

## Newcastle Community Association – Regular Meeting

July 9th, 2024, at 7 PM on Zoom

The meeting was called to order by NCA President Karen Kuwica at 7:07 PM.

### **1) Review and adopt minutes of May and June 2024.**

- A motion to adopt the minutes by Suzanne Groulx and seconded by Janet Buechler. Passed.

### **2) New Business**

Janet Buechler would like to know whose responsibility it is for the trees on the boulevard on Vancouver Ave.

### **3) BBQ Recap**

Treasurer Fred MacDonald went over the revenue and expenses for the BBQ & Blues held at the Nanaimo Yacht Club June 23rd.

- BBQ sales were \$950 and the Bake sale raised \$600.
- Expenses were \$575.85 for food, \$420 for hall rental, \$255 for insurance for the event, and \$400 for the band.
- Treasurer Fred MacDonald reported. that we broke-even and everyone had a good time. NCA has \$4000 left moving forward in our bank account.
- Compared to last year's BBQ attendance was down and we sold less burgers. There was a competing event downtown and the weather may have been factors to account for the drop in attendance.
- Some members felt that the price for the burgers of \$15 was too high and that it should have included a beverage for that price.
- Moving forward, President Karen Kuwica was wondering if it was the right date for the event. It was also suggested that perhaps an afternoon workshop on an issue of importance to the neighbourhood could be done along with a BBQ to provide a learning experience for the community. Suggestion was put made to hold an Emergency Planning seminar for the community.

#### **4) Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network (NNN) Purpose and Draft**

- Nancy Mitchell had sent around a proposed draft of the NNN objectives for NCA members to review. They are to be finalized at the next NNN meeting, Oct 15 2024. Some members of NNN want it to be an organization which lobbies the city while the majority want it to be an informal group that shares information and discusses issues. NCA members agreed to the latter approach.
- President Karen Kuwica said that since the NNN proposed only 3 in-person meetings a year, she would like to see more Zoom meetings occur. She felt that they were able to accomplish more in past years because they met more frequently.
- The NNN's next meeting will also include an updated presentation of "Planning 101" by City staff.

#### **5) Development Updates**

5 (a) President Karen Kuwica thanked all the members who showed up to the City Council meeting on June 17, 2024 to show their support in regard to 250 Terminal.

- Several NCA Directors spoke to City Council about removing the clause in the proposed bylaw which would allow 250 Terminal Ave. to be used as a social resources drop-in resource centre. They were successful in having this use removed as well as increasing the fence height between the facility and the neighbours on Vancouver Avenue from 2.4 M to 2.75 M.
- They were unable to get the building height reduced and there were still no updated renderings or drawings of the buildings available.

5 (b) President Karen Kuwica reported that the old Howard Johnson's Hotel on the corner of Comox Avenue and Terminal Avenue had been sold.

- The site was purchased by the Provincial Government and they became partners with the First Nations to develop the site. Fencing was brought in to secure the site and is now in place (completed August 2024).

5 (c) Director Suzanne Groulx reported that the condos at the Seaglass development (Newcastle Ave) were now listed on [Realtor.ca](https://www.realtor.ca) and available for per-sale. The units on Newcastle avenue were listed at \$ 2.7million dollars and that there were 17 units between the two buildings.

## **6) Neighbourhood Updates**

- Karen Kuwica reported that 475 Stewart Avenue was sold. The property was purchased by an individual who had grown up in the house and was going to renovate it to live in. It was good news as the property was previously going to be redeveloped into a multifamily development. The neighbourhood will now have another heritage house being restored.
- President Karen Kuwica also had some sad news to report. Allan Dick who lived in the Stewart Ave/Townsite area had passed away. Allan had been involved with the NCA and will be missed.
- Karen Kuwica also reported several incidents that occurred recently at 250 Terminal Ave. One resident who moved into 250 Terminal recently was allowing someone to sleep in their vehicle (this was addressed by Karen Kuwica and Darrel Gyorfi. There was also an incident where a resident living in the facility purposely damaged the plumbing in the building. The City had to turn off the water and the RCMP were called in.
- Karen Kuwica reported that this incident delayed moving new residents into the building at 250 Terminal Ave.
- It was also noted that there is no Good Neighbour agreement between Island Crisis Care and the new residents in the building as the expectation is that they will be good neighbours since they are low-acuity clients. The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) has also been disbanded. Agreed that the situation be monitored until the fall and perhaps restart the CAC if needed.
- Martha Hardy reported that the old 7-11 on Terminal Ave. was being used for parking for construction works. Some members were wondering if it was being used as a car lot due to the amount of cars parked there daily. (NB: it was the surveying company who had permission to use it for extra parking)

- Director Peter Giovando reported that the vacant lot next to him on Newcastle Avenue was for sale. The property was sold many years ago for \$800,000 and was now listed for \$1.7 million dollars.
- The German Cultural Centre has been sold to an acting/ dance school for children. Property is being upgraded with fence and gate.

## **7) NCA Priorities**

Director Nancy Mitchell gave an update on the NCA's priorities list:

- NCA Directors are meeting with the Transport Manager, Jamie Rose on July 16 2024 about what plans the City has for Stewart Avenue in preparation for some kind of community engagement by the City in the fall. The NCA needs to form a committee to analyze the options for Stewart Ave from the community's perspective. NCA will also be asking about removing the glass and seats at the bus stops on Terminal Avenue by the Ramada and Adams Tarps and Tools as a safety measure.
- The NCA made a motion for the staff to come back with a report on a Vacant Property Bylaw. Motion that "Council direct Staff to provide a report regarding options to regulate vacant properties" was passed unanimously by Council on June 17 2024. This report will hopefully come to Council sometime in the fall.
- The NCA also asked the City about a dog park in the area. Karen Kuwica noted that she had seen 5 new dogs in the area and a younger population on the seawall who might want to use this type of amenity. She said that we would need data to back-up this request and may have to do some door knocking

## **8) Block Watch**

- Karen Kuwica reported that the residents in the upper level of a rental on the corner of Vancouver Ave/Townsite were evicted due to non-payment. There were issues with substance abuses and mental health issues and the lower tenant was being terrorized. RCMP attended with a bailiff and a RCMP officer was assaulted during the eviction.
- Karen Kuwica also reported that there were a couple living in their van in the neighbourhood and conflict was spilling into the neighbourhood

- She also said there was an increase in long-term parking in the area. She reminded residents that vehicles parked for more than 24 hours can be reported to Bylaw Enforcement.
- Suzanne Groulx said that she saw evidence of someone sheltering next to a shed by her building.
- Irene Wende also noticed that there were people looking into garbage cans on the Vancouver side of her building and knocking them over.

**City of Nanaimo Economic Development Officer has provided NCA with some demographic data about our neighbourhood. Reports are attached for information.**

**Note:** if you see someone who appears to be suffering from mental health distress call the following numbers. 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, September 3rd, 2024, at 7 PM on Zoom.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM.

Submitted by Belinda Climenhaga