



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

Meeting #: PH2/2022
Date: June 20, 2022
Time: 4:00 pm
Location: CVRD Civic Room, 770 Harmston Ave, Courtenay

Council Present: B. Wells
W. Cole-Hamilton
D. Frisch
D. Hillian
M. McCollum
W. Morin
M. Theos

Staff Present: G. Garbutt, CAO
C. Marshall, Director of Development Services
K. O'Connell, Director of Corporate Support Services, via audio/video conference
N. Gothard, Manager of Community and Sustainability Planning
A. Proton, Manager of Legislative Services
T. Setta, Manager of Development Planning, via audio/video conference
C. Dallamore, Legislative Coordinator

The Mayor respectfully acknowledged the lands on which the meeting was conducted is the Unceded traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nation.

1. HOW TO PARTICIPATE

The public hearing meeting was conducted in a hybrid electronic/in-person format and live-streamed on the City of Courtenay YouTube channel.

2. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Wells called the public hearing meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

3. BYLAWS

3.1 Bylaw 3070

Mayor Wells called the public hearing for Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3070, 2022 to order at 4:00 pm. The Mayor and staff read a statement to inform the public of the public hearing process.

Bylaw No. 3070, 2022 proposes to repeal and replace Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2387 with Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3070. The purpose of the OCP is to set objectives and policies to guide decisions on community planning and land use management, within the City of Courtenay, respecting the purposes of local government. The OCP is to work towards the purpose and goals of the Comox Valley Regional Growth Strategy.

Roger Kishi, Wachiay Friendship Centre representative, 1625 McPhee Avenue, Courtenay, spoke in appreciation of the reconciliation section of the OCP and noted that the Wachiay Friendship Centre is seeking to increase the amount of affordable housing in the Comox Valley. New OCP provisions will help with affordable housing. However, there are gaps in the regulatory tools for the affordable housing policy, e.g. how to waive fees, allocate funding.

Teri McEachern, 399 Clubhouse Drive, Courtenay, voiced concerns about the future cost to taxpayers resulting from the OCP, and that the length of OCP is a barrier to engagement. The speaker objected to allowing non-residents to participate in the process and stated the OCP only affects taxpayers, and only taxpayers should have input. Farmers were not consulted. The speaker does not support the OCP as it lacks clarity.

George Aldcroft, 3225 Majestic Drive, Courtenay, questioned why a city of 28,000 people requires a 256- page OCP and questioned if anyone had read it. The speaker advised that the City does not have a greenhouse gas problem and that reducing greenhouse gases would be at significant cost with no returns. The resident voiced concerns about step code advances, solar panels, that green roofs will cause additional cost, delay, complexity and put a delay on construction trades which are already experiencing a delay. The speaker does not support the OCP because it will exacerbate housing issues and felt a future Council should consider the OCP after the election.

Pam Munroe, 202-2202 Lambert Drive, Courtenay, spoke in support of the OCP as it is required if we want to move forward on climate change response and

COVID recovery. The speaker voiced appreciation for the City's communication with citizens and acknowledged the work staff have put into the OCP.

Tom Grant, 3337 Crown Isle Drive, Courtenay, spoke about the STEP Code 5 being onerous. Builders, designers and industry must be ready when it is required and the development and construction industry in the Comox Valley does not have the capacity to meet this. The speaker is opposed to the OCP and further stated that Paris is going to a 15-minute city, and has spent hundreds of millions of dollars trying to achieve that, and was wondering how Courtenay could expect to be a 10-minute City.

Dick Clancy, 6344 Crown Isle Drive, Courtenay, spoke of inclusion and how dark streets and limiting parking causes danger to women who will be required to walk on darkened streets to get to their destination.

Fred Muzin, 1031 16th Street, Courtenay, questioned if the OCP was developed by a contractor and asked how much was paid for it. The speaker advised that 4:00 pm is not a convenient time for working people to attend a public hearing and agreed with George Aldcroft's comment that future Council should be the ones to approve this OCP.

Nancy Gothard, Manager of Community and Sustainability Planning, advised that the consultant was Dialogue Design Sustainable Solutions Group and other sub-consultants (Colliers International/Collier Development), and that they haven't had a role since fall 2021. Specific costs were not available and will be provided at a later time.

Fraser Graham, LUSH Valley and Comox Valley Food Council representative, 2342 Rosewall Crescent, Courtenay, supports the OCP and thanked the City for their work on this plan. The speaker noted that there is a mention of climate change on page 165 and, while negative sides are mentioned, it should also mention that climate change will be specifically challenging for farmers and food systems. There are no target numbers to mention the success of the plan for food systems because there was no baseline data.

Edgar Smith, 1817 Anderton Road, Courtenay, representative of Natural Pastures Cheese Co (635 McPhee Avenue, Courtenay), Natural Farms Ltd, Natural Pastures Beef and Island Seaweed, asked that Council read his written presentation. The speaker noted that despite past cooperation and assistance with Mission Road sewer capacity, he feels that staff and Council are unaware of the risk the OCP places their farm in. City staff appear to have limited or

nonexistent knowledge of agriculture. Environmentally sensitive areas, steep slopes, buffer zone requirements limit their ability to continue. The speaker asked why they would pay \$40K in taxes for 600 acres if they are going to be put out of business, and invited Council to visit the farm and learn about agriculture.

Dave Kozakowski and George Quocksister, 798 Stewart Avenue, Courtenay.

George Quocksister spoke further to Edgar Smith's point and advised of the importance of ensuring a good understanding of the process for salmon, and understanding what happens to waterways and ecosystems when a new development is added. There is already too much damage to salmon habitat and we all depend on the salmon. The speaker advised not to do work if it is going to interrupt the salmon. **Dave Kozakowski** spoke about how the Little River Watershed is the most productive per square metre for salmon, and that they are still only a third of the way back to restoring the river.

Murray Presley, 4344 Dove Creek Road, Courtenay, is a long time resident and voiced some major concerns including property tax increases and the need to reduce the City's operating costs to make things more affordable to residents. What is the good of the items in the OCP if it is unaffordable to residents? Wide roads are being narrowed for bicycle lane. The population is getting older and narrow streets are more difficult for older people. The City should approve some boundary extensions to allow more affordable housing and the approval process from concept to building should be reduced to weeks. Local governments should back off on services that should be provided by the Province or federal government. The speaker is concerned that this draft OCP includes staff wants rather than industry or resident needs.

Dianne MacLean, 1765 McPhee Avenue, Courtenay, spoke about the importance of green spaces with increased density, outside covered areas in our community, and different perspectives. The City doesn't necessarily have the same perspective as other people and it would be difficult to write one bylaw that covers all the perspectives and meet the needs of Courtenay. The OCP includes too many details that may change. The speaker advised that community spaces don't necessarily have to cost the taxpayers and would love to have a dog park at Harmston and a covered firepit circle as well as more liaison, consultation between non-profit community groups and other groups in the city.

Helen Boyd, 1659 Beaufort Avenue, Comox, has worked solely on the issue of climate change and its health impacts since 2016 including the heat dome and Fraser Valley flood. The speaker strongly supports the OCP, particularly the

section on page 110, and appreciates the provision that allows developers to go to a lower step code. It's important to prioritize greenspaces that help people be healthy. The speaker appreciated the summary video on YouTube.

Harold Stevens, 3399 Crown Isle Drive, Courtenay, moved here in 1974 and started building homes including the Puntledge Park subdivision with 21 duplexes on 50-foot lots. The speaker noted that the minimum lot size requirement was changed to 70-foot lots afterwards. Affordable housing is important and 70-foot lots are counterproductive to providing more housing. The speaker supports the OCP.

Gerald McClintock, 3419 Dove Creek Road, Courtenay, is a farmer and a previous member of the Agricultural advisory group. There are a lot of things in the plan that affect farming and will make farming more expensive. The speaker stressed the need for a more site-specific policy including how to deal with sensitive areas. The OCP will take a lot of land out of production that is already developed and the plan needs to be vetted with people who farm.

Andrew Howe, 1088 17th Street, Courtenay, via Zoom, spoke about how people think “active transportation hurts those with cars” or that it’s too dangerous. The speaker stated that people walking and cycling makes the city safer because there are more eyes on the street. Cycling and active transportation reduces cost because it reduces wear on the roads. Cars and subdivisions on the edge of town have a huge cost on infrastructure. More car dependency is not sustainable. Houses built now at the lower step code will forever be producing the extra CO2.

Etienne Cote, Comox Valley Farmers Institute representative, 3525 Piercy Road, Courtenay, feels that the community hasn’t been consulted sufficiently and recently heard about how the OCP may affect Edgar Smith's farm. Need to consult the agriculture industry earlier in the process.

Jennifer Halderson, 203-463 5th Street, Courtenay, appreciates all the work that went into the plan although it took a long time to read. The speaker supports bike lanes and added that places that use bikes find there is less noise and more community connection. It is currently scary to ride a bike in some places including the 5th Street bridge when it’s dark, and raised bike lanes like the new section on 5th Street would be good because cars often drive in the bike lanes.

Bella Mackenzie, 2537 Dunsmuir Road, Cumberland, participated in the Youth Media Project and advised that youth involvement is positive and helps get

youth positively involved in the community. The speaker would like to see trash being removed and supports the program at the Travelodge.

Erik Eriksson, 667 12th Street, Courtenay, stated that there is nothing in the plan about playgrounds, sports fields, economic development, or mitigating the effects of climate change. Who is going to be doing the work of organizing committees, consultation work?

Nancy Gothard, Manager of Community and Sustainability Planning, advised that playgrounds and sports fields are included in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the OCP did not intend to duplicate that work. More of that information on climate change adaptation is in the background document that is on the OCP project website. There is a concurrent floodplain management study. More work is need on food security. Nothing has changed since January regarding economic development. One of the implementation priorities is related to understanding the role of economic development.

Mayor Bob Wells, advised that depending on what the item is, often the City would organize the committee, consultation work.

Edgar Smith, Beaver Meadow Farms, 1817 Anderton Road, Courtenay, (second time) has farmed in Comox Valley for the last 70 years. Regarding the future expansion of 1200 acres, approximately 800 acres in the ALR, called Raven Forest Lands, believes the City did not follow the proper application procedure to exempt land in the ALR, and they should reconsider that part of the OCP and give equal opportunity to anyone in the ALR. The City needs to consult with the agricultural community before taking out 160 acres of the ALR for future expansion. The Province has removed the rights of private citizens to remove land from the ALR. The speaker asked the City to forward an application to the ALR on behalf of Beaver Meadow Farms.

Murray Presley, 4344 Dove Creek Road, Courtenay, (second time) suggested that Council hasn't done adequate consultation with the farming community and have consulted with construction and development, but have done nothing to make the changes requested. Council should go back to the drawing board.

Andrew Howe, 1088 17th Street, Courtenay, via Zoom, (second time) advised that there are ways for parents with children to travel by bicycle and the City should build infrastructure for active modes of transportation.

Megan Ardyche, 727 9th Street, Courtenay, appreciates the City for being proactive and recognizing the need to act in the present to create a liveable

future. The changes that are coming are going to cost a lot more down the road for young people so it's important to act accordingly now even though it is difficult and expensive. The agricultural community is an essential partner in creating a liveable future– if we don't have clean air, clean water and healthy food we die. The land that is agricultural land needs to stay agricultural land. It's important to work with farmers to ensure they are getting off of fossil fuels and have genuinely sustainable food production. We can't offload dealing with climate change to future generations and we need to have sustainable food production.

Bella Mackenzie, 2537 Dunsmuir Road, Cumberland, (second time) advised that we still depend on fossil fuels and people are always going to want to have luxury cars. Bus fare feels like a poverty tax and the bus does not come often enough. We need a low barrier option for public transportation.

Helen Boyd, 1659 Beaufort Avenue, Comox (second time) expressed approval that the City is moving away from liquid natural gas in OCP. Liquid natural gas is 90% methane and methane is a fossil fuel that is 86 times more potent than CO₂ and lasts for 20 years in the atmosphere. The speaker advised that renewable natural gas is not actually renewable – it has a very small component of biomethane.

Dianne MacLean, 1765 McPhee Avenue, Courtenay, via Zoom, (second time) advised that the OCP summary includes an implementation section that mentions Harmston Park Civic area but doesn't say how to get involved.

Mayor Bob Wells and staff, advised ways to become involved.

Edgar Smith, Beaver Meadow Farms, 1817 Anderton Road, Courtenay, (third time) submitted an amended written report and advised that the BC Cattlemen's Association would also like to submit a written report after the Public Hearing. The speaker requested the City follow up with the BC Cattlemen's Association before implementing this bylaw.

Mayor Bob Wells and staff, advised any written submissions have to be submitted prior to the end of the public hearing or Council is unable to consider them.

Bella Mackenzie, 2537 Dunsmuir Road, Cumberland, (third time) requested the City look into ocean energies and carbon capture, and look into internationally-minded foundations for renewable energy.

Theresa Restemeyer, 3011 Glacier Road, Courtenay, noted that there have been many comments submitted during the OCP consultation process and feels that there were ample opportunities to submit comments.

The City also received a total of 30 written submissions (see agenda) and 764 survey responses since January 2022 regarding Bylaw No. 3070.

Mayor Wells called three times for speakers and waited one minute for additional submissions. There being no further speakers, Mayor Wells closed the public hearing for Bylaw No. 3070 at 6:02 pm and called a recess in the meeting.

3.2 Bylaw 3071

Mayor Wells called the public hearing for Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 3071, 2022 to order at 6:15 pm. The Mayor and staff read a statement to inform the public of the public hearing process.

Bylaw No. 3071 is to allow secondary suites as a permitted use within the following zones: Residential One (R-1); Residential One A (R-1A); Residential One B (R-1B); Residential One C (R-1C); Residential Two A Zone (R-2A); Rural Residential One (RR-1); Rural Residential Two (RR-2); Rural Residential Three (RR-3); Rural Residential Four (RR-4); Rural Residential Five (RR-5); Agricultural One (A-1); Comprehensive Development One (CD-1A, CD-1B, CD-1G, CD-1H, CD-1I); Comprehensive Development Six (CD-6); Comprehensive Development Fifteen (CD-15); Comprehensive Development Twenty-Three A (CD-23A).

The bylaw also amends the definition of a secondary suite to remove the maximum size limit of 90m², to remove the limitation on number of rooms, and to only require one vehicular off-street parking space be provided for the secondary suite for properties fronting a cul-de-sac.

Dianne MacLean, 1765 McPhee Avenue, Courtenay, is concerned for areas that don't have off-street parking already and doesn't understand how the parking requirements will apply to their lot downtown.

Councillor Hillian noted that Bylaw 3071 is on the topic of secondary suites, and requested to postpone discussions relating to the off-street parking issue until the public hearing for Bylaw 3074.

Tom Revie, 2991 Chapman Road, Courtenay, asked for a definition of a secondary suite and requested an amendment to the bylaw to allow two separate residences.

Nancy Gothard, Manager of Community and Sustainability Planning, provided the definition of a secondary suite which has to be attached and form part of the building. A second detached building such as a carriage suite is not a secondary suite and this bylaw does not apply.

Andrew Howe, 1088 17th Street, Courtenay, is in favour of this bylaw but stated that it doesn't go far enough. We are in a housing crisis and should be pushing toward more housing instead of less. Instead of secondary suites, duplexes should be allowed and if it's on a lane, secondary residences should be allowed as well.

Fred Muzin, 1031 16th Street, Courtenay, appreciates the intent of this bylaw, but is opposed to it due to enforceability including rent and length of tenancy. Enforcement is difficult and the Bylaw will result in more short term vacation rentals (AirBnB). Secondary suites alleviate a problem now but they cause neighbourhoods to deteriorate. Long-term this is short-sighted. Without some restrictions or caveats, this will create huge problems in the future. Basement suites are not a place to raise a family.

Jason Thompson, Glen Urquhart Drive, Courtenay, is in favour of the new Bylaw and would like to extend it further to allow detached dwellings.

Andrew Howe, 1088 17th Street, Courtenay, (second time) stated that blocking additional construction is not going to help with a short term vacation rental (AirBnB) problem.

Dianne MacLean, 1765 McPhee Avenue, Courtenay, (second time) voiced concern over off-street parking requirements.

Bella Mackenzie, 2537 Dunsmuir Avenue, Cumberland, stated that in more rural areas, it is difficult to accommodate family members if you can't build a second home on farms.

The City also received a total of 5 written submissions (see agenda) regarding Bylaw No. 3071.

Mayor Wells called three times for speakers and waited one minute for additional submissions. There being no further speakers, Mayor Wells closed the public hearing for Bylaw No. 3071 at 6:42 pm.

3.3 Bylaw 3074

Mayor Wells called the public hearing for Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 3074, 2022 to order at 6:15 pm. The Mayor and staff read a statement to inform the public of the public hearing process.

Bylaw No. 3074 is to set bike parking standards for multi-residential dwellings including number of spaces and specifications of spaces. The bylaw also reduces the number of vehicular parking spaces from 1.5 per dwelling unit to 1.2 per dwelling unit for multi-residential dwellings.

Fred Muzin, 1031 6th Street, Courtenay, is opposed to this bylaw as the bylaw does not actually set out the number of spaces required (not opposed to the general idea, but opposed to the bylaw in the absence of specific details). Families have two cars, and many have campers as well. Not everybody can use bicycles. There should be enforcement and proper infrastructure for bikes. The speaker is not opposed to mandating bicycle parking and suggested installing secure bike lockers.

The City also received a total of 2 written submissions (see agenda) regarding Bylaw No. 3074.

Mayor Wells called three times for speakers and waited one minute for additional submissions. There being no further speakers, Mayor Wells closed the public hearing for Bylaw No. 3074 at 6:52 pm.

3.4 Bylaw 3075

Mayor Wells called the public hearing for Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 3075, 2022 to order at 6:15 pm. The Mayor and staff read a statement to inform the public of the public hearing process.

Bylaw No. 3075 is to include Temporary Use Permit designations, conditions and Development Permit Area Guidelines in the Zoning Bylaw, whereas previously they have been located within the Official Community Plan.

Dianne MacLean, 1765 McPhee Avenue, Courtenay, requested clarification on the Bylaw.

There were no written submissions submitted regarding Bylaw No. 3075.

Mayor Wells called three times for speakers and waited one minute for additional submissions. There being no further speakers, Mayor Wells closed the

public hearing for Bylaw No. 3075 at 7:00 pm.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Wells terminated the public hearing meeting at 7:00 pm.

CERTIFIED FAIR AND ACCURATE:

Mayor Bob Wells

Adriana Proton, Deputy Corporate
Officer