

BOWEN ISLAND MUNICIPALITY

Minutes of the Public Hearing (Snug Cove Village Plan) Meeting of the **Municipal Council** of Bowen Island Municipality held Thursday June 23, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. at Bowen Island Community School, Bowen Island, B.C.

COUNCIL IN ATTENDANCE

Mayor Lisa Barrett
Councillor Alan Leigh
Councillor Neil Boyd
Councillor Terry Cotter
Councillor Peter Frinton
Councillor Alison Morse
Councillor David Wrinch

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Isabell Hadford, Chief Administrative Officer*
Gina MacKay – Island Community Planner

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Michael Rosen – Planning Consultant
Approximately 125 members of the Public
Jacqueline Massey – *The Undercurrent*
Gayle Ferguson – Minute Taker
(*denotes partial attendance)

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Barrett called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

OPENING REMARKS

Mayor Barrett noted that the Public Hearing was being convened in order to consider proposed Bylaw No. 137, 2004 cited as “Bowen Island Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 139, 1995, Amendment Bylaw No. 137, 2004”. The purpose of the Public Hearing was to allow members of the public to make representations to Council. Everyone who was interested would be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard or to present written presentations.

Mayor Barrett noted that the Public Hearing would be the last opportunity by the public to comment on Bylaw No. 137. Council would listen to all presentations and at the end of the process, Council could give, without further notice, any decision it deemed proper regarding Bylaw No. 137.

BYLAWS FOR CONSIDERATION

Bylaw No. 137, 2004 cited as “Bowen Island Municipality Bylaw No. 137, 2004 – Bowen Island Municipality Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 139, 1995 Amendment Bylaw No. 137, 2004

Michael Rosen Planning Consultant provided a short history of the Snug Cove Village Plan. He noted the following main points:

- The Snug Cove Village Plan was a document to provide guidance for Council in land use issues. It created an opportunity to rezone when specific development proposals would be brought forward for consideration;
- Increased Density;
- Long Term Ferry Marshalling Options;
- Vision of the plan - to create a village in the park, a pedestrian oriented area;

- Protection of Heron Nesting areas;
- Marinas.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

Mayor Barrett noted that a box for written submissions had been provided for the public and Council would review all written submissions left in the box prior to consideration of adopting the bylaws relating to the Snug Cove Village Plan.

VERBAL SUBMISSIONS

Brenda McLuhan noted that she was not in support of the urban style density plan for Bowen Island that would allow for 235 residential units and up to 150 multi family houses. Such a plan was not compatible with:

- The rural character of Bowen Island;
- The Islands Trust stated objective to preserve and protect the environment and should be a first step in any plan for Snug Cove;
- Official Community Plan guiding principles - maintenance of the intrinsic attraction and insular characteristic of Bowen Island;
- High Density was not in keeping with rural identity or serenity of island living, which were the values that brought people to Bowen Island;
- The affordable housing rationale found in the Snug Cove Plan was not valid;
- Opposed to the Loop Road through Crippen Park as the park was an amenity that many people enjoyed. Suggest the Snug Cove Village Plan be amended to provide specific protection for Crippen Park;
- Multi unit dwellings and water concerns – request to rethink the multi unit dwellings policy.

Bill Riddell noted he had a vested interest in the Snug Cove Village Plan as the owner of the Seabreeze Building, which he had purchased 25 years ago. He further noted that since 1987 he had served on various Snug Cove Planning Committees. He believed that Snug Cove was not rural in nature but a village on the Island and he urged approval of the Bylaw.

Ross Carter noted his support for the vision statement and guiding principles in the Snug Cove Village Plan but expressed concerns for the following:

- Residential Development 4.1.3 (d) relating to demonstrated community benefits. Mr. Carter requested that Council ensure the 2nd to last sentence would refer to all rezoning proposals as it had been suggested that the amenity requirement would refer only to those rezoning proposals above 15 units. He believed the amenity requirement should apply to all rezoning proposals;
- What would be the effect of redesignating the historians lot and building as Village Commercial as it was obviously Institutional?

Richard Osler noted he and his family had moved to Bowen Island 12 years ago and became attached to the Island and its community. He requested that Council not break his heart and the hearts of his family by not intervening to prevent the continuation of the unchecked pace of development and the present plans for Snug Cove. He noted that the Snug Cove Village Plan did not address housing needs or prevent Bowen Island from becoming a West Vancouver clone. He had expected planning for growth on Bowen Island to be measured and gradual in order to protect Bowen Island's intrinsic values. He suggested that Council reduce the density and include a Municipal Green State Trust not to further develop the land.

Bill Hamilton urged Council to adopt Bylaw No. 137, 2004. He noted his support for the concept of increasing population and diversity within Snug Cove. Townhouses seemed a logical solution to provide affordable housing. He encouraged Council to seek a solution to ferry marshalling first before planning could take place.

Paul Hoosen, speaking on behalf of the Bowen Island Arts Council expressed the following concerns relating to land use designations north of the RCMP precinct designated as Civic Institutional and Village Residential. He believed that including residential use would endanger the intent and compromise the potential for providing land within Snug Cove for a community facility. He requested Council to change the land designated in this area from "Village Residential" to "Civic Institutional".

Rod LeRoy, a 35-year resident of Bowen Island, noted he had built approximately a 100 homes over a twenty five year period. He urged Council to pass the Snug Cove Village Plan.

Jean Jamieson suggested that the density in the Snug Cove Village Plan should correspond to the Official Community Plan's projected build out population of 7,000 for Bowen Island. She believed that the present Snug Cove Village Plan would add to the projected population density for Bowen Island. Density transfer would be the only mechanism, which could allow increased densities in Snug Cove, while ensuring no increase in the overall population in order to keep Bowen Island green. She requested that Council consider the impact of greater density around Snug Cove as it would require more open areas for recreational purposes and the Heritage Precinct would become crowded. She applied Council's Mission Statement to the Snug Cove Village Plan as follows:

1. Protect the environment – overall impact and well being of future generations would not be enhanced;
2. Encourage community involvement – the Snug Cove Village Plan was doing that and would enhance the small caring community;

3. Preserve and enhance natural ecosystems and green spaces - important to retain the feeling of being green and rural; and hoped Council would take the Loop Road option for ferry Marshalling off the table. Don't reduce the park, reduce cars.

Sylvaine Zimmerman suggested that planning for Snug Cove Village should not be done in isolation. She commented on the following:

- Increasing the density must not happen without taking that density away from some place that is green in order to protect the green spaces;
- Council should not be building more parking, loop roads and larger ferries but instead attempt to come up with an innovative transportation plan;
- In favour of an Arts Centre on the knoll between the School and the Historian's site, or possibly on the land below the ball field;
- Ferry Marshalling - using Rondy Dike's parking lot would be a very good idea.

Bud Long commented on ferry marshalling policies as follows:

- In favour of Council's decision to consider the Loop Road Option for the longer term;
- In favour of Council's intention to carry out studies before a decision would be taken on a preferred option;
- Study should be undertaken by an impartial technically qualified person;
- Decision on options should be made after a public poll had been taken and requested that if Council was not already considering a poll, that Council conduct such a public poll;
- Appeal to Council to bring back south side as an option for consideration as it had been rejected without explanation and should be decided in a public vote.

Alan Boniface, Taylor Road resident speaking as an architect and planner noted the following:

- Essential values were characterized in this Snug Cove Village Plan and the reality of the Snug Cove village was that it was not a rural area but a commercial mixed use entrance to Bowen Island;
- Place is where community can come together and could be enhanced by this Snug Cove Village Plan;
- Sustainability – encouraged Council to make a sustainable village as an example of what Bowen Island was about;
- A more creative approach be taken for sewer systems and consideration be given to rainwater catchment system.

David Hill commented on the following:

- Consider the need for ferry evacuation and leave the south side option in the Snug Cove Village Plan as there had been no written evidence that there were major obstacles to the south side option;
- Even if traffic diminished it would be difficult to see how it would be possible to have a pedestrian village with ferry marshalling in the Snug Cove village.

Kathy Dunster noted the following:

- There was no mention to conformity to Islands Trust Policy Statement and the Plan was overriding that legislation;
- Density and intensity of land use – a problem exists on Bowen Island regarding the supply of fresh water. Where has that been addressed in the Snug Cove Village Plan document?
- Has Council and the Islands Trust compared the document with Islands Trust policies to see if there was conformity of policies relating to aesthetics, development growth rate, and land use?
- Address means to achieve efficient use of the land base;
- Snug Cove was not a village. Was that Council's intent?
- Importance to maintain what makes Bowen Island unique and special – arriving in a park.

Robert Wright read a letter from John Rich regarding:

- Urban focus of Snug Cove Village Plan - opposed to intense development on Bowen Island and sad to see the urban focus of the Snug Cove Village Plan;
- Condominiums were not appropriate;
- Rationale for protecting the integrity of Crippen Park – a proper plan should protect Crippen Park that enticed the majority of residents to Bowen Island in the first place;
- Requested assurances not to have urban development creep in to Crippen Park;
- Loop Road option should be abandoned and development adjacent should not be seen or heard from within Crippen Park.

Andre Chollat questioned the rationale for higher density in Snug Cove. He believed that Snug Cove should be made interesting for the community and higher density be allowed if it was to be an arts village situated around an arts center. He noted that change happened slowly and requested Council to be more imaginative in planning efforts for the Snug Cove Village.

John Dowler noted his rationale for moving to Bowen Island was the treasures found in the forest parks and wildlife. Putting a road through a park for ferry marshalling would be like a motor boat in a swimming pool and requested Council to drop ideas for destroying Crippen Park.

Anne Chollat made the following comments:

- Should not sell surplus land for profit as it would be important to have it for community purposes;
- Ferry Marshalling – a solution would be to duplicate the lane nearer the school;
- Community Arts Centre – a good location would be on the knoll between the School and the Historian’s site;
- Water quantity and impact of new sewage regulations need to be considered.

Marina Robinson noted her opposition to the high density vision for the Snug Cove area as it was not consistent with the reason many people moved to Bowen Island. She believed it would turn Snug Cove into a bedroom community and had the potential to add 10% to overall population of Bowen Island with ramifications for everyone living on Bowen Island. She requested that Council reject the high-density vision for Snug Cove.

Wendy Merkle commented that there had been no consultation between GVRD and the Squamish First Nations regarding the GVRD surplus lands and the referendum. She believed that as long as the Squamish Nation had not been consulted, the Municipality had no right to discuss land use issues while negotiations with the Squamish Nation was in progress.

Doug Hooper commented on:

- The need for a policy stating until growth management tools are in place on Bowen Island there be no further development;
- The need for a policy regarding the GVRD surplus lands that would keep them forever in the public trust rather than turned over to development in order to pay back the \$2 million purchase price;
- The Loop Road option was not a good idea because a park is a park.

Eric Sherlock believed that the Snug Cove Village Plan should not be passed as written. He noted he had made some written recommendations for solutions to include:

- Council should go back to the April 2004 Joint Committee/Commissions three recommendations in the areas of ferry marshalling, housing densities and the use of the ball field;
- The April 30, 2005 referendum changed everything. Should now reconsider basic assumptions as land is coming into community ownership;
- Density of 20 units per acre was too high and should be dropped to 10 units per acre;
- Density transfer along Millers Road - let the 12 or 13 lots go up in density to 10 units per acre but all additional density should come from Density Transfer;
- On the slopes behind have mixed market at 10 units per acre;

- Density transfer - lower the cap and apply to all new market housing;
- Ferry Marshalling – eliminate the Loop Road concept to reflect public input;
- Have extended Commercial zones;
- Parking - ensure that parking areas exist in designated commercial zones and get rid of the idea of a commuter parking lot around the Old General Store and use it for commercial parking.

Rod Marsh noted that Bowen Island was a wonderful place for those who care about the environment and family life. Higher density could be done in a visionary way for developing new homes and communities. He requested Council to hold the vision of Bowen Island as a beautiful area known worldwide.

Michael Segal believed that the present Snug Cove Village Plan required either a new vision or rethinking. He hoped that Council would take another look and vote against adopting the present Snug Cove Village Plan.

Robert Lewis, Cowan Point Road commented on the issue of commercial viability. He believed that most residents not living in or near Snug Cove would be walking in the parks and beaches not going to Snug Cove. He noted his opposition to the Snug Cove Village Plan and his preference for seeing people living sustainability in an integrated community rather than approval of a plan for those who want to live in a commercial zone.

Trish Jacquet, Cates Hill resident noted her concerns regarding whether the present Cove Bay Water System had adequate water supply to support the increased density being proposed for Snug Cove.

Anne Ayre a member of the Bowen Island Municipality Ferry Advisory Committee noted her support for Snug Cove Village Plan.

David Faber, West Sechelt resident commented on:

- Problems with the Snug Cove Village Plan relating to the issue of density. He believed density should be tiered with the highest density occurring in the older part of Snug Cove nearest the ferry dock with less density towards Millers Road;
- Ferry marshalling - make a trade with the Union Steamship Marina to use the parking lot as a ferry marshalling area.

Kami Kane Tsuka, Millers Road resident believed it would be a travesty to take any of the natural forest away for commercial or residential use. The Loop Road was a ridiculous idea. She suggested that the public be educated to reduce their dependency on vehicles. She believed that the only need the community had was for a community centre.

David Van Berckel noted that discussion was never held regarding reducing densities and believed Snug Cove should not be dealt with in isolation from the rest of Bowen Island but rather in relation to how many people Bowen Island as a whole could sustain and the adequacy of the water supply.

Ed Weismiller encouraged Council to look after the water systems and septic needs especially since the new sewage regulations had come into effect.

Patricia O'Hagan, Miller Road resident believed there should only be single family homes in Snug Cove. She inquired as to where the parking lot would be for a civic facility. She noted that Miller Road would become more dangerous with increased development and Council should consider the present residents of Miller Road.

Diana Raynor commented on the importance of being able to walk in Crippen Park. She believed that people had chosen to live on Bowen Island because of the forests and the living ecosystem. She suggested, instead of the present approach, that Council had an opportunity to do something wonderful in protecting and preserving what existed and take the financial aspect out of the equation and think of the quality of people's lives on Bowen Island and the lives of their children.

Rondy Dyke, Union Steamship Marina suggested that Council get on with addressing the real problem in Snug Cove – ferry marshalling.

Brett Dowler reiterated the importance of upholding the qualities of patience, integrity and foresight. He requested Council to slow down and consider the implications for the future of moving ahead with the Snug Cove Village Plan.

Ian Henley commented that he had been involved with various plans for Snug Cove for the past 30 odd years. He noted his concern related to ferry travel. He believed that Council ought to show some leadership in developing a plan for increased ferry traffic.

Mr. Robinson noted that in his history as an Islands Trust trustee he had learned it was very hard for Councillors to do nothing but he cautioned Council to slow down as sometimes doing nothing was the best thing to do. He believed that Council needed to rethink where it was coming from and do nothing for a while.

Robert Wright lived in seaside cabin for 15 years and is likely the last surviving native of Crippen Park. Visitors walk right into Crippen Park and residents use the forest. This uniqueness would provide Bowen Island the opportunity to grow in a progressive and interesting way. Going into Crippen Park would define the politics. Rapacious development was affecting everyone. Let us love Bowen Island instead of raping it.

Jeff Scouten noted his concern regarding density increase in Snug Cove Village. However if an increase in density was tied to no overall increase in density on Bowen Island then the amount of green spaces would not likely be reduced as well as increased density in Snug Cove would allow for more people living within walking distance of the ferry.

Mayor Barrett called three times for any further submissions or comments regarding Bylaw No. 137. There being none, Mayor Barrett declared the Public Hearing with respect to "Bowen Island Municipality Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 139, 1995 Amendment Bylaw No. 137, 2004" closed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Certified Correct:

Lisa Barrett
Mayor

Isabell Hadford
Chief Administrative Officer