



FONVCA MINUTES THURSDAY April 20th 2006

Place: DNV Hall 355 W. Queens Rd V7N 2K6

Time: 7:00-9:00pm

Chair: Diana Belhouse, Delbrook Community Association. Tel: 604-987-1656

Attendees:

Cathy Adams	Lions Gate NA
Maureen Bragg	Lynn Valley CA / Save Our Shores
Monica Craver	Upper Lynn CA
Dan Ellis	Lynn Valley CA
Fred Gooch	Blueridge CA
K'nud Hille	Norgate Park CA
David James	Upper Lynn CA
Corrie Kost	Edgemont CA
Val Moller	Lions Gate NA

Notetaker:

Lyle Craver	Citizens' Budget & Finance Advisory Cte / Lynn Valley CA
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Meeting Convened 7:10 pm

1. Order/content of Agenda

2. Adoption of Minutes of March 16th

3. Old Business

3.1 Shirtsleeve Session with Council

Review of shirtsleeve (Wed April 19th) meeting with council. In which topics to be discussed were:

- A) Role/representation of Associations

Since the terms of the shirtsleeve meeting were that, although attendees were free to take notes, it was to be an open – off-the-record discussion of the tabled issues, the minutes here should reflect that agreement.

– **The following are thus comments of the current FONVCA meeting:** Discussion went around the table concerning the previous night's meeting. Most felt it was a worthwhile meeting. To avoid any misunderstandings by both council members and the public it was suggested that when a CA executive member addresses council he/she should explicitly say either that they were speaking on behalf of their association or was speaking as a private citizen.

Each CA is autonomous and should regularly be in contact with Council. Sometimes contact with Council should be to give / receive information, sometimes speaking on a matter of principle. There seemed to be a clear consensus around the table that the formation of a smaller number of "Super-Community Associations" was not desirable. It was well understood by FONVCA that the various CAs have their own key issues and have developed their own ways of dealing with Staff and Council. The question of the Community Associations' role could easily have spent the entire Shirtsleeves meeting and perhaps such future meetings should be on a single topic only.

On the issue of whether a CA represented the views of the majority of the area they represent it was noted that, in the unlikely event they did not, other local residents **would very likely** give their input to Council.

There seemed to be broad agreement that petitions do not get the weight they deserve – although coloured maps showing the lots which are pro/con/neutral/no-reply seem to garner more weight in council deliberations. An example cited was the City of North Vancouver 980 Marine Drive public meeting where despite a large petition and numerous delegations and e-mails some City councillors felt responses to the proposal was mixed. Real bodies at public hearings seem to have more weight.

It was expressed that this dilemma has always existed, and that while the process may be "messy and fuzzy" it works quite well and that "neighborhoods" cannot be defined and imposed from above. That Community Association members are not a large percentage of the total population will always be of some concern to some decision makers. It was suggested that in a typical development application there were 4 groups: (a) the proponent(s), (b) the immediate neighbors who were usually unhappy with the proposal, (c) the more distant neighbors who might be sympathetic to the proposal and (d) those local residents who simply didn't care and that except in cases where there was an obvious principle to be supported, we all knew the political considerations that motivate Councillors.

It was also expressed that, no matter who was speaking on an issue, the principle should ALWAYS be "is this truthful?", "does this make sense?", "does this content have validity that needs to be listened to?"

A concern was also expressed that letters/emails to council may not be delivered until a related staff report is prepared.

The issue of excessive requests on staff time by members of the public was discussed and needs further clarification, especially as it relates to council policies on public involvement procedures. Perhaps this could be considered a future topic for another shirtsleeve session with Council.

There was a consensus that FONVCA would like to see more information on the proposed communications workshop and that a Thank You letter should be sent to Council concerning the Shirtsleeves meeting.

There was consensus that a letter be sent to council which:

Thanks council for the meeting. Indicating that FONVCA felt it to be informative. In addition FONVCA favoured the idea of Town Hall Meetings to be held in the near future. FONVCA also felt it would be beneficial to clarify the communication time lines and protocols between the community, staff, and council and that we looked forward, preferably on a single topic chosen from a list of 2 or 3, to another shirtsleeve meeting in the fall.

Brian to draft appropriate letter incorporating above and send to Mayor and council. **ACTION ITEM.**

There was a general agreement that the NV Recreation Commission be formally invited to attend/participate in next FONVCA meeting – especially as it relates to Needs Assessment and concern about future status of existing Recreation Centres. **ACTION ITEM** for Brian.

3.2 Update on Use Changes in RM Zones

– Comments on Public hearing held April 18th on Grouse Woods amendments.

– It was noted that we had to be careful addressing Council on this since Council could not receive additional information on a Closed Public Hearing

– There was a discussion of the recent Public Hearing on Grouse Woods. Among the points were the appropriateness of discussing ONLY the issue of suites without discussion of other single family uses. It was said that it only took one or two people finding out that their community was about to be changed to bring a crowd out to the public hearing. A key element of the public hearing was when it was revealed that Grouse Woods had been built with a covenant which Council had not been informed of. “This threw a big monkey wrench into the public hearing”. It was noted that this alone made the ~ 25 known secondary suites in Grouse Woods illegal yet none had been forced by staff to close down.

It seems staff does not like being inundated with e-mails and phone calls BEFORE a public hearing. Yet it also appears that staff does not want to answer questions AT the public hearing stage. Meaningful input to the hearing by the

public could thus be defeated if staff can only provide answers after the Public Hearing was closed. This apparent conflict needs to be addressed.

4. Correspondence Issues

4.1 Business arising from 5 regular emails:

4.2 Non-Posted letters

0 this period.

4.3 FONVCA letter - Translink Democracy

Letter sent to Mayor Walton as per 6.2 of minutes. <http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/apr2006/FONVCA-motion-all.pdf>

5. New Business Council and other District issues.

5.1 Improving Public Participation

<http://www.reason.org/ps292.pdf>

A report “Citizens’ Budget Reports: Improving Performance and Accountability in Government” by the Reason Public Policy Institute of Los Angeles, CA was tabled by Corrie Kost.

5.2 Improving the Budget Process

Worth examining the “Participatory Budget” process of Quelfh, Ontario?

<http://www.alternatives.ca/article685.html>
<http://www.tni.org/newpol-docs/pbcanada.htm>

Lyle Craver of the Citizens’ Budget and Finance Advisory Committee thanked FONVCA for these references and said he would certainly pay close attention to these.

He noted that his main reason for attending the FONVCA meeting was that during the CB&FAC Shirtsleeves meeting with Council the previous month the Committee was given by Council as an action item their desire for a report covering public reaction to the “open” portion of the 2006 DNV Budget Process.

He was seeking information from Community Association representatives and other interested citizens on the following points:

- Was the information presented by Staff applicable?
- Was the depth of that information sufficient?

- Were the presentations appropriate to the issues under review?

- Does the overall budget process make sense to DNV residents?

He was particularly interested in responses dealing with (a) the 2006 Budget Workbook, (b) the financial information presented on the NV District web site and (c) the various Council and CFO workshops and asked attendees "How many of these did you read or attend? Did you find out about each of these in a timely manner? How would you compare these to what was presented last year?"

What was done right? What needs work for 2007?

What could District do to make budget and tax information more useful and accessible?"

Responses are welcome and can be sent to him at lcraver@shaw.ca or by fax to 604-987-5303 or discussed at any Monday Council meeting.

- Some concerns were expressed about the 2006 Budget workbook being unavailable until six days before the public input meeting with printed copies being hard to come by as compared to previous years.

- Some dissatisfaction was expressed with the timeline of the budget process and how the public is involved (only 1 of 11 meetings allowed for public input).

5.3 Commercial dog walking in parks

See comments by Lyle Craver at http://www.fonvca.org/letters/2006/1_3mar-to/Lyle_Craver_6apr2006.pdf
http://www.fonvca.org/letters/2006/1_3mar-to/Lyle_Craver_8apr2006.pdf

See staff recommendation at http://www.dnv.org/upload/documents/Council_Reports/641398.pdf

Question: Should there be any commercial uses in public parks – particularly on trails?

- impact on quality of traditional public use?
- Impact on leave no trace policy?

For template of park commercial use see eg. http://www.ci.boulder.co.us/openspace/pdf_commercialuse/Rationale.pdf
Specifically for dogs see: <http://www.ci.boulder.co.us/openspace/visitor/dogs.htm>
http://www.ci.boulder.co.us/openspace/pdf_brochures/dogbrochure.pdf

- Corrie Kost spoke on the example of Boulder, CO

- Maureen Bragg discussed her walk with David Cook (vice chair, Parks & Natural Environment Advisory Committee) and discussed the experience of Arborlynn where dogs and others had pretty much destroyed the wetland area there. She said that from an environmental point of view the ONLY safe place for off-leash dogs was on a gravel or paved road. LVCA had supported Lynnmour residents on this but was too late since by the time DNV took action the wetland had been destroyed.

- Fred Gooch discussed the experience of the Mt. Seymour area

- There was a discussion of commercial dog walking in other municipalities

- Corrie Kost noted that Commercial use of some public parks represents a fundamental change in the use of a park that amounts to a re-zoning and thus a full-scale public hearing on the subject is called for.

- There was a detailed discussion of the proposed Dog Walker bylaw and opinions that contrary to what the Dog Walker Alliance claims, it is entirely possible for on-leash dogs to be adequately exercised.

- There were strong opinions that public parks should not be commercialized in this way and that no real opportunity for public input had been provided. It was also felt that DNV could not afford to be too far out of synch with regulations for West Vancouver.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Legal Issues

Referenda in Maine USA
http://www.memun.org/public/local_govt/general_interest.htm
where 10% rule is 10% of # who last voted, NOT, as we have here, 10% of those who can vote!

= Corrie Kost noted that this system differed markedly from BC where the criteria was 10% of the entire voters' list.

There was a consensus that two letters should be written: one to Council thanking them for the Shirtsleeves meeting and suggesting another meeting as soon as possible after the summer and a second to the Recreation Commission seeking further contact and cooperation.

7. Chair & Date of next meeting.

May 18th 2006 with an Edgemont CA representative as Chair