminder for our the Music in the Park event was sent on August 23 and a reminder for the Bicycle Music Festival and our Residents Survey was sent on August 1. They were opened by 51.2% and 56.2% of subscribers, respectively.

- **Web site**
 - We continue to add posts to the News page and add events to the Events page of our new website.
 - 383 site sessions over the past month (up 20% from the previous month)

- **Social Media**
 - The number of posts over the past month, and the current number of followers are:
 - Facebook - 14 posts, 969 followers
 - Instagram - 4 posts, 492 followers
 - Twitter - 12 tweets, 1150 followers

- **Other**
 - **9** new members since the last report
 - **12** new newsletter subscribers since the last report

Submitted by
Doug Boyd
Chair, Communications and Membership Committee

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

September 2022

1. **Board orientation:** The first-ever formal Board orientation was held on July 26, at the Dock at 6:00 to 8:00. All Board members attended with presentations as set out in the attached Agenda, with additional valuable input from Ian. Doug and Dianne's power point presentations that have now been posted to the DRA DropBox, with the intent being that a similar orientation will be offered to any new Board members.
2. **Monthly Board Meeting Procedures — Land acknowledgement:** The Committee wants to add a land acknowledgement to the monthly meeting agenda, and want to make it meaningful and more than simply pro forma. If you have any suggestions or thoughts on this, please send them to the Committee chair. Still being worked on.
3. **Grant funding opportunities:** If Board members are aware of any grant possibilities, or have projects they want to pursue if grant funding is available, they are asked to let the Committee Chair know.

Submitted by
Dianne Flood
Governance Committee Chair

APPENDIX 3

DRA BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION AGENDA

1. **Introductions and welcome** – Board President
2. **Legal Framework** – Governance Committee Chair/Secretary
 - a. Constitution Act
 - b. Local Government Act
 - c. Societies Act
 - d. DRA Constitution and Bylaws
 - e. DRA Structure – Board and Committees
 - f. DRA formal policies
 - g. DRA informal policies
3. **Financial** – Treasurer
 - a. Fiscal year
 - b. Funding - sources and timing
 - i. per capita grant funding
 - ii. My Great Neighbourhood grants
 - iii. Other
 - c. Review of prior year financial statements
 - d. On-going financial commitments
 - e. Signing authority and safeguards
 - f. Insurance, including directors insurance
4. **Key relationships and Strategic plans** - President
 - a. Relationship with
 - i. the City
 - ii. DRA contractors
 - iii. Yates Street Garden
 - iv. VCAN
 - v. External Committees
 - vi. DVBA
 - vii. Others
 - b. Current year strategic plan – Content and status
5. **Other**