

# **DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC VISION FOR OTTER POINT & SHIRLEY/JORDAN RIVER**

## **INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 1 – APRIL 2007**

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Welcome to the first Information Bulletin for the Developing a Strategic Vision project. These regular bulletins will keep you informed of the activities taking place in our community as we work towards developing what we are referring to as a strategic vision for Otter Point & Shirley/Jordan River.

### **What is a Strategic Community Vision?**

- A strategic community vision is a document that outlines the major goals that a community sets for itself for a 5 -15-year period and identifies key strategies for achieving those goals.
- The community goals normally reflect the community's priorities and can focus on diverse issues including: governance, recreation, public services (water, fire protection, communications, transportation, etc.), taxation, economic development, socio-cultural progress and environmental preservation.
- The strategies to achieve such goals are generally broad and inclusive, link to a wide range of groups and organizations both within and outside the community, and may include timeframes for initiating certain activities.
- In some respects, the process of developing a strategic community vision can be more important than the document developed, if it brings community residents, groups and elected leaders together in a process to clarify what they want for their community and how to pursue those goals.

### **Background**

Neither Otter Point nor Shirley/Jordan River has community goals or strategies. The closest documents are proposed Official Community Plans (OCPs) and Zoning Bylaws, which are legislatively required and focus narrowly on ensuring an adequate supply of land for housing and setting land use zoning standards.

Our communities can not live in isolation from what is happening around us. Growth and development anywhere in the area is going to have an impact on our three communities. The immediate planning issues in our area are related to economic development and sustainable land use. Our three communities are seen by some as having immense potential for residential growth - especially as forestry companies sell large tracts of private forest lands to development

companies. Such development is coming into conflict with present usage which is primarily forestry, farming, rural residential and as a recreation/vacation destination for Capital Region residents and off-Island visitors. Related to the issue of future economic and residential development are other equally important planning issues which include environmental preservation, potential new water and sewage requirements for residential developments, fire protection, expanded road and recreational trail development, local governance and zoning bylaws.

Decisions based upon planning that reflect the community's needs and wishes are lacking. No one is responsible for developing a comprehensive, long-term strategic plan for the future of this area. In the absence of a municipal government - that would normally assume this role, our proposal is to assume that challenge and work with residents to develop a strategic vision for our three communities.

### **Activities to Date**

#### **A) Initial Meeting**

The initial meeting of the Developing a Strategic Vision project was held on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007. This was an initiative of the Otter Point & Shirley Residents & Ratepayers Association (OPSRRA) and was intended to bring together individuals and organizations in Otter Point, Shirley and Jordan River who were interested in developing a strategic vision for how our community should develop over the next 5 -15 years. About 35 invitations were sent-out in November 2006 and 25 replies were received. Sixteen individuals representing 20 different organizations attended the initial meeting. Some of the areas of suggested interest were: recreation, governance, economic development, community services (fire protection, water, roads, health, and communications), sustainable food supply, environmental protection and community development.

Since that initial meeting another 5 organizations have asked to be included in future sessions.

B) From the group attending the initial meeting, a steering committee of 8 -representing various areas of the community, was created.

#### **Steering Committee Members**

Wayne Fritz- OPSRRA  
Arnie Campbell – OPSRRA  
Emma Taylor – OPSRRA & Community Health Initiative  
Heather Phillips – Otter Point Resident  
Rosemary Jorna – Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society  
Alanda Carver – Muir Creek Protection Society

Liz Petersen – Sooke B&B Association  
John Charles – Private Forest Landowner

### C) Start-up Grant

The Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Regional Director has issued a \$1,000 start-up grant to OPSRRA to be used for the Developing a Strategic Vision project.

### D) Grant Application to EDC

A grant application for \$2,000 is presently before the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Economic Development Commission. If approved at their April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, the money would be used to underwrite the cost of the economic development component of the project.

### E) Meeting With Smart Growth B.C.

An initial (free) meeting was held with a representative of Smart Growth B.C. on March 6<sup>th</sup>. Ideas about how the project could be shaped to ensure community participation and suggestions about topics for community workshops were shared. Smart Growth B.C. may be hired to assist with the project if sufficient funding is available.

### F) Locating & Cataloging Background Material

We have been collecting background information on our area; thus far over two dozen studies and planning documents have been located. These documents are being reviewed, summarized and assessed to determine if they contain useful information.

## **Need for More Funding**

The present budget for the project is a very conservative \$7,800. In addition to the grant application to the JDF EDC, we are in the process of submitting two grants to private business foundations that are interested in supporting communities that are pursuing planned change.

We still need more money. Donations towards the cost of the project will be considered from both public and private sources. If, as an individual or a business, you support the idea of community involvement in developing a strategic vision for Otter Point & Shirley/Jordan River, then we request your financial support or ideas about where we could be seeking funding.

## **Liaison with JDF Governance Study Committee**

Concurrent with our project is another group that is looking into governance options for Shirley/Jordan River and Otter Point. They are part of a larger Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Governance Study committee; we will try to share our information, as Governance is one of the major theme areas included in the Developing a Strategic Vision project. There is a need for two more people from Otter Point to become part of the JDF Governance Study Committee. If you would be interested in volunteering, contact Ken Douch @ 642-2114 or [kalsooke@shaw.ca](mailto:kalsooke@shaw.ca) or the JDF Electoral Area office @ 642-1500 during business hours for more details.

### **Developing a Strategic Vision Contact Information**

If you have any questions about the project or want to volunteer to help us as we move forward with fundraising, planning community workshops and publicizing our findings, contact Wayne Fritz @ 642-0440 or [wfritz@shaw.ca](mailto:wfritz@shaw.ca)