

**NEWCASTLE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION-**  
**Regular Meeting Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2023, at 7 PM on Zoom**

**Draft Minutes**

The meeting was called to order by President Karen Kuwica at 7:04 PM.

1) **Review and adopt minutes of April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

A motion to adopt by Nancy Mitchell and seconded by Fred MacDonald.  
Passed.

2) **New Business**

An announcement for the Nanaimo Public Safety Association (NPSA) was added to the agenda

3) **White Spot Update**

- Members of the Newcastle Community Association Executive Karen Kuwica, Fred MacDonald, Nancy Mitchell, Peter Giovando, and Belinda Climenhaga met with Jeffery Baegen, Executive Director of the Salvation Army on Vancouver Island, and Bern Muller, Director of the Nanaimo Salvation Army, on April 27<sup>th</sup> at the old White Spot location on Terminal Avenue.
- There were concerns from the NCA about the Salvation Army setting up a kitchen in this location. The NCA was not informed of their presence in the neighbourhood and were alerted when they saw trades working on the kitchen over the weekend and saw the Salvation Army vehicles parked outside.
- Jeffery Baegen and Bern Muller explained that their kitchen in the Salvation Army facility on 19 Nicol Street had been condemned and that construction of a new facility would take approximately 2-3 years.
- The Salvation Army moved their food preparation facilities to the Old Caprice theatre; however, they had recently lost that location due to their inability to get the required permits. As a result, they have rented out the kitchen in the old White Spot location on Terminal Avenue to prepare meals for approximately 2-3 years while construction takes place on their new facility and kitchen in their downtown location.
- The NCA was informed the Salvation Army plan to operate from 7 AM – 3 PM, seven days a week, to prepare meals to be distributed approximately 500 meals a day to their clients at the Hope Centre downtown and meals contracted by the City of Nanaimo for distribution throughout the city.
- Meals would be prepared in the old White Spot facility and no meals would be distributed from the Terminal Avenue location.
- There was concern from the NCA Executive that once the word spread through the street population, people might be lining up for food at the Terminal Avenue location.
- Jeffrey Baegen informed the NCA that the Salvation Army will spread the word that no food is to be served from that location.
- The Salvation Army was asked if it would be open to signing a Good Neighbour Agreement with the Newcastle Community Association to help prevent loitering around the property or people lining up seeking food handout.
- The NCA Executive would draw up a draft based on their discussions with the Salvation Army and send it to the Salvation Army.

#### **4) Newcastle Place Update**

- Nancy Mitchell, Karen Kuwica, and Fred MacDonald met with Dale Lindsay, Deputy CAO/General Manager, Development Services for the City of Nanaimo, and Dave LaBerge, Manager of Community Safety for the City of Nanaimo, on April 21 2023 about Millstone River bank safety by the Pearson Street Bridge Park.
- Dale Lindsay from the City of Nanaimo made a commitment that an environmental assessment would be done on the bank and that a barge would be brought in on the Millstone River to do a clean-up of the bank.
- Nancy Mitchell also informed the membership that the NCA did not receive the Watershed Grant it had applied for to have an Environmental Planner assess the bank to see what could be done to discourage campers from camping there and help formulate a plan to improve the health of the bank.
- The NCA will be following up with Dale Lindsay from the City of Nanaimo to see if they intend to follow through with their plans for an environmental assessment of the bank.

#### **5) Neighbourhood Engagement Session**

- Fred MacDonald, Nancy Mitchell, and Karen Kuwica from the NCA Executive along with The Nanaimo Neighbourhood Association attended a Neighbourhood Engagement Session sponsored by the City of Nanaimo on April 26 2023. It was an evening where the various Neighbourhood Associations recognized by the city, presented their priorities to the City of Nanaimo's staff. The room was divided into zones by locations of the various neighbourhood associations and each one made presentations to the room about their priorities.
- Newcastle's neighbourhood priorities were: traffic safety/calming along Stewart Avenue, public safety, and promoting the neighbourhood and its historical aspect. We need to ensure that they are included in the city's action plan which will be going back to City Council in June.

#### **6) Summer Block Party**

- Karen Kuwica was looking for volunteers for a sub-committee to help organize the Summer Block Party on Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup> from 4 PM to 7 PM.
- Fred MacDonald had secured the upper parking lot at the Nanaimo Yacht Club for the event. Fred MacDonald said that there was a budget of \$500 - \$600 for the event and that he would look into insurance for the event.
- Ideas for the event included:
  - incorporate something to celebrate Newcastle's heritage and help preserve and promote the neighbourhood.
  - BBQ food such as burgers, hot dogs, and pizza were also suggested.
  - live music
- A Zoom meeting was scheduled for the sub-committee to discuss the BBQ on Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, at 4:30 PM All volunteers are welcome!

#### **7) Development Updates**

- There is an active permit for the Nanaimo Yacht Club to replace their C Dock. The Newcastle Community Association approved their request to support their application in our last meeting on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- There is an active development permit for a 6 unit building at 921 Terminal Avenue.
- There were some clerical errors on the initial application for the development on the old Howard Johnston's property on Terminal Avenue/Comox Avenue; however, they have been resolved and the development is moving forward.

## 8) Neighbourhood Updates

- Karen Kuwica reported that Jon Vosburgh had been hired back again by the developers of 210 Caledonia Avenue to monitor the property.
- Karen Kuwica said because of the patrols done by Jon Vosburgh they were able to thwart a big operation being set up on the property. A large tent was dropped off at the property by a truck and Jon Vosburgh was warned by unhoused people not to go near it. It was being set up for purposes other than sleeping. Jon Vosburgh approached the tent and called the RCMP to escort him out as he was being watched and needed help as Jon Vosburgh felt the situation could turn dangerous. The tent was eventually taken down.
- Karen Kuwica said that she had received numerous emails about a cart train belonging to a couple that was on the waterfront on Newcastle Avenue. The couple had been visited numerous times by the Community Safety Officers (CSO's), and the RCMP for wellness checks and Bylaw regulations.
- It was also reported that rumors are surfacing about the development at 250 Terminal Avenue will include a safe injection site. The safe injection and inhalation site on Dunsmuir Street is being heavily used so there is a desire for another one. It is unclear whether the rumoured safe injection site would be for residents only of 250 Terminal Avenue or open for public use.
- Concern was expressed that all options were being exercised by the RCMP, Bylaw, and CSO's but the neighbourhood wasn't seeing any results regarding social disorder in the area and summer would bring more issues into the area.
- Concern was also expressed that Newcastle Neighbourhood was at turning point and residents had to decide what they wanted to do about it. It was time that residents stepped up to try and preserve our neighbourhood as we are in a crisis about the future of our community.

## 9) New Business

- Karen Kuwica informed the membership that the Nanaimo Area Public Safety Association (NAPSA) was co-sponsoring a screening of "Canada is Dying" at the Port Theatre Monday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Tickets would be sold online, and it was an exposé on what it is like to live unhoused on Vancouver Island. There will be a moderator for a question-and-answer session after the film.
- Karen Kuwica informed the NCA that Priscilla, one of the founding members of the NCA who has lived in the Newcastle Neighbourhood is moving to another community. Priscilla wanted to thank everyone that is involved in the NCA for the positive experience she has had and generously left the NCA a donation.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 PM

Next regular general monthly meeting: June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Submitted by Belinda Climenhaga, Secretary, 2023