

North Quadra News

North Quadra Residents Association - Fall 2006



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NQ. Centennial Gift Dedication

*Friday, Dec. 8th 6:00 - 8:00 pm in the 2nd floor
foyer at Saanich Hall*

*Come and meet artist Barbara Weaver-Bosson. See her
superb painting of the late Bruce Hutchison's house
unveiled and dedicated*

Please join us for the dedication and Christmas Cheer

Light Refreshments Served

SEWAGE CHARGES MOVE TO "USER PAY"

Recently, Saanich Council approved changes to the sewer billing to better reflect the amount each user pumps into the system.

Until now, sewer charges have been based on a combination of a parcel tax, assessments and the number of fixtures in a property. This system bore little relationship to the amount of sewage users actually produced and resulted in considerable inequities.

A single person or a couple in a large, family home would, for example, pay far more, proportionately, than a business such as a restaurant or an institution such as the University of Victoria.

Under the new system, which will be phased in over 3 years, each user will pay a small fixed charge of \$31 per year. The rest of their payment will be based on actual use (amount of sewage produced).

Amount produced will be based on the lowest of rainy season bills, so the effect of summer watering will be eliminated and you won't be penalized if you have a large garden.

The new system will be fairer and will bring Saanich billing into line with the rest of the region. As an added bonus, the new system will promote conservation.

*Help Keep North Quadra Vibrant
Become a director or active supporter of your association*

THE SEED FARM COMES TO THE FORE AGAIN

You may recall about five years ago, Western Forest Products sold its seed farm at the end of Beckwith in the Blenkinsop Valley. Since then several owners have floated a number of proposals past our association.

However, with Council making it evident that they were loathe to approve any development in the valley, no development proposal has yet gone forwarded for consideration by Saanich.

Now, a new owner, the Merdyn Group, is attempting to develop the site. In October of this year, they held a meeting for the immediate neighbourhood which a few members of our executive attended.

At that meeting, some community members were concerned that the association had not informed them of what was happening. That's because the association itself did not find out about the meeting until the last minute.

The developer involved has experience in Saanich and it is in our mutual interest that he works with the community and gets them involved as soon as possible.

We hope that in the future, the developer will make every attempt to keep the association involved. In turn, as the developer works with us, the association will do its best to insure that the community is informed. We have already informed the developer of traffic and land use concerns.

This proposal will likely face the same obstacles as earlier proposals that did not proceed. Most of the property is outside the urban containment and the sewer containment boundary. In addition, some of the land is ALR and the Blenkinsop Valley is regarded as very special in our municipality. Change to the valley, if there's to be any at all, must be carefully considered.



Barbara Weaver- Bosson's painting of Mr. Bruce Hutchison's heritage designated home will be unveiled and presented to Saanich on December 8th at the Municipal Hall

A CENTENNIAL HERITAGE LEGACY FOR SAANICH

North Quadra Presents a Centennial Gift to Saanich

As Saanich's Centennial year quickly draws to a close your association joins many other community groups in celebrating and paying tribute to Saanich's 100 years of rich history, community spirit and pioneer accomplishments!

In our last newsletter we reported seeking sponsorship funds to match a \$2000.00 municipal grant for a commissioned Barbara Weaver-Bosson watercolour of the Hutchison home on Rogers Avenue. Mr. Bruce Hutchison was recognized as a noted Saanich forefather and pioneer who left a substantial legacy to Saanich and his country.

Since the heritage designed Hutchison home graces our landscape as a valued historical North Quadra landmark, we felt a legacy painting, to be permanently showcased in the Bruce Hutchison library at Saanich commonwealth place, would be a fitting gift for Saanich's centennial.

We appreciate the gracious hospitality provided by the Hutchison family to facilitate this artistic venture. In appreciation, the Hutchison family will be presented with a full sized giclee copy of The Hutchison Home painting.

We are pleased to announce the painting is ready for its official unveiling and dedication! The general public is invited to attend one of Saanich's last centennial celebration events on Friday, Dec. 8th. See invitation on the front page

This project would not be possible without the generous financial contributions of the following sponsors:

Haji Charania and Family, Don Mann Excavating, Geric Construction, Megson Fitzpatrick Insurance, Monkey Tree Pub, North Quadra Residents Association and Thrifty Foods

A REMINDER

Do you have old,dated medicines and other pharmaceuticals in your medicine cabinet. Stale dated medicines can be dangerous and should not be used. You may also have around old paint, pesticides or other hazardous material.

Remember! Such things should never be put in the garbage or poured down the drain. They can be properly disposed of at the Saanich Yard on Borden Street.. For more information phone CRD Recycling at 360 3030

MAYOR LEONARD'S STREETSCAPE SAFETY INITIATIVE

On Monday, November 20th, Mayor Leonard brought a report to Council dealing with streetscapes. This report may have stemmed from a backlog in projects that has developed in Saanich over the years.

For some time, Council followed a process of approving streetscape designs without ever providing capital in the budget to carry them out. Eventually, a backlog of about 15 projects built up. In Council's last term, agreement was reached to do at least 3 streetscape projects in 10 years. However, a quick calculation shows that, at that rate, a half century would be needed to catch up to already accepted designs. Faced with all of this, the mayor has suggested that streetscapes should be limited to safety and "operational" concerns.

According to staff, operational concerns covers problems such as whether left turn lanes are of sufficient length and have been primarily directed at the flow of traffic. Safety, on the other hand, is automatically a part of everything that Saanich does to streets but things can be safe without being attractive or very functional.

Limiting streetscapes to safety and operational concerns would seem to

suggest future projects leading to the same "hard edged" unattractive, automobile oriented solutions that we have had too often in the past.

Good streetscapes can provide much more. Well designed, integrated streetscapes can provide desirable pedestrian environments that encourage residents to get out of cars and walk. Furthermore, they can help with traffic calming and can offer environmental benefits including better treatment of stormwater. On the economic side, attractive, modern, vital streets will encourage investment in the municipality. Ugly, "hard edged" streets will do just the opposite.

It would seem that many others agreed with this point of view. When the item came before Council on Monday, November 20th, over 30 people, including most community associations, attended and spoke to Council. All but one opposed the mayor's initiative. Also, opposed were several letters including one from a prominent architect with recognized expertise in smart growth.

Surprisingly, Council voted to approve the narrow definition of streetscapes with Councillors, Brownoff, Derman and Sanders voting in opposition. Our association sees this as a backward step for Saanich. We hope that you will urge the mayor, and Councillors who voted with him, to reconsider.



Well designed integrated streetscapes can encourage pedestrian activity, provide traffic calming, produce many environmental benefits and stimulate investment.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL FOR 4045 RAINBOW

Recently, the association met with a developer who has big plans for the southern slopes of Christmas Hill on the east side of Rainbow.

The developer involved had originally purchased the old Penn property at 4045 Rainbow. Recently, he added 4021 Rainbow and 820 & 850 McKenzie to his holdings. This gives him ownership of most of the land east of Rainbow from the edge of the nature sanctuary to McKenzie.

In addition, to being next to the sanctuary, the properties in question currently contain considerable green space as well as a large number of Garry Oaks. The land must be developed very sensitively, if natural values are to be retained.

Our first look at the developer's concept for the area suggests that he and his architect have paid some attention to the area's unique nature.

Nevertheless, more work needs to be done and the issue of public amenity requires clarification.

The association will continue to work with the developer and his architect to insure the best possible outcome for our community. Please feel free to contact us if you have any concerns. Contact information is available on the back page of this newsletter.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL FOR 4030 BORDEN

For some time, we have been working with a developer on a proposal for properties at 4030 Borden near the Monkey Tree Pub. We have passed the following concerns on to the applicant:

- We would like assurance that parking numbers will work.
- While the target audience is young people including university students, we are not sure they will not own cars.
- We have concerns about locating large numbers of students next to a pub.
- Presently staff at the Monkey Tree park on this property. How will their parking be addressed?
- Streets in the area cannot handle more on street parking
- We would like more information on how this development would meet "green" development initiatives in Saanich.
- How does this development provide for bike storage needs.
- How will access to the Lochside Trail be improved and integrated into project plans?
- The proposed traffic circle should be the minimum amenity provided. More detail is needed on how it will work for emergency vehicles etc.
- We would like more details on stormwater management.
- We have concerns that the density is too high for this location.
- We would like to see the development to become part of an overall concept plan for the area including the Saanich yard.

We will continue to press for answers to these questions.

SIDEWALK FRUSTRATIONS

While we thank Council for the North Quadra Traffic Management Study currently being implemented, we remain concerned about the poor quality of sidewalks in our area. Specific concerns include:

- Still more improvements are needed near Lakehill and Rogers schools.
- A lack of separation from the road through curb or boulevard barriers for the new sidewalk on Douglas between Cameo and Lily.
- The continued existence of the very poor quality sidewalk on Morris/Cedar Hill/Borden that do not accommodate those with mobility challenges.
- The very poor quality of the pedestrian environment along much of Quadra which will be addressed in the next newsletter.

As a municipality, we must do better!



We Need Better Sidewalks and Pedestrian Environments in Saanich

All 2200 copies of our newsletter are delivered by volunteers. If you would be willing to help, please contact Lauraine Derman at 479 0302

CONTACT INFORMATION

All legally established North Quadra residents are association members. To operate, however, the association depends on the generosity of residents. Become a "supporting member" for an annual fee of five dollars. Other donations of any size are welcome. We also continue to accept donations to support acquisitions around Christmas Hill.

PLEASE DIRECT QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND CHEQUES TO:
Ron Warden - Pres. 727-6106 - 936 Lucas Ave., Victoria, B.C. V8X 4L2
Haji Charania - Past President - 757 Genevieve, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3R4
Stan Brygadyr - Secretary - 847 Cameo, Victoria, B.C. V8X WM3

**For Saanich South MLA David Cubberley - Please Contact His
Constituency Office at Suite 200 3939 Quadra - ph. (250) 952 4418**