

**DISTRICT OF HIGHLANDS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting held June 9, 2005 at Caleb Pike House, 1589 Millstream Road at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Roessingh, Chair
Councillor K. Brotherston
Councillor M. Brotherston
Councillor Cardinal
Councillor Kadar
Councillor McPherson

ABSENT: Councillor Mendum

IN ATTENDANCE: Scott Coulson, Administrator
Terry Trace, Municipal Clerk
Laura Beckett, Municipal Planner

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

**MOVED BY: COUNCILLOR KADAR
SECONDED: COUNCILLOR MCPHERSON**

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

2. OTHER BUSINESS:

- a) **OCP Review
Seven Maps Prepared by: Connie Morgan, Halbert Morgan
Consulting**

The Mayor introduced Sonja Zupanec, summer student in the Planning Department.

Laura Beckett, Municipal Planner gave Council a brief outline of her report.

Council discussed several different scenarios of density and secondary housing.

Density:

The following points were made:

- density should be decided prior to deciding on secondary housing;
- it was suggested that if a ten acre minimum lot size was decided upon, then consideration should be given to bringing pipe water right up and through the Highlands to alleviate water issues;

- Changing minimum lot size from 30 to 20 is going against growth strategy and if the District changes its density – it would be an infraction of the CRD Bylaw; (Councillor Brotherston noted that this fall will provide an interim process – whereby the CRD is looking at the Regional Growth Strategy for inconsistency and looking at each municipality);
- Concern was raised with respect to providing affordable living in the Highlands
- Not in favor of taking away any R1 zoning (Planner advised that this would not be the case – minimum lot size would only apply to those already zoned as 30 acre minimum);
- More demand on water for small lots;
- Concern with price range of homes – Highlands is becoming an exclusive neighborhood and too expensive for young families;
- Consider minimum lot size to be 15 acres;
- Would like to see lot averaging system if the District drops the 30 acre minimum to 20 acres (averaging is a tool to minimize costs);
- Concern was expressed for those who have large lots and wish to stay in the community and the affordability of it;
- South of Stewart Mountain Road has potential for 10 acre minimum, except lands just subdivided to 30 acre minimum in that area and maybe some properties in the east and north areas – North has quick access to Willis Point Road;
- It was suggested not to look at density on crown land;
- It was suggested to that there be increased density from Fred York's boundary and south down on the left side of the Highlands;
- It was suggested that Council take into account the information from Sylvia Kenny and lineaments and ground water recharge to assist in making a decision with respect to minimum lot size;
- Need to consider impact on storm water and should consider storm water management;
- It was suggested that a map be provided with an overlay of water features with lineaments to assist Council in making a decision; and
- It was suggested that the public have choices on density.

Michael Bocking, 405 Hazlitt Creek Road, noted that he had reviewed the density analysis report by Halberd Morgan Consulting, as well as the groundwater studies by Franz Environmental and Sylvia Kenny. He noted that the density analysis states facts that are not facts with respect to potential lots for subdivision under 30 acres. He noted that one of the problems is that the consultant and the new Planner do not know the history of land use in the Highlands. He noted that the only way to accurately determine whether lots are subdividable is to do a title search and this can be accessed through B.C. Online.

Mr. Bocking further noted that the consultant recommended that “the District should limit zoning until the completion of hydrological studies to determine water quality and quantity”. He noted that this conclusion is not reasonable when the facts about water are considered. He noted that Sylvia Kenny's report indicates that there is sufficient water. He noted that the Franz Environmental baseline study indicates that the amount of water drawn out of the aquifer is balanced by the amount replenished annually by rainfall at lot densities of 50 to 10 acres.

Mr. Bocking noted that the central principle in relation to land use densities in the Highlands is what type of community do we want. He further noted that the District needs to provide a diversified tax base well into the future and do we want a rural community or a more rural residential development.

Karen Burns, 746 Caleb Pike Road, noted that the original OCP questionnaire indicated that not more than 50% of those who responded favored less than 30 acre minimum lots and indicated that the District should keep the 30 acre minimum lot density.

Scott Richardson, expressed concern with respect to Council making a decision for all time regarding density and how it will affect the prices of homes. He suggested that Council put a restriction on a subdivision once it is granted that it not be permitted to further subdivide (ie covenant).

Bob Flitton noted that covenants can be changed and that he is opposed to 3rd party covenants. He noted that the integrity of the community needs to be protected.

Mr. Fred York, 743 Finlayson Arm Road, indicated that Council was going against the 10 acre minimum recommended by the Planner and that they are now going in circles.

The Mayor noted that what the Planner had recommended isn't what the community wants, so Council is now deciding on options to let residents decide upon.

Evelyn Samuels, 405 Hazlitt Creek Road, expressed concern with Council cherry picking for density and noted that the meeting should consist of discussion and principles with respect to roads, etc. and not cherry picking what properties should be individually designated.

It was noted that the Regional Growth Strategy can also be considered another form of covenant.

Al Pellett, 3975 Munns Road, indicated that the public would favor large lots, rather than small lots.

Council consensus was to provide three options to the public at the Official Community Plan Open House for consideration:

- a) Existing density;
- b) 20 minimum acre blanket density;
- c) 20 minimum acre with some 10 acre parcels and the rationale for the 10 acre option.

Secondary Housing:

The following points were made:

- It was suggested not to use secondary suites as affordable housing;
- The District should think about areas with piped water for secondary housing;

- Heavy water draws are uncertain and people who have suites may use less water than someone who waters their lawn too much;
- Need to look at vision and what land is capable of holding in the way of secondary housing;
- Need to consider tax base;
- Need to address what suites are already in place and legalize them;
- Not in favor of allowing new suites until we know how many we already have;
- Not the time to look at affordable housing – no spot in the Highlands designated for it and it is not a priority at this time;
- Don't decommission existing suites – allow them time to conform;
- It was suggested that a bylaw be drafted to allow staff to enter onto property to ensure suites are up to code and to inspect for hazardous materials;
- It was noted that people need to be aware of the affects of suites and cottages;
- It was suggested that the public be asked if they prefer suites or cottages on 20 acres;
- It was suggested that accessory buildings and cottages and suites be permitted on 20 acre parcels;
- It was suggested the square footage for cottages be increased from 900 sq. ft.;
- Concerns were expressed with parking, roads and sewage;
- It was suggested that a moratorium be put in place disallowing further suites until the District gets control on the existing suites; and
- It was noted that we do not need a moratorium, as the District doesn't allow suites now.

Bob Flitton, 680 Stewart Mountain Road, indicated that secondary suites provide the capability for affordable housing. He noted that the District should be licensing secondary suites and the District needs to determine how many secondary suites are located in the District and use them as a tax base. Mr. Flitton noted that some people in the Highlands are not aware that they are not permitted to have suites.

Eleanor Rayner, 600 Stewart Mountain Road, suggested that the concept of secondary suites be supported monetarily by providing money to the Capital Regional District and let them provide the secondary housing.

Staff were requested to check with Langford how they legalize suites already in place.

Mr. Dave Mackas, 746 Caleb Pike Road, noted that it was important to catalogue all existing suites in the Highlands, as this will impact what we will allow in the future.

Eleanor Rayner noted that the District must consider health first with respect to water and sewage.

Council consensus was to provide two options for the public at the Official Community Plan Open House to consider:

- a) 10 acre lots permitted to have suites or cottages; or
- b) 20 acre lots permitted to have suites or cottages

With a statement for each option indicating what would happen if suites were permitted on that size parcel of land.

3. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY: COUNCILLOR M. BROTHERSTON
SECONDED: COUNCILLOR MCPHERSON

THAT the meeting adjourn at 9:55 p.m.

CARRIED.

MAYOR

MUNICIPAL CLERK