

Minutes of the Feb. 12, 2007 Ad Hoc Meeting of Persons Interested in Developing a Vision Document for Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River (SUBSEQUENTLY RENAMED AS THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE)

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: Otter Point Fire Hall

1. Welcome Statement

Arnie Campbell, as acting chair

- welcomed everyone to the meeting on behalf of the meeting organized by OPSRRA,
- noted that the Shirley and Otter Point populations had increased substantially between 2001 and 2006 (21% and 24% respectively);
- noted that building permits had doubled in Otter Point in 2006 from the previous five year average and were up slightly in Shirley/Jordan River;
- pointed out that a visioning project need not start from “zero” as there had been a range of reports and studies done over the past few years which included information about Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River;
- information collected in developing a community vision could be used to better prepare for the next OCP review;
- suggested that the scope of the project could possibly include the JDF Electoral Area lands north of Otter Point and Shirley up to the Cowichan Regional District; but
- emphasized that the purpose of the meeting was to:
 - learn more about the project,
 - hear suggestions and ideas,
 - decide whether to proceed with the project or not, and
 - establish a steering committee if there was agreement to proceed.

2. Introductions

Round- table introductions were made for everyone at the meeting as follows:

Liz Petersen (Sooke B & B Association)

Heather Phillips (Otter Point Resident)

Rosemary Jorna (JDF Community Trails Society)

Alanda Carver (Muir Creek Protection Society)

Ken Douch (Otter Point representative to: JDF Economic Development Commission, JDF Parks Commission and JDF Land Use Committee)

Holger Lazrad (ALM Farms)

Maureen Nelson (SEAS)

Ken Pearse (Sooke Salmon Enhancement Society)

Steve Lorimer (Timber West)

Marianne Stolz (Timber West)

Joanne Hemphill (Kemp Lake Waterworks District)

Kenny Jones (Kludakh Club and Otter Point Fire Trustees)

John Charles (Private Forest Landowner)

Wayne Fritz (OPSRRA)
Arnie Campbell (OPSRRA)

Emma Taylor (OPSRRA)

Regrets at being unable to attend the meeting were received from:

Chuck Minten (Shirley Community Association)
Bruce Lemire-Elmore (Sooke B & B Association)
Veronica Armstrong (MCPS)

3. Background to the Project

Wayne Fritz, on behalf of OPSRRA, made a background presentation regarding the proposed visioning project. He noted a number of factors that had been identified by OPSRRA which were currently and would increasingly affect Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River, namely:

- population movement onto southern Vancouver Island was leading to increased residential development in Otter Point, Shirley/Jordan River and Port Renfrew as land became less available in other southern areas;
- the pace and size of such developments were likely to increase as forest companies sold off portions of their land to companies for large scale development projects;
- increased population growth and development would lead to:
 - increasing requests for changes in current local government planning frameworks (e.g. Regional Growth Strategy, Official Community Plans, Zoning Bylaws),
 - requirements to expand a range of services (e.g. road maintenance, fire protection, police protection, land use planning, telephone services, school services, water supply/quality, environmental protection, recreational services, etc.) and
 - increases in the local property tax base and/or property tax rate to fund such service increases.

OPSRRA had concluded that the development of a vision document, which identified broad community goals and related strategies to achieve them over the next few years, was one way for Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River residents to discuss and manage such pressures for change.

Potential broad goal to be used in developing a vision document for Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River had been identified:

Governance and Geographic Area
Community Services
Taxation
Economic Development
Social Progress
Environmental Preservation

Preliminary ideas developed by OPSRRA about how to obtain broad community participation in developing a vision document ranged from holding a one-day visioning workshop to organizing a mix of community meetings and one or more workshops. Informing, discussing, deciding and reporting back to the community were stressed as being integral to any process decided upon.

Key outcomes from a visioning project were identified as:

- bringing a cross section of individuals together in a process to jointly identify broad community goals and strategies,
- informing community residents and decision-makers about goals and strategies that were identified, and
- using the vision document as a basis for future community discussion and decision-making.

Wayne Fritz stated that although OPSRRA supported proceeding with such a visioning project for Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River, it believed that such a project could proceed only with support from a wide range of individuals and community organizations. Consequently, OPSRRA had contacted some 32 local organizations, asking them if they were interested/supportive of such a project. Seven expressed some interest in the proposed project while 14 were both interested and prepared to be involved in some manner. The remainder either didn't respond or were not interested for a variety of reasons. OPSRRA subsequently invited interested individuals to this ad hoc meeting.

In the general discussion following the presentation, the following potential community goals were identified:

- Promoting food sustainability and use of agricultural land
- Better informing the community about local services, organizations and decision-making processes
- Establishing a community hall in Otter Point
- Strengthening employment in Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River
- Establishing fire protection services in Jordan River
- Improving recreational services (parks, trails, beach access, etc.)
- Improving emergency communication and Internet services
- Supporting recruitment and use of community volunteers
- Improving provision of daycare/childhood services

A number of additional organizations were also identified that might be interested in a visioning project for Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River, namely:

- Girl Guides
- Cooperative Association of Service Agencies
- Association of BC Landowners

4. Resources and Funding

Emma Taylor, on behalf of OPSRRA, made a presentation about resources and funding required for a visioning project. Key points:

- Project expenses were difficult to forecast until decisions were made about the process to be used for the visioning project, but a draft budget of between \$7,500 and \$8,00 had been developed for working purposes and some specific workshop costs had been identified.
- Applications for funding had been made to the Regional Director of the JDF Electoral Area (\$1,000) and to the JDF Economic Development Commission (\$2,000).
- Some other funding sources from the UBCM were being examined but appear to be too specifically project focused to be applicable to the visioning project.
- The local MLA and MP would be asked if they were aware of potential provincial or federal government funding sources for the project.
- SmartGrowth BC would be willing to assist a steering committee in planning a visioning process through a one-day workshop and would require only their expenses to be covered.

In the general discussions following the presentation, it was suggested that grants from the BC Lottery Corporation also be explored as a source of funding. A. Campbell noted that any corporate donation would also be welcome providing there were “no strings attached.”

5. Next Steps

General discussion about the proposed project produced a number of observations, questions and issues.

- How could community support for the project be assessed?
- How can one get participation from people who are already very busy?
- The project would have been more useful if done before the Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River Official Community Plans were developed.
- The JDF Governance Committee may be a useful source of information.
- A lot of work would need to be done to clarify what the main issues are.
- The process of developing a vision must be inclusive.
- A two-step process with a workshop coming first may be more practical.
- A process that is targeted at “officialdom” and fits into local OCPs and Zoning bylaws would be most effective and respected by large landowners.
- Whatever comes out of the process should/must be “validated” through a local bylaw.
- To get community attention, the project should focus on only 1-2 important issues.

While there was some skepticism, the general consensus was that enough support exists to proceed with the establishment of a steering committee for the project.

Persons volunteering to participate on the steering committee were:

Liz Petersen
 John Charles
 Heather Phillips
 Rosemary Jorna
 Alanda Carver
 Arnie Campbell

Emma Taylor
Wayne Fritz

It was agreed that the steering committee would meet shortly to begin planning. Communication will be carried out largely through email, with face-to-face meetings scheduled when necessary.

6. Wrap-up

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.