

**James Bay Neighbourhood Association
Minutes of August 11, 2010**

Attendance varied: 36 (start) – 47 - 29 (end)

1. Tim VanAlstine welcomed all meeting attendees, indicated how one obtained membership, and thanked Marlene Hunter for serving as recording secretary for the past nine months.

2. Approval of Agenda. M/S/C

3. Approval of Minutes of JBNA meeting of July 14, 2010, after two additions were made under Community Concerns. These additions emphasised the problems of cruise ship emissions and horse-drawn carriages. M/S/C

4. Correspondence/Announcements: the correspondence file was circulated and moved to be received. M/S/C

5. Committee reports: brief written reports from the Parks and Quality of Life Committees were circulated.

6. Councillor report: Councillor Madoff was unable to attend due to prior commitments.

7. Coho and Clipper: Temporary Customs Structure briefing

Ryan Burke, President, Blackball Transportation, and Tom Oran, Terminal Manager for Clipper Navigation Limited, presented the plans for erecting a one-story, pre-fabricated building on the Clipper dock to house the operations, communications unit, and staff members of United States Customs and Border Protection (USCBP) as a replacement location for the offices that must be vacated by November 1, 2010, at the Provincial Capital Commission's building (previously the CPR Terminal) at 468 Belleville St. due to upgrading and earthquake reinforcement.

Building costs are the responsibility of the ferry operators, including Blackball Transportation, Clipper Navigation, Victoria Express, Victoria Star, and Washington State Ferries.

The building will be located behind an existing security fence, appropriately landscaped, and is not expected to generate any additional externality costs.

When asked whether there was any intention of moving these ferry operations to Ogden Point, the presenters said "no, that would be most undesirable."

8. Development Proposal: 118 Ladysmith

Fraser McColl (developer), Barry Cosgrove and Doug Walter (architects) presented a proposal to replace the old flour mill at 118 Ladysmith St. with a three-story four-plex condominium building, with each unit having approximately 1,500 sq. ft. of floor-space. The four units would each have two bedrooms on the upper floor, a separate external entrance, an attached garage, a small private garden, and comply with green building (silver level) standards. The main floor would contain the living room, dining room and kitchen, while two of the units would have an additional room on the entrance level. All units would be suitable for families, but not for anyone requiring a wheelchair. Except at the rear of the property, set-backs would increase relative to the existing flour mill. A zoning change from R2 to RK is required to build the four-plex.

Question: **several nearby neighbours** raised questions about **the demolition stage**, including its timing and the care that would be taken with respect to rats, raccoons, and seagulls that inhabit the abandoned building, and with respect to dust and blasting.

Answer: Care will be taken in demolishing the building so ensure that externalities on the neighbourhood are minimised and that rats and other pests are exterminated. There will be no blasting since the old flour mill has no basement. Demolition is likely to occur later this fall, with construction starting during the winter.

Question: **what will the units sell for;** how affordable will they be?

Answer: selling prices cannot yet be determined because construction costs are moving around. Affordability will be enhanced by sharing the land costs over a four-plex rather than a duplex.

Question: has a **green roof** been considered?

Answer: a green roof would lead to greater building height and reduced privacy for neighbours, and has therefore been rejected.

Several people spoke in favour of the building proposal, its **design and its “smart density”**, while a **couple** of people worried about the enhanced housing density that a **four-plex rather than a duplex** would generate.

9. Official Community Plan (OCP) and Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP)

Chris Gower and Robert Batallas of the City of Victoria Planning department gave a presentation of the urban design elements within the OCP and the main themes of the draft DCAP. The presentation on urban design elements borrowed directly from the work (*The Image of the City*) of urban geographer, Kevin Lynch, and used the concepts of gateways, paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. The presentation also indicated that Victoria's (and James Bay's) history and geography has led to a rather tortured street pattern grid, and to considerable diversity and character of streetscapes and housing styles.

Question: One purpose of an OCP is to provide for a harmonious arrangement of land uses. In reality, however, we have to deal with the City 'as built', and improve on its functioning. In the case of Victoria that includes the existence of Ogden Point – an industrial area – in the midst of a residential area. Ogden Point activities result in a number of negative impacts beyond the site boundary including noise pollution from on-site uses such as the Helijet Port, air pollution from docked ships, heavy traffic volumes, noise and pollution from vehicles servicing the site, pedestrian safety and vehicle conflicts along heavily used routes, etc., etc.

The GVHA, VIHA, and the JBNA all recognize that the impacts exist.

One way of dealing with the conflicts is through zoning. Two types of zoning in particular are useful – Direct Control District zoning and/or Performance Zoning – both of which include specific performance measures designed to minimize the external impacts of otherwise incompatible land uses.

My question is: **'Will the OCP include policy statements regarding the use of tools such as Performance Zoning to address the external impacts of Ogden Point?'**

Answer: This is still to be determined.

Question: James Bay is thin on a number of amenities and characteristics. The urban design framework, including the creation of enclaves, appears to be **based on pre-defined or engineering structure rather than the people-based use** of the area.

Urban design involves more than streets and transportation networks. Planning must include **other aspects of a community such as quality of life factors like pollution**. The James Bay as presented does not reflect the James Bay I live in. How do you get to know what our James Bay is really like from a liveability perspective?

Answer: None. (Perhaps the JBNA web-site should be explored, or a JBNA presentation invited.)

Question: **What is meant by edges?** How can a roadway be an edge?

Answer: An edge is a division between areas of different character. The James Bay section of Douglas St. is a good example of an edge.

Question: **Where do we want to go with respect to urban design and zoning systems?** The Community Charter gives the City considerable powers to influence both the character of developments and the externalities that they may generate.

Answer: None

Question: What is to be done about **large vehicle traffic heading from downtown to Ogden Point**, often during the late evening?

Answer: Write to the Mayor and Council on this issue!

Question: Why are you not considering **light rail as a solution to the Ogden Point** people movement problem?

Answer: Light rail, rather than rapid transit buses, is unlikely to be used on the major transit corridors between Downtown and the Western Communities, Swartz Bay/Airport/Sidney or University/Camosun/Jubilee Hospital. It is most unlikely to be used through a residential area which (from a geographic perspective) is at the end of the transit line.

Chris Gower and Robert Batallas then provided **an overview of the draft DCAP**, which will replace the existing Downtown and Harris Green plans, and indicated that January was the current target for Council approval of the plan.

The presentation stressed the cross-town concept, using Douglas St. and Yates St. as the spine corridors for both transportation and development. The presentation also stressed the amphitheatre concept, with the centre of the amphitheatre being the historic old-town commercial district and the inner harbour.

The presentation went on to consider aspects of economic vitality, the redesign of Belleville St. and Government St. as pedestrian orientated esplanades, the completion of the harbour pathway through the Wharf St. parking lots, transportation issues including modes of transport, heritage building preservation, the bonus density system, and design and height guidelines for new buildings by location.

Little was said about the interface between DCAP and James Bay, or about impacts on James Bay as DCAP is implemented.

There being no time left for questions, at 9:30 a motion to adjourn was M/S/C.