

## SUMMARY NOTES

### SPEAKERS' PRESENTATIONS AND THE QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION from the ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY CHANGE FORUM

Otter Point Fire Hall, 3727 Otter Point Road  
October 4, 2007 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.

80 people attending, including moderator Arnie Campbell

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.** Wayne Fritz, Chair of the Developing a Strategic Vision Steering Committee, described changes in the Otter Point Shirley-Jordan River area over the last two years and the background to the strategic vision project. He then turned the floor over to moderator Arnie Campbell, President of Otter Point & Shirley Residents & Ratepayers Association.

Mr. Campbell made some housekeeping announcements, outlined the agenda of the forum and then introduced the speakers. He pointed out that it was a coincidence that the forum topic chosen was "Economic Development and Community Change" when the month of October is designated "Small Business Month." Mr. Campbell also pointed out that the forum was not planned to deal with issues around the sale of WFP lands.

Three sheets were circulated through the audience during the forum: a sign-up for the Information Bulletin, email only; a straw poll on areas people consider important; a sign-up for membership in OPSRRA and or to receive OPSRRA newsletters, e-mail only.

The introductions for the speakers are included before the summary of each speaker's comments.

#### **MONA BRASH "Silver Spray – a Cautionary Tale"**

*Mona Brash currently teaches the Canadian Constitution at the University of Victoria and Political Science in the Officer Professional Military Education Program for the Royal Military College on the Esquimalt Naval Base. Ms. Brash has been involved in politics at all levels as an advocate of citizen participation and due process. She recently completed her Master's thesis in Political Science focusing on the Silver Spray project in East Sooke.*

Ms. Brash's tale is about how the Silver Spray issue turned East Sooke into a social war zone. It provides an example of how not to do economic development or deal with issues around changing land use. The Silver Spray story involves conflict between two factions: one that could be characterized as supporting economic growth and one that could be characterized as defending the *status quo*.

The story begins about ten years ago with Michael Thornton's purchase of the Silver Spray farm in 1996. There were four different development proposals until in June 2002,

after five years, the CRD approved the fourth. The successful proposal was to change the farmland to a higher density use. At the June 2002 CRD meeting there were clearly two factions present in the audience: those with “something to lose” and those with “something to gain.” There was no neutral zone.

In 1997, the East Sooke community learned of Michael Thornton’s plan to develop an eco-lodge and higher density use at Silver Spray. Reaction was personalized and ugly from the start. There was name calling on both sides and well researched files were created that included information about people’s support for or opposition to the Silver Spray project and their voting record, political views and contributions, letters to the newspapers and other information. People were spying on each other and this may have involved phone calls being secretly taped. Legitimate and not-legitimate organizations made statements and provided their information to the public in various forms. The situation lead to law suits for defamation. East Sooke became a social war zone.

How did East Sooke turn into this? It involved accidents of personality. The developer saw the land as a commodity. He wanted greater density to increase the value of the land for himself and his investors. Supporters of the project liked the potential jobs and potential amenities such as improved water supply. Opponents felt the proposed new use would be an invasion of their home and community as well as the destruction of a unique and irreplaceable landscape. They had concerns about the environment: fire protection, sewage disposal, logging, protection of the foreshore. Both sides positioned themselves as environmentalists with the result that the environmental issues were dumbed down and environmentalism was discredited.

Also, there was very little good public information about the process. The decision making was confused; for example, during the five years of conflict, the people on the East Sooke Advisory Planning Commission changed because of an intervening election and perceived conflict of interest. People had little knowledge of the roles of government and made appeals to higher government to intervene when the Capital Regional District was responsible. Allegations of conflict of interest and lawsuits developed during this period.

The decision-making process should have been clear, but it was not. During the five years of conflict there was no attempt at negotiation between the two factions. The events – personal attacks and appeals to higher government – were an inefficient use of people’s energy. The delays while about 55 meetings were held cost taxpayers money. Ms. Brash asked the audience to imagine what the outcome might have been if the parties had talked issues over, explored common goals and worked out something they could live with instead of causing hundreds of thousands of dollars to be spent inefficiently. In the end, everyone lost something: the Silver Spray application was approved, so the opponents lost; the supporters lost the increase to the tax-base because the developer successfully petitioned to have his property annexed to the District of Sooke; the developer lost because the delay cost money.

Ms. Brash characterized Silver Spray as an opportunity missed. The lesson is to focus on finding solutions, not on the conflict.

**NICOLE CHALAND “Managing Change through Community Economic Development: Stories from Small Town Canada”**

*Nicole Chaland is the Canadian Community Economic Development Network’s Director of Learning and Development. She coordinates Simon Fraser University’s Certificate Program for Community Economic Development (CEC) Professionals, where she also teaches “CED Approaches to Affordable Housing.” She is a co-op activist and educator who worked in the Philippines learning co-operative development and community building from her peers in the social economy in that country. Upon returning to Canada, she continued to work in the co-operative sector as a researcher at the BC Institute for Co-operative Studies. She is a founding member of Roofs and Roots Housing Co-op, which converts private rental buildings to co-operative ownership and green buildings over time. For the last five years, Ms. Chaland has worked with the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet), initially as the research coordinator who coordinated the first national survey of CED organizations across Canada. Ms. Chaland co-authored “CED in Canada: Review of Definitions and Profile of Practice” in Community Economic Development: Building for Social Change. She has a deep commitment to supporting solutions that come from communities themselves.*

Ms. Chaland said she would follow Ms. Brash’s presentation with a story about what we should do for economic development. She referred the audience to a handout and also to her business card. She said that people should call her if they had unanswered questions after the forum. At the end of her presentation, Ms. Chaland issued handouts. The web site for more information on the Community Economic Development Network (CEDNET) is [www.ccednet-rcdec.ca](http://www.ccednet-rcdec.ca)

Ms. Chaland defined community economic development as a process whereby people living in a community work together to create a diversified and sustainable local economy. She said that Adam Smith’s description of the market and the invisible hand was correct for his day when there was a problem of scarcity. In the present day, there is plenty but the problem is distribution. We need a different economic model to deal with the problem of distribution.

At present, the focus of economic development in Canada is on outside investment. It is a top-down model in which the local community is not involved in planning its future. Business and political leaders bring in investors who are wined and dined in the hopes that they will invest in the community.

The Community Economic Development Network, which Ms. Chaland represents, is a national, Canada-wide, non-government organization with 650 members. It is member led and democratic, with the goal of providing local residents with a voice to seek maximum social and economic benefits from economic development in their area.

Critical success factors include:

First, a capacity for planning, research and advocacy. People need knowledge of how an economy functions and an intimate idea of what is really going on in their own communities. Tourism and forestry are big segments, but what factors exist on the smaller scale? For example, people need to know how many houses in their area are not lived in, i.e. are vacation homes. Absent owners reduce the wealth in the community.

Second, knowledge of the multiplier effect for developments. Communities need to know how many jobs are created by changes. The multiplier effect ranges between 1.1 and 1.4 for every dollar that comes into a community. The effect is higher for people living at lower incomes because higher income people spend more of their money outside of their local community.

Third, community-wide vision. People need to take time to talk about shared values, rather than get distracted by differences. Values are real and most people find they have common values.

Fourth, collaboration between groups with similar goals and values, e.g., a credit union and Community Futures group.

Fifth, accountability. People need to know who is making decisions and how the decisions are made.

Sixth, trust. This is important if the community is to move forward. Transparency is also necessary, e.g., the availability of income statements. Leadership is also critical.

Seventh, access to credit and equity. Capital is needed for investment.

The community vision should project 20 years into the future, with reviews and revisions every five years to confirm the consensus and direction.

A community needs to come together in an early, highly visible success at the beginning of the planning process, e.g., a successful building project or even a block party.

Revelstoke provides an example of successful economic development in a small town. Revelstoke was settled in the 1880s with an economy based on logging to supply the needs of the mines and the Canadian Pacific Railway. In 1955, the provincial government gave out a Tree Farm Licence tied to the local mills. From the 1960s through the early 1980s, the town boomed. This was the period of mega dam building on the Columbia River. The boom was followed by a bust when dam construction finished and timber and agricultural land was flooded. Local residents had not been consulted about these consequences of the dam building program. By 1986, the town had lost 2,500 jobs. The unemployment rate reached 25% and there were 450 houses on the market. Only one twentieth of the timber supply was processed locally.

However, in the 1980s, the residents had started an economic development process so they were somewhat prepared. The municipal government hired an Economic Development Commissioner. After a false start, they were successful in revitalizing the

town core by restoring the historic buildings. This resulted in a sense of pride and community. Organizations formed and leadership emerged. A second success came when the first Community Futures Development Corporation in BC was established in Revelstoke. It was local in scope, not weakened by having to serve too wide an area. The Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Consultant, Community Futures and Small Business Bureau all shared office space and provided one-stop shopping and convenience for working together. The Credit Union then moved into the same building.

The forest industry was not generating many jobs. In 1992, the Saskatchewan company that held the Tree Farm Licence proposed selling the licence to a US company. The community of Revelstoke was in a position to apply to purchase part of the licence to operate a community forest. They were given 12 days to prepare a proposal and were able to secure one half of the licence with some of the financing from the town of Revelstoke. The resulting community forest corporation was and is a success. It made a profit in its first year. Local mills receive 50% of the timber harvest. Unemployment dropped to 10%. The municipal government received \$75,000 in income from the community forest. Revelstoke is an example of a community that did the foundation work and was able to speak with a common voice to achieve a community vision.

### **BRIAN WHITE “Leading the Vision: Growth Management and the Quality of Community Life”**

*Dr. Brian White is Professor and Director for the School of Tourism and Hotel Management at Royal Roads University. He holds a PhD in Human Geography from Simon Fraser University, where his research focus has been settlement and tourism on the west coast of Vancouver Island. In November 2004, he was honored as the Canadian tourism industry’s “Educator of the Year” at the annual Pinnacle Awards in Toronto, hosted by Hotelier magazine.*

*His recent consulting work in British Columbia has included community tourism strategic planning, museum organizational restructuring, human resource development for tourism, cultural and arts-based tourism development planning, and First Nations tourism planning. Recent international consulting and lecturing experience includes human resource policy and planning, community capacity building, cultural tourism, and eco-tourism initiatives. Consulting contracts with a variety of clients and funding agencies have been recently undertaken in Vietnam, Bulgaria, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Guam, Thailand, and Costa Rica.*

Dr. White began by commenting that he has lived in East Sooke only since July 31, 2007. His background includes working in the logging industry near Tahsis, in Tree Farm Licence 19. He was responsible for building the road into Tahsis. In the 1990s, he wrote his PhD thesis on the Clayoquot Sound logging controversy and supervised students who were involved in the protest and civil disobedience against logging in that area. His thesis is titled “Authoring the Landscape in Clayoquot Sound.”

Dr. White said that civil disobedience and protests worked for Clayoquot Sound in the 1990s but there are strategies available beyond bitterness and conflict. It is important not to create a legacy of conflict. Ucluelet and Tofino provide examples of how different

communities survived a controversial economic development proposal. Ucluelet is going forward with \$5 million from Weyerhaeuser. Tofino still experiences the emotional fallout from the 1990s. The town suffered a crisis in water supply in the summer of 2006 and has not agreed on a solution. Dr. White has learned that community action is only as good as the relationships within the community.

Today a community needs a good strategy and tactics. In the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area, the WFP land has been withdrawn from TFL 25 and put on the real estate market. Local forest workers are upset and the land is likely going to become residential. Dr. White's advice is as he quoted from Ashley Brilliant: If you can't go through it, under it or around it, you had better negotiate with it.

All of the local economy has changed. The area is developing a service-based economy in place of a resource-based economy. There are sectors that depend on tourism, such as the bed and breakfast industry, and there are sectors that depend on the local population, such as landscaping services, small businesses and retailers. There are people who work from home and there is still a resource extraction sector with income from the forest industry. We have to improve on what is here.

A community needs pragmatic strategies and vision based on a consensus approach. Dr. White advised a sense of urgency: that we not take years to develop priorities and a wish list. An opportunity exists for the CRD to achieve more than just parks through density bonusing. Amenities can include fire and ambulance service. As well, the area will need better roads to accommodate increased traffic. Highway 14 already has more commuter traffic than it can handle between Sooke and Victoria, as he knows from trying to get onto the highway from Gillespie Road in the morning. We may want another road north of the existing highway. He said the area will absorb growth. We need to develop a vision that focuses on the triple bottom line: economic, social and environmental benefits.

Dr. White advised that if the present CRD system doesn't work, it should be changed. We should build a network/system that includes a wide geographic area and a broad political spectrum. Include Cowichan. Consult with representative from all political parties. Make the issues personal with the corporations involved. For example, Western Forest Products is owned by Brookfield. Get in touch with the CEO and talk to him about the corporation's plans for the area. Dr. White also advised not to get into conflicts that lead nowhere.

Dr. White recommended getting in touch with the press. The sale of WFP land does not have to be "the next tragic loss." The community needs to assign leadership, create teams, and assign responsibilities. We need to get external people involved. As well as the CBC and other media, use the Internet, blogs, case studies, and get people to look at what is going on.

While planning for the growth that will come, we need to make sure features such as low cost housing are included. We need to keep track of taxes so they don't become a problem. We need to use the new legislation on phased development to control density.

We need to be clear on where the commercial centre will be. We need to understand capitalization and financing for projects.

In summary, a community can cruise along without thinking until something big comes along that triggers a response. A community needs a consensus on what it wants in the way of services such as water, roads and schools. Leadership is essential within groups. There has to be a community plan. People can be passionate, as they are in Whistler, and still understand the strategies that make their plan work. We need to use the tools such as zoning and plans for infrastructure. Be professional and don't pick fights with people.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Note: These are not quotes; they are intended to capture the main ideas of the Q & A session. Unless otherwise specified, the "comments" are from members of the audience.

**Question** (Shirley resident): She was told at a meeting in Shirley that Otter Point was going on its own and that Shirley was considering going with Metchosin. Why is Shirley here with Otter Point?

**Answer:**

A. Campbell: The ratepayers association does represent both communities. Otter Point and Shirley were originally together, only divided later, need to work together.

Jane Munro: Two members of the Shirley Governance Committee also sit on the Developing a Strategic Vision Committee.

**Question:** Does OPSRRA want to downzone property in Otter Point and Shirley? Will it be negotiated? How will it be dealt with?

**Answer:**

B. White: This can be a particularly divisive issue in a community. Some will want to subdivide and others will want lots to stay large. This is where visioning and community discussion can best occur. Some developers will want to subdivide. If the community does not take control of the issue the CRD will create the zoning. Bigger is better for Otter Point and Shirley. Get the zoning right and then protect it.

M. Brash: Down zoning is not common in BC.

Comment: Balkanization is occurring out here. There is a need to expand the scope of the Strategic Vision Committee to go out to Port Renfrew so it can cover WFP lands.

**Question:** What is "Community Futures" about?

**Answer:**

N. Chaland: It is a federal program created by Industry Canada to allow community development corporations with local people on the boards. Its major function is to give small business loans. The local community development corporation gets core funding and is a quasi-government body. A good example is in Haida Gwaii.

B. White: Squamish also has a community development corporation.  
Participant: So does Sooke.

**Question:** As the strategic vision gets drafted, to whom does it go? Who sees that it is carried out?

M. Brash: Who is asking for the documents?

**Answer:** (W. Fritz recapped the history of the project.)

B. White: OPSRRA is a good place to start with a vision but don't just leave it on the shelf. We will need tools and strategies to operationalize it: communications, connections, graduate students to help, funding. Create a shopping list.

M. Brash: Make sure the process includes a wide cross-section of the population or there will be disagreement later in the process. Make sure people get elected and involved: e.g., Advisory Planning Commissions and Official Community Plan Committees. Get the decision makers we want elected. Force an OCP discussion.

A. Campbell: OPSRRA is not doing the "Columbus thing – taking other people's money and heading off into the unknown." The Strategic Vision document needs to go to the CRD when the Regional Growth Strategy review begins in 2008. We are outside the Urban Containment Boundary, but will want to comment. It will go to the JdF EA Economic Development Commission; it will help shape election campaigns for Regional Director. It will be useful when the CRD Parks Master Plan is reviewed and when the Official Community Plans are reviewed.

Comment: The 1986 OCP for the Sooke Electoral Area has an example of a vision that hasn't gone anywhere. The OCP says we should identify commercial and industrial lands. The latest OCP doesn't identify any new areas for this zoning, although the zoning does allow for home-based businesses.

Comment: The JdF EA Economic Development Commission has two representatives from Otter Point. It needs another rep from Shirley. Anyone willing to join the commission should talk to Regional Director Erik Lund.

N. Chaland: If the EDC needs to negotiate, it will do better with a fresh vision. Everyone has to buy into the vision and everyone has to do a share of the work. Example: We may want to encourage the school to have a market garden as part of the slow food movement.

**Question:** Habitat destruction is a major issue. How do we build the protection of trees and frogs into our strategies so that they are recognized as part of the community?

**Answer:**

B. White: Growth should proceed with as little harm to the environment as possible. There are global values. We can build a stewardship role for the environment into the strategic vision, e.g., wetlands protection.

N. Chaland: Good economic development strategy should include plans for people who cannot take care of themselves. Expand the concept to the environment.

M. Brash: We need to clarify what the existing environment is and to get the resources to do this. When the Bamberton projects were proposed, the government funded data collection for that area and Todd Inlet, so there is

now a lot of mapping and documentation. In this era, it might be hard to find government funds. The developers could be asked to fund an environmental survey.

**Question** (Shirley resident): She noticed after houses were re-numbered on her road that there is a six-number gap between the houses. Present zoning is for one house on one hectare. Does the gap in numbers mean there are plans to add in six more houses?

**Answer:**

B. White: The phased development concept could be helpful here. The option would not allow further development once an agreement of density bonusing was in place.

Comment: She has lived in many parts of the province. She suggests a round table so the strategic vision discussion goes beyond the Ratepayers Association to include other groups such as First Nations and Forestry.

A. Campbell: OPSRRA did invite Timber West and WFP and the T'sou-ke First Nation to the initial meeting for the strategic vision project. TimberWest and WFP had representatives at the first meeting. We still want them in the process.

**Question:** Agreed, people shouldn't make personal attacks. That said, the biggest obstacle facing small businesses in the area is getting people to shop locally. For Thanksgiving, his family is going to try to organize a 100-mile dinner. Is there any way of expanding the 100-mile idea to more of the local economy?

**Answer:**

N. Chaland: She agrees. A Community Economic Development strategy is to keep more spending local through buying local, doing import substitution. She suggested a local consumer survey to find out where people shop, and a system of "local currency" to remind people to shop locally. She asked people to contact her for more ideas.

B. White: He said the area is already well known as a tourist destination. He suggested branding the area and doing an inventory of assets: agri-tourist potential, natural beauty areas, art and craft locations, wineries, organic farms and so on.

S. Barta (OPSRRA director managing the website): Community people need to know about local businesses. OPSRRA has a website that allows advertising for local businesses.

Comment: People should join the Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce does not only represent the District of Sooke. It can be used to support a regional approach.

Comment: Other examples where "Sooke" in the organization's name seems to confuse people are the Sooke Region Museum and the Sooke School District.

**Question:** Are petitions useful tools?

**Answer:**

B. White: He doesn't think so. There aren't a lot of people in the area to produce a petition. A petition with thousands of names might be a good tool. A petition is a last resort. The community needs to do its work up-front and do

negotiated settlements. If it goes immediately to a petition, it probably hasn't used the other, more effective tools.

**Question:** Given that Otter Point and Shirley have little political clout with only 3,000 residents, how can we attract attention and action for their concerns? For example, there is an ecological disaster on the boundary between the two communities and we have no influence on what is happening.

**Answer:**

V. Husband: Responding at the request of the moderator, she advised talking to the people in Sechelt who are dealing with gravel mining problems. She said there are other people dealing with logging in watersheds, if the question refers to the protection of Muir Creek.

N. Chaland: Her organization is intended to help small communities in such situations. A community economic development plan and strategies re-localize control over the economy. Meanwhile, form alliances and speak with one voice.

Comment: While new to this area, she described how she helped organize her previous neighbourhood to negotiate with a developer. She got the mayor involved and that official listened to the community's concerns. The municipality hired an urban developer. She recommends that the community seek out experts for advice – people who know what they are doing.

**Question:** We have heard about Revelstoke's Community Forest Corporation. Where else have community forest corporations been established? Are they still successful?

**Answer:**

N. Chaland: The information is at [www.ccednet-rcdec.ca](http://www.ccednet-rcdec.ca) People can also phone her for more information. The Revelstoke Community Forest Corporation is still operating.

B. White: Cowichan has the Cowichan Valley Community Forest that dates from the 1930s when the owners of the property could not pay taxes on it. It is currently managed for the benefit of the community (recreation, green space, some jobs). Our community could likely negotiate for a community forest with WFP.

A. Campbell: Cowichan reports that its forest makes money for them.

**Question:** Decision making is often top down and leads to a homogenization of the world. TILMA is an example. What will we do as an unorganized area? Is there a plan to form a government?

**Answer:**

A Campbell: Governance is an important issue. It will be one of the topics for an upcoming public information forum. If the provincial government is not persuaded by the people's vision, nothing will come from it. As part of an unincorporated area, we are at a disadvantage with only one elected representative to the CRD.

B. White: He recommended the communities fight for self-determination and that means making choices about government. He said that we should consider options such as becoming a new regional district as well as

incorporating as a district municipality. He said we need to think about what a municipality or district would look like and to consider the role of Jordan River as a potential municipal or district centre.

M. Brash: She agreed that local government is the best way to proceed. She said not to buy into amalgamation. The Ben Marr report has a lot of information to work from. She also said we need to keep track of which level of government deals with the different problem areas we identify. It is the provincial government that decides on local governance. People need to run for office.

Comment: Some references to politicians seem cynical and off-putting. We are asking people in the room to run for office because they care about the issues.

B. White: It doesn't hurt to have someone grab onto your issue and run with it. Representation that is passionate is best.

**Question:** In a small population, it is important that people vote. What are issues that galvanize and unite communities? What tactics can give the people a voice? People united around a single issue can determine the outcome of an election.

**Answer:**

B. White: People unite when they feel under threat from something. A campaign needs to be positive and strategic.

Comment (A. Campbell): At present, one third of the registered voters in the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area are residents of the Songhees Reserve in View Royal who receive CRD water service, and are therefore entitled to representation on the CRD Board. Other than electing the Regional Director, they have little in common with the rest of the JDFEA. This situation does not make sense.

## FINAL COMMENTS BY SPEAKERS

### Mona Brash

- Local politicians are usually responsive to community issues and are therefore less likely to change their minds. They are less likely to be tied to political party platforms.
- Listen to each other and avoid engaging in personal attacks.
- Understand your current zoning bylaw.
- Run for office.
- Recognize that at some point in negotiations you must say either "yes" or "no" and the negotiation ends.
- Work with other groups but maintain a separate identity.
- Support transparency in organizations.
- Be at the negotiating tables but make sure that you are communicating with all groups present; don't sit by yourselves.
- The vision project is a good start.
- Be proactive. Be nice to government staff.

**Nicole Chaland**

- Be creative with how to get community participation in the visioning and planning process. Focus groups and surveys are often useful.
- People need to feel heard or they won't buy into a solution.
- Expect to make changes in your Official Community Plan, as the Premier announced at a recent UBCM meeting that all OCPs will be required to deal with green house gas emissions.

**Brian White**

- Build capacity and consensus for community change through networking, alliances, Internet use and media contacts.
- Develop negotiating skills.
- Get elected to government office and get other politicians to buy into your plans.
- Develop a vision that includes the quality of life in your community.
- Build sustainability issues into your plan for all socio-economic groups.
- Carry out an inventory of community assets and the landscape.
- Don't blink. Stay the course. Good luck.