

Roberts Creek SCRD Director's Newsletter, February 2018

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In person: Gumboot Café, most Saturday Mornings, 10-12.

(If you have trouble with any of the links below, copy and paste them into your browser)

With discussions with regards to Growth, Affordable Housing, Community Diversity and the like taking place in the community and at the Board table, the Agenda of the **February 8th SCRD Planning and Community Development Committee (PCDC)** provides a good opportunity. What follows is a quick look at some related initiatives, from the big Sunshine Coast-wide picture, down to a local site-specific rezoning application. If you are interested in drilling down on any of the below, this Agenda package and page reference at the end of each item will provide you with more information: <http://www.scrd.ca/files/File/Administration/Agendas/2018/2018-FEB-08%20PCD%20Agenda%20Package.pdf>

Region-wide Growth

SCRD staff have confirmed that there are currently no Provincial funding opportunities for processes such as Regional Growth Strategies. This is something our MLA may be able to help with.

In the interim, there are **existing opportunities for greater policy and operational integration among local governments**. A further report will come forward later in the year which will provide process options for this SCRD Board, and the following Board, to consider. (PCDC Agenda link above, Page 63)

Main Zoning Bylaw Review

Bylaw 310 is the central Land Use Bylaw for four out of the five Rural Areas on the Sunshine Coast (Pender Harbour has its own). The Bylaw is overdue for a review and that process is beginning to move forwards. A scoping summary report from a consultant was received at the Feb 8th meeting, and key issues and opportunities identified include **housing affordability and diversity, agriculture and food production, short term rentals, home based businesses and climate change resiliency**. There is also an opportunity to make the document format more user friendly, which anyone who has looked through the Bylaw will appreciate.

The next step in the process is to get Advisory Committee feedback (Roberts Creek APC and OCP Committees, Agricultural Advisory Committee, Natural Resources Advisory Committee, and others) and then begin a **broader public engagement process**. This will be a long, but significant process to pay attention to, particularly if you have an interest in the issues identified above. (Agenda above, Pg. 71)

Official Community Plan

Our Roberts Creek Official Community Plan is a **visioning and goal setting document that helps inform any changes to Zoning Bylaw 310** as they come forward from either individual property owner/applicants, or other drivers of change, such as the Bylaw Review noted above.

There are currently proposed amendments to OCP's across Rural Areas with regards to land use for affordable housing that will be coming forward to the PCDC this month or next. These amendments will be informed by this public engagement process that included an information meeting on **Housing and Short Term Rentals** at the Hall on November 28th that many Roberts Creekers attended. The Report on public feedback themes from those meetings was on the agenda. (Page 5)

Temporary Movable Small Homes?

Still at the same meeting, the Planning Committee received a presentation from a public delegation with regards to the potential for a small home pilot project in Rural Areas. The goal would be to provide an opportunity for property owners to temporarily accommodate a small movable home, **within existing density specifications**, in a manner that would suit neighbourhood considerations. Note that this would be different from a dense Tiny Home "Colony", as a project of that nature would take a property-specific application to move it forwards.

The personal feeling of this Director is that this idea **holds possibilities for addressing some of the gaps in the housing spectrum** here on the Coast, while offering options for property owners and long-term tenants who chose a small footprint lifestyle. Early days yet, but the Committee supported SCRD Planners bringing forward more research on the issue later in the year, and used broad language such as "movable" to allow staff scope in researching the bridges and barriers to a range of options. Look for more specifics from the presentation on Page 1 of the Agenda.

Public Hearing Ahead

There will be a Public Hearing with regards to a rezoning application for a **Bike Shop in the heart of the Creek** on March 13 at 7 PM at Roberts Creek Hall. The proposal is in close alignment with the Roberts Creek Official Community Plan. Local Advisory committees have been supportive, and recommended that the property also remain zoned for a potential residential component, as mixed use in the "downtown core" is a Smart Growth objective.

The above summary provides a **quick** scan of some of the land use initiatives happening in our community right now. It should be noted that all of the PCD Committee's recommendations must be ratified by the Board at its next meeting on Feb 22nd. SCRD Agendas are available at scred.ca by clicking on Agendas at the top of the page.

Speaking of Homes...**How “Fire Smart” is your property?**

At a recent conference, I attended a workshop that reviewed some of the **learnings from the extensive wildfires in the Interior last summer**. Images of rural neighbourhoods where half the houses burned and half didn't were striking. The difference was that the houses that are still standing had previously implemented some basic recommendations around wildfire safety in “interface areas” such as ours.

Of note was that fire crews would make strategic decisions as to whether or not to defend a home based on a quick survey of the degree to which the property had been “Fire Smarted”.

This is the time of year to **build some of the recommendations below into your spring or summer project list**. Here is the link to some excellent online resources, and there are hard copies of the resource at our Roberts Creek Reading Room and up at the SCRD Offices at the top of Field Rd.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/managing-our-forest-resources/wildfire-management/prevention/for-your-home-community>

Federal, Provincial and Local Cannabis Legislation

There is much concern among Local Governments in BC and across Canada around the **pace of cannabis legalization implementation**. The limited time between the proposed July 1 Federal date, and last week's Provincial announcement has made for limited time for Local Governments to react to what is a significant paradigm shift. While senior governments will regulate many aspects of the issue, the Land Use/Zoning/Location pieces around Commercial Production and Retail Sales in Rural Areas will fall mainly to the SCRD. The Board has asked staff to bring forward the implications of the recent Provincial announcements, and any potential legislative issues that would require action prior to the July 1 date.

In general, I believe that **the clarification of the legislative playing field will be of benefit to local neighborhoods** that have concerns around smell, electrical issues, fire safety, traffic and the like. It will also provide **business certainty and growth opportunities** to what is a very significant part of our local economy. In the next couple of months I'll go deeper into the issue here, and you can always catch me at the Gumboot on Saturday mornings.

Water

If you missed the link to some very interesting Tetrahedron Park Designation history from the mid 1990's, along with selected Park Management Plan excerpts that provide some more context to ongoing water discussions, you can find them here:

<https://robertscreekmark.com/news-blog/>

SCRD February Newsletter:

<https://secure.campaigner.com/CSB/public/archive.aspx?args=MjQ3NDYxMDQ%3d>