



A Newsletter for the Town of Sidney

TOWN TALK

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April 2010

Sidney's Long-Term Sustainability

Is this a headline we will be reading in the Peninsula News Review for May 2025: "Sidney Faces Crisis: Shops, Restaurants and Other Services Close for Lack of Employees"? It could well be if we do not begin to address a key issue now.

Statistics Canada's Census for 2006 showed Sidney to have one of the most senior demographic patterns in Canada. And there are good reasons for older people to want to live in our town. But its appeal, along with the fact that we really have no more (or very little) land for housing, leading to serious inflation of housing prices, is creating a growing imbalance in age groups within our population. The long-term impact of this imbalance, if allowed to continue without some sort of intervention, will likely produce a headline similar to the one above.

Let me give an example. Near my home in the Orchard Avenue area, two very nice smaller single

level homes have just been built (and sold for well over \$600,000) on land that formerly held a modest fourplex rental unit. The fourplex unit provided a housing opportunity for four families. Where those who were displaced went, I do not know. We cannot, however, fault the development community for what is happening; market forces are driving land and building prices, and builders are simply responding to a demand.

But we need younger people living in our community to work in the services that we all require. We cannot expect them, in a future of rising fuel prices, to commute to our Town from other areas in the Capital Region where housing is affordable and attainable.

In addressing this issue, Council will work with our new Community Development Commission and Healthy Community Commission in developing a housing strategy which will set directions for providing housing at an affordable rate for younger families. We will keep residents informed as we develop and implement the strategy.

In the next Town Talk I will address other aspects of the long-term sustainability of Sidney as the "best seaside town in Canada".

Mayor Larry Cross

2010 Sidney/Canada Days

June 30 - July 1

Wednesday, June 30

- * Community Dinner, 5:00pm (*Mary Winspear Centre*)
- * Canada Day Ceremony, 7:00pm (*Beacon Park*)
- * Live Entertainment, 8:00pm (*Beacon Park*)
- * Fireworks, 10:00pm (*Sidney Waterfront*)

Thursday, July 1

- * Pancake Breakfast, 8:00am (*Mary Winspear Centre*)
- * Parade, 11:00am (*Beacon Avenue & Second Street*)
- * Build-a-Quick Boat Race, 4:00pm (*Diver's Point*)
- * Lots of activities (live entertainment, family activities and more) all afternoon (*Mary Winspear Centre*)
- * Summer Street Market, 5:30pm (*Beacon Avenue*)

Peninsula Celebrations Society 250-656-4365

Saying Goodbye

After 10 years, the time has come to say goodbye to the boat called Wanda, the 34 ft double-ender fishing vessel located at the corner of Beacon Avenue and Highway 17. An assessment of the boat's structure has determined advanced state of decay and that it is unsafe and would be cost prohibitive to repair or move. In disposing of Wanda, the Town will install temporary landscaping, until such time as an alternative entrance feature can be selected.

Property Taxes & Home Owner Grants

Council has adopted a Financial Plan for 2010 reflecting an overall increase in property taxes of 2.5%, a reduction in water parcel taxes and no change to the sewer parcel tax. Increases were required to both the water and sewer user rates to cover the increased costs of purchasing bulk water from the CRD and operating costs of the sewage treatment plant. The Town

continues to maintain a minimum quarterly charge in recognition that there are fixed costs associated with operating water and sewer distribution systems.

Property tax notices will be mailed out by the end of May. **Deadline for payment is July 2.** To avoid long lineups, payment can be made by post dated cheques, at your

bank or online. If eligible, please remember to claim your provincial Home Owner Grant (HOG), which can also be claimed on the Town's website. The Province has continued its deferment programs allowing qualified home owners to defer all or a portion of their annual property taxes. The following three programs are available:

Eligibility criteria for all three programs:

- Listed as registered owner of the home
- Are a Canadian citizen (or permanent resident)
- Have lived in BC at least one year prior to applying
- Apply on the home in which you live
- Have a current fire insurance policy on your home
- Property taxes are up-to-date prior to current year

Financial Hardship

- Have at least 15% equity in home based on assessed value provided by BC Assessment
- Declare that you are facing financial hardship due to current economic conditions
- Simple interest charged at prime rate (set every 6 months) and no application fee

Age 55+, surviving spouse or person with disability

- Have at least 25% equity in home based on assessed value provided by BC Assessment
- Be 55 years or older OR a surviving spouse OR a person with disabilities
- Simple interest charged at prime less 2% (set every 6 months)
- \$60 application fee and \$10 annual renewal fee

Families with children under 18

- Have at least 15% equity in home based on assessed value provided by BC Assessment
- Be a home owner with financial responsibility for a child under 18
- Simple interest charged at prime rate (set every 6 months)
- \$60 application fee and \$10 annual renewal fee

Q & A: Getting the Facts

Q: Is Beacon Wharf going to be closed permanently? **A:** Based upon a preliminary assessment of the wharf and for safety reasons, the Town has restricted the wharf to pedestrian traffic only. Council is awaiting a detailed engineering report to determine the next course of action.

Q: What is the future plan for Beacon Wharf? **A:** In response to the Town's call for proposals, Council received one submission for the redevelopment of Beacon Wharf which also included a new marina surrounded by a floating breakwater/public pier. Staff have

been instructed to gather further details regarding the proposal and report back to Council. Council has made no decision to proceed with this proposal and no development application has been submitted to date. Council values all aspects of the wharf - fish market, bistro, ferry service and in reviewing options for the wharf, these existing features will be taken into consideration. If the proposal proceeds, prior to any final decisions being made, there will be a public consultation process. The proposal is available for viewing at Town Hall.

Q: Is the Fire Hall going to be relocated? **A:** Council is exploring options to ensure the Town's emergency service providers (ie. the Public Works Yard and Fire Hall) are able to sustain a major disaster. Improvements to the Public Works Yard are already in progress and Council is considering options for a new Fire Hall in a new location. Council is committed to ensuring these operations remain functional as they will be required to assist the community in emergency situations.

Zoning Bylaw Review

A comprehensive review and update of the Town's Zoning Bylaw is currently being undertaken. The Bylaw is the primary tool for the implementation of the Town's Official Community Plan (OCP) which impacts the use and development of property. The review of the Bylaw must:

- ◆ reflect the key elements of the OCP and Local Area Plan, Vision 2020 document and other major policies adopted by Council;
- ◆ contain clear and consistent formatting, cross referencing and section numbering;
- ◆ address policy objectives in a simple and concise manner; and
- ◆ be user friendly (utilizing graphics and color-coding).

Town staff are working with the Advisory Planning Commission to undertake this review. A draft new Bylaw will be presented to Council, which will be followed by a full and inclusive public consultation process.

Tree Maintenance

Residents are reminded that before pruning or cutting down trees to please ensure compliance with the Tree Preservation Bylaw No. 1663 (copy on the Town's website). The Town is responsible for maintenance of trees on public property. If you are uncertain as to what trees are protected, please contact the Parks Department, 250-656-4502.

Climate Action Plan

As a result of Bill 27 and becoming a signatory to the BC Climate Action Charter, the Town has a commitment to becoming carbon neutral in its municipal operations by 2012. The Town is taking a proactive approach to meeting these requirements by developing a comprehensive Climate Action Plan to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions from Town operations and throughout our community. Stantec Consulting has been engaged to assist with development of the plan. The challenge is to figure out how to reduce emissions, where to set reduction targets and what policies and actions the Town can commit to making in the OCP. The Plan will be completed this spring and presented to Council. Your feedback on Climate Action is important and we look forward to hearing from you. A public on-line survey is available on the Town's website.

New Fire Engine 904



Built to the latest technology and safety standards, this truck is fully equipped with custom cab, large pump (1,750 gal p/minute) and hydraulic generator and ladder - it is ready to serve the Town for the next 20 years.

Volunteers Wanted

The Peninsula Chamber of Commerce is operating the Sidney Visitor Centre on Beacon Avenue. Volunteers are needed to provide information and service to visitors. If you can spare three or four hours a week, please contact the Chamber office for more details.

250-656-3616 info@peninsulachamber.ca

Staff Retirement



Valerie Marchand has retired after almost 20 years of service in the Town's Parks Department. Valerie's hard work has helped create Sidney's many outstanding floral displays. We wish her a happy and healthy retirement.

School District No. 63

School Crossing Guard Substitutes Needed
(auxiliary basis, CUPE rate \$17 p/hr)

250-652-7300

Community Events ...

Summer Street Market Jun 3 - Aug 26

5:30 - 8:30pm, Beacon Avenue

On Thursday nights, come and check out the hundreds of vendors, artisans and entertainers. For more information call 250-655-6417.

Battle of the Bands May 8

7:00 - 10:00pm, Panorama Recreation Centre

Register your band (11-18yrs) and play for your friends. Come out and vote for your favourite band. For more information call 250-656-7271.

Sidney Health Fair May 29 & 30

9:30am - 5:00pm, Mary Winspear Centre

Meet and connect with local health care practitioners and providers, sample, learn and have fun. Lets create the Healthiest community in the world! Visit www.sidneyhealthfair.com.

Outdoor Book Sale Jun 5

10:00am - 2:00pm, Library (Resthaven Drive)

The Friends of the Library are holding their second annual book sale outdoors, next to the Wellness Park. Also, come celebrate Access Awareness Day.

Summer Sounds Concerts Jul 4 - Sep 5

2:00 - 4:00 pm, Beacon Park

Every Sunday afternoon, enjoy beautiful music at the new waterfront park. Donations are welcome.

Art Centre at Tulista Park

The Community Art Centre has become a popular stopping place for everyone especially those strolling Sidney's spectacular sea walk. Through January and February the shows by the Sister Cities Committee and the Shutterbugs had over 1,000 visitors. In May, 'The Dogs of Sidney' will be featured followed by Artisans Gift Galleria for the summer. Entry forms for Artisans are on the website. Other upcoming events: the last of the Author reading series with Anny Scoones and Bill Richardson (reading will be April 23, 7:30 at the Red Brick Café) and the Spring Studio Tour will take place June 12 and 13.

Community Arts Council of the Saanich Peninsula

250-656-7400 www.cacsp.com



Mary Winspear Centre
Conferences, Special Events and Live Theatre

Saanich Peninsula Annual Art Show - April 24 & 25

Sunny Shams - A Tribute to Pavarotti - May 7

Fab Fourever - Mothers Day Beatles Tribute - May 9

Annie - May 12

Westcoast Ride to Live - June 6

Doug & the Slugs - June 26

Box Office Hours

Monday to Friday: 9:30 - noon, 1:00 - 5:00 pm

Saturday: 1:00 - 4:00 pm

(and 1 hour prior to show time)

250-656-0275 www.marywinspear.ca

Beacon
Community
Services
www.beaconcs.ca

Visit the **NEWLY UPGRADED COMPUTER LAB**
at the **SHOAL Centre**

We are never too old to learn something new. If you are interested in learning computer skills or upgrading your existing ones under the supervision of friendly and helpful instructors visit the newly upgraded Computer Lab at SHOAL Centre. Also, from April through to June, the Computer Club will be offering non-instructional drop-in times to access a computer with the assistance of an attendant: Fridays, 9:30-11:30am or 1:00-3:00pm, \$18 a session, plus a SHOAL Centre membership of \$45. Space is limited. Computer Lab rentals are also available for local businesses or community groups wishing to provide training opportunities for volunteers or staff.

250-656-5537 www.beaconcs.ca

Town Talk is a quarterly newsletter published by the Town of Sidney and distributed to residents and local businesses throughout Sidney. We welcome your feedback.

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