

JBNA Zoom Meeting - March 10, 2026

Recap

The meeting began with discussions about community concerns including vacant properties and property maintenance requirements, followed by updates on city initiatives including tax reductions and community safety plans. The main focus was on presenting and discussing a community garden program proposal for James Bay, including implementation details and potential challenges. The conversation ended with presentations of a neighborhood survey results regarding development plans and discussions about community engagement, with reminders about upcoming meetings and events.

Summary

Opening Remarks and Land Acknowledgement

The meeting began with Trevor announcing upcoming elections for board positions including president, treasurer, secretary, and directors at large.

Councillor Dell: City Initiatives and Updates

Matt Dell provided updates on several key city initiatives and issues. He reported progress on reducing the proposed property tax increase from 14% to 7.28%, noting that VicPD had agreed to reduce their budget request. Councillor Dell discussed the implementation of the community safety and well-being plan, including the opening of a new 34-space shelter in Rock Bay and a 20-unit recovery home called Johnson Manor.

Councillor also addressed concerns about properties on Menzie Street and Government Street, noting that developers sometimes agree to clean up properties after being contacted. Issues were raised about a potential bylaw to keep homes from sitting vacant and falling into disrepair. Councillor Dell explained this was not something the city could enforce.

A community member suggested examining staff salaries, particularly in human resources, as a potential area for budget reduction.

The conversation ended with a discussion about UDI (Urban Development Institute) membership, where Councillor Dell explained his vote in favor of retaining membership based on staff recommendations about its value for accessing industry data and expertise. A

community member voiced that they believed it was a lobbying group that influences urban planners.

Curbside Co-Op: James Bay Boulevard Garden Proposal

Founder of Curbside Co-Op, Eric Buhne presented a proposal for a community boulevard gardening program in James Bay, explaining how it would address long waitlists for community garden plots and emphasizing the program's focus on partnership with homeowners. The presentation detailed the benefits for both gardeners and homeowners, as well as the process for implementing the program, including liability protections and homeowner rights.

Eric explained that there would be no additional cost for homeowners, with gardeners paying between \$40-50 for the year, similar to the Montreal Street Community Garden. The program aims to have 20 participants in its pilot year, with potential expansion to Quadra Village if James Bay doesn't meet the target. Trevor inquired about insurance and liability issues, particularly regarding access to water spigots on private property, which Eric said they were still waiting on feedback from the City of Victoria about. A community member shared experiences from Fernwood about successful private gardens and fruit trees on boulevards, though noted ongoing liability concerns with city employees.

JBNA OCP Survey Results & Reflections

Trevor presented the results of the JBNA survey conducted last fall, which received responses from 265 residents across 159 postal codes. The survey focused on 8 questions covering topics from building design and housing to transportation, environment, and parks. Key findings included a strong preference for building designs up to 4 stories with emphasis on infill housing rather than high-rises, significant concerns about environmental and climate risks including sea level rise and cruise ship impacts, and strong support for preserving parks and green spaces.

Pat commented on the detailed nature of the responses and mentioned upcoming climate resilience workshops at James Bay Community Center.

A community member expressed concerns that the City's OCP plans ignored feedback from previous community workshops and questioned the transparency of zoning changes that expanded the downtown district without proper notification to residents. Trevor confirmed that the survey results were presented to City Council during OCP discussions, though the feedback appeared to have been ignored. Another member raised specific concerns about the lack of notification to property owners when the downtown zoning border was moved from Quebec Street to Kingston, noting that only the developer was informed while nearby homeowners were not.

A community member expressed appreciation for the work and suggested notifying media outlets about the survey, which Trevor acknowledged as an oversight and agreed to address.

Community Comments

Keira promoted an ongoing social media contest about what residents love about James Bay. The group discussed the importance of community engagement and participation in democracy. Councillor Dell mentioned the upcoming Heritage review of the city and encouraged continued advocacy for preserving James Bay's character. A member raised concerns about a recent power outage in the area, which Tim explained was caused by a transformer blowing up and resulting in surges throughout the western part of the community. The conversation ended with a reminder about the upcoming in-person AGM at James Bay Community School.

Zoom Chat:

00:16:03 Felicity Klassen: For admin...Why is Dave Klassen is being called Carole Farley?

00:16:44 JBNA: Replying to "For admin...Why is Da..."

For admin...Why is Dave Klassen is being called Carole Farley?

Did he get the link from someone else other than his email? Sometimes that happens if you don't log in with your unique name/link

00:31:33 Felicity Klassen: Replying to "For admin...Why is Da..."

Dave is using Felicity Klassen's zoom

00:32:25 JBNA: Reacted to "Dave is using Felici..." with 👍

00:39:59 Kirk Buhne: Developers should have a credibility reputation and be aware of this. Such poor neighbour developers should not be given freebies as Geric has received. Irresponsible developers should not get respect from council.

00:45:27 Kirk Buhne: The UDI was founded by the real estate industry to promote development. They influence city staff and teach them what they want them to know. If staff get so much value from the UDI, they are indeed being brainwashed. Their education should come from less biased sources.

00:49:45 kathleen bligh: Thank you Kirk. I agree with you 100% and yes "it's not a good look.

00:50:13 Kirk Buhne: Reacted to "Thank you Kirk. I a..." with 👍

00:51:15 Ingrid Holm: Reacted to "The UDI was founded ..." with 👍

00:52:16 Kevin Youck: Seems like the new OCP was written to meet the many wish lists of the UDI

00:53:17 pauline kelly: What is the UDI?

00:54:00 Kirk Buhne: Urban Development Institute, founded by developer lobbyists

00:57:35 Kevin Youck: Reacted to "The UDI was founded ..." with 👍

00:59:23 Ingrid Holm: <https://crdwatch.ca/?s=udi> Some information about UDI here.

01:08:41 Kevin Youck: Great presentation and good ideas!

01:08:55 pauline kelly: How to get in touch? You can have my boulevard!

01:10:31 JBNA: @pauline kelly <https://www.curbside.coop/contact/>

01:39:37 Corinne Macdonald: Thank you Trevor - informative presentation.

01:39:57 Deb Hull: Reacted to "Thank you Trevor - i..." with 👍

01:40:47 Gayle Mavor: Thanks for all the work, Trevor, you put into compiling this data (with the help of AI). Very interesting.

01:45:09 Kevin Youck: Reacted to "Thank you Trevor - i..." with 👍

01:45:20 Kevin Youck: Reacted to "Thanks for all the w..." with 👍

01:46:18 Kirk Buhne: Reacted to "Thank you Trevor - i..." with 👍