

Newcastle Community Association – Regular Meeting

Tuesday, November 7th, 2023, at 7 PM on Zoom.

The meeting was called to order by NCA President Karen Kuwica at 7:05 PM.

1) Review and adopt minutes of November 7th, 2023.

A motion to adopt by Janet Buechler and seconded by Peter Giovando.
Passed.

1) New Business

No new business brought forward by members of the Newcastle Community Association (NCA).

2) Emergency Preparedness Education

The NCA Executive is proposing to sponsor a neighbourhood emergency preparedness awareness and education seminar in 2024 and has applied to the City's Community Vitality Grant program to hire a consultant to assist with research and facilitation.

3) Systems Planning Organization (SPO) and Warming Centers Update

Concern was expressed that the new Systems Planning Organization (SPO), to which the City of Nanaimo has contributed \$500k in operational funding over the next five years, has not been able to find funding for the opening of warming centres this winter. The City has now agreed to use a \$250k surplus to establish one warming centre through Risebridge at 520 Prideaux St and will ask for an expression of interest from other social organizations for additional facilities. It was suggested that the NCA ask the city for community access to board meeting minutes; work plans; etc through the SPO website so that residents can monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the expenditure given that it is a city-funded organization.

4) ILLUMINIGHT

President Karen Kuwica reported that the NCA Executive met to discuss this year's ILLUMINIGHT event.

- It was decided that this year's event will be moved indoors and will be held **Sunday, December 17 from 4-8 PM**. The **Bake Sale** will start at **4:30 PM** first come/first serve. Goods for the bake sale will be

dropped off from 3-4 PM. **Dinner will be 5 - 7 PM** and the **Renovations Blues Band** will be 4:30-7:30 PM.

- Two options for dinner were presented: **Option #1 A Baked Potato Bar + Caesar Salad** and **Option #2 A Pre-Made Meat Lasagna from Costco**. Vote was in favour of the Potato Bar and salad to be sold for \$15.
- Wine by the glass will be available at \$6 and hot drinks at \$2.
- Karen Kuwica informed the membership that the ILLUMINGHT sign would go up on November 25/26 and asked for volunteers to help out with both putting up the sign and the event in general.
- Suzanne Groulx volunteered to help with the distribution of flyers and Janet Buechler will help the Bake Sale.
- It was noted that that 250 Terminal Ave residents will be having their annual Art Show and perhaps it could be incorporated into the ILLUMINIGHT dinner.

5) Millstone River Embankment Update

This is an ongoing issue in the neighbourhood. The NCA has teamed up with residents who live across from the embankment on the North side of the Millstone River and are monitoring the situation. So far, the area has not been reinhabited and that coupled with some people moving out of the Castaway Motel; the closing of the 7-11 on Terminal; and the reduction of residents at 250 Terminal have contributed to the disorder situation being more under control.

- Karen Kuwica also reported that an encampment in the Howard Johnsons parking lot had been removed.
- The NCA Executive has also met with the owner of 210 Caledonia Avenue, and they have agreed to work with the NCA to uphold the environmental sensitivity of the area and they plan to build a viewing platform so the public can access views of the river.
- It was also noted that the water level has risen and the coho are going upstream.

6) Developments Update

- According to City planning staff, the rezoning application for 250 Terminal Ave will not be coming to Council before the end of this year. NCA's comments on the project have been shared with BC Housing including our reasons for why number of units should be at 30 instead of 50.
- Two properties for sale in the neighbourhood have mock-ups of potential redevelopment concepts included with realtor listing: 475 Stewart (10 units) and 260 Stewart (34 units)
- 526 Vancouver is also for sale on a 625.49 sq m lot in an R1 zone which qualifies under new Provincial legislation for at least 6 units. (lots > 280 sq m and close to transit stop with frequent service.
- The 30 Mt. Benson property also has a proposed fence at 16 ft on north side which is a significant variance above fence height limits. Neighbours at 345 Newcastle are okay with it.

7) 250 Terminal Community Advisory Committee Meeting

NCA Executive Directors Fred MacDonald and Nancy Mitchell attended the CAC.

- Nancy Mitchell commented there were not many attendees and the representative from Housing was new.
- Fred MacDonald felt that she had not been briefed about the history of 250 terminal and the neighbourhood. Fred also felt that the neighbourhood has become more stable with the 51 residents currently in 250 Terminal Ave.

8) Neighbourhood Update

- A break in through Block Watch was reported at the corner of Vancouver Ave/Townsite Ave. A shed had been broken into and a lawnmower and leaf blower had been stolen.
- Karen Kuwica reported that she called in a mental health incident in the neighbourhood.
- To report streetlights that are out email City of Nanaimo at public.worksinfo@nanaimo.ca or call Nanaimo Public Works at 250-758-5222.

- Overgrown bushes on the City Boulevard obstructing views of the stop sign at Bryden and Vancouver have now been taken care of by the City.
- Karen Kuwica said that there was also someone sheltering by the White Spot garbage enclosure.
- The City has established a Public Safety Committee and they would be looking for 6-7 members of the public to participate.

Note: if you see someone who appears to be suffering from mental health distress call the following number. Triage will be performed, services, food or medications will be offered.

AT nighttime: call the RCMP at 250-754-2345

During the day: call **COR** at 250-741-7645 or **ACT** at 250-739-5705

Check out our website at: <https://newcastlecommunityassociation.ca/>

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 5th, 2023, at 7 PM on Zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Submitted by Belinda Climenhaga