

ROCKLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
held March 29, 2017
at the Grace Lutheran Church

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. There were 88 people in attendance.

2. President's Remarks

Janet Simpson summarized the past year. Of the disappointing events the neighbourhood experienced were the continued loss of significant trees that are one of the hallmarks of the neighbourhood; the demolition of one of the oldest houses in the neighbourhood, the 126 year old carriage house of the Robleda mansion; and the continued loss of rocky outcropping, for which the neighbourhood was named. However, there were successes-

- The development of 1745 Rockland now reflects development in keeping with the neighbourhood and the neighbours wishes;
- The plans for Pemberton Meadows have been scaled back;
- The Board of Variance has delayed the approval of a height variance at 1540 Montgomery;
- The proposed subdivision of 1322 Rockland is has been sent back to the proposers; and
- The unprecedented neighbourhood backlash over the proposed development of the Truth Center property.

Janet said this next year is very important as the work on the revised neighbourhood plan will begin. To help the residents start thinking about their neighbourhood, Janet introduced the featured speakers of the evening.

3. Guest Speakers

Janet Simpson introduced the panelists speaking on the topic The Value of Historic Neighbourhoods, Mr. Steve Barber, Dr. Michael Prince and City of Victoria Councillor Pamela Madoff.

Mr. Barber presented information on Heritage Conservation Areas (HCA). These are identified in the Official Community Plan (OCP). These areas define the heritage value of a neighbourhood. Renovations and development should respect the context of the area. The city needs appropriate resources to implement and administer HCAs. These resources do not exist currently within the City of Victoria.

Dr. Prince discussed the work he and his neighbours have done to develop a HCA in his neighbourhood. They realized that the character of their neighbourhood, which has 11 of the 28 heritage designated houses in Oak Bay, was at risk. Very quickly, they worked with the city to request a heritage planning consultant to work on their HCA by using their connections strategically and becoming a positive grassroots movement. He closed by saying that HCAs are about context and are much more than buildings but also include walls rock outcroppings, trees, streetscapes, etc.

Councillor Madoff moderated the session and added her experience as a heritage building owner living in a heritage area of Victoria. She would like to see communities working with developers to educate them as to the value of neighbourhoods to encourage appropriate development. She said that the process of conservation is about community building.

Questions from the audience were taken.

Are any of the big buildings going up in the city now designed to be the next heritage quality buildings?

Of new builders, Mr. Barber pointed to the Victoria Conference Center as having a complementary design.

Councillor Madoff said that some of the new builds are not as good as they should be.

Is the proposed development at 1201 Fort Street respectful of the Fort Street corridor HCA?

Mr. Barber said he couldn't comment as he did not have enough information about the proposal.

Can city council take into account trees on property (there is little respect for trees)?

Councillor Madoff confirmed that trees are not protected if they are within the building envelope or driveways. She thinks a stronger by-law is needed. She is hearing from the broader community that this is important and there is nothing to preclude such a by-law from being instituted if there is community will.

Comment that, at public hearings, the proponents are bring friends, family and associates to speak and are swaying Council by their numbers.

Councillor Madoff asks for the addresses of speakers to have a clearer view of actual neighbourhood sentiment.

Are the two sequoias on the Truth Center property considered "significant" and thereby protected?

Councillor Madoff will contact the Parks Department for an answer.

Comment was made that developers promise trees as part of their development but often don't deliver or plant trees of much smaller scale than what had been on the property.

Councillor Madoff indicated that individuals must be careful to ask for details on proposals and ensure that what must be done is done (eg. permit and covenant requirements) vs. what is nice to do.

4. Local Area Planning

Andrea Hudson, Assistant Director Community Planning, gave an overview of the process for revising the Local Area Plan (LAP). The LAP will identify broad goals spanning the

next 25 years. It is a seven part process which, for Rockland, will begin in 2017/18. It will address land use, urban form, transportation culture, public places and some projects tailored for the Rockland area and will be integrated into the OCP. The process will take a year and will involve significant input opportunities for the residents.

Comments/Questions:

A caution from an audience member based on her experience-sounding boards (boards on which post-its with comments are placed) that these boards can be over-run by comments from non-residents.

What is the use of a neighbourhood plan or the OCP if they are not adopted as by-laws and enforced?

The neighbourhood plan is intended to be integrated into the OCP. The OCP will be adopted as a by-law. Decisions by Council should be consistent with the OCP. However, Council does have the authority to amend the by-law (by an established process) if they deem a deviation is warranted.

How many site-specific zones are there? (800). Since there are so many, the OCP starts to look unreliable.

The city is trying to get away from so many site specific zones. The zones will be refreshed after the OCP process.

There is concern that Council is pushing ahead development plans currently being reviewed because the new OCP may not allow them.

The guidelines currently in place are being used to evaluate current proposals.

5. Police Report

Cst. Sean Hand, the Rockland Community Police Liaison, was introduced. He stressed the importance of keeping VicPD up to date on all events in the neighbourhood. Criminal activity is used as the basis for assigning police resources. He indicated he is looking into the current uptick in car vandalism on Joan Crescent, will look into the specificity of the crime map (in response to a concern raised by a resident), indicated that he would be pleased to work with residents on a Block Watch program and will inform the appropriate authorities about squatter activity at 1201 Fort.

6. Thanks to those supporting the board

Janet Simpson thanked the following people for their support of the RNA board.

Welcome-Eileen Nurmi, Heather Grampp

Newsletter-Helen Edwards

Membership-Ian Mayhill

Retiring Board Members-Norm Clark, Aimée Botje and Ian Mayhill

Special recognition and thanks were given to Don Hamilton for his many, many years of support with the RNA website.

7. Quorum (minimum of 10% of total members)

Total membership is 153. With 69 voting members in attendance, there is a quorum.

8. Approval of Minutes of Annual General Meeting, February, 2016

Motion: To approve Minutes of Annual General Meeting, February 2016
Moved/seconded/carried

9. Committee Reports

As included in the AGM Report.

Motion: To accept reports
Moved/seconded/carried

10. Members' Concerns

Chantal Meagher informed the residents that subdivision activity at 1322 Rockland has begun again. Anyone who would like to be included in communication regarding this issue should contact Chantal.

Michelle Dobie asked if there were a plan for a large scale rally encompassing a number of the neighbourhoods to express discontent with the development that is underway in the city. Media should be involved. Flyers to the neighbourhood.

Don Hamilton suggested that people bring ideas to the April 19 meeting. He indicated that there is time as the meeting of the Committee as a Whole has not yet been scheduled.

Mary Douglas Hunt gave suggestions on how to compose a flyer to increase community involvement (short bullet points, electric colours etc.)

Kam Lidder asked if issues should be coordinated as a whole rather than piecemeal (ie., one development proposal at a time).

Janet Simpson said this would be raised with the new RNA Board.

Rachel MacDonald said, based on their experience with Abstract and the Bowker/Foul Bay development proposal, time should not be taken for granted. Abstract means business.

Michelle Dobie said that all the neighbourhoods should get together. Everyone is angry.

Lisa MacIntosh informed the group that May 7 is Neighbourhood Day. She reminded the group to include renters in communication and activities.

John Weaver said that the deer problem is becoming exponentially worse and asked what the city was doing.

Councillor Madoff indicated that the city has taken no action on this problem.

Doug Woodall asked if something could be done about the tour bus exhaust, suggesting a meeting with RNA, the tour bus operators and the city.

Janet Simpson said that a member of the Board would be in touch with him.

11. Nominating Committee

Lloyd Ollila, Chair; Heather Grampp, Ethelyn McInnes-Rankin

For President, Janet Simpson

For Vice President, Marc Hunter

For Treasurer, John Edwards

For Secretary, Sue Simpson

For Directors

Lawrence Bortoluzzi

Dave Clark

Vanessa Dingley

Art Hamilton

Bob June

David McWalter

Stephen Roughley

Susan Wynne Hughes

All by acclamation.

12. Closing Remarks

Stephen Roughley unveiled the new RNA website, www.rockland.ca, which will be live on April 3. Lloyd Ollila urged residents to take an active role in land use discussions.

- 13. Motion:** To adjourn at 9:43 p.m
Moved/seconded/carried

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Simpson, Secretary