

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SAANICH MUNICIPAL HALL, 770 VERNON AVENUE
TUESDAY, JULY 22, 2008 AT 7:30 P.M.

Present: **Chair:** Mayor Leonard
Council: Councillors Brice, Brownoff, Derman, Gillespie, Ngai (8:17 p.m.) and Sanders.
Staff: A. Topp, Manager of Community Planning; S. Exposito, Planner; D. Halldorson, Manager of Underground Services; D. Dupas, Deputy Manager of Legislative Services; and A. Park, Senior Committee Clerk.

PLD55 XRef
Helvetia Crescent
Development
Guidelines

HELVETIA CRESCENT – PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Report of the Director of Planning dated June 26, 2008 recommending that the Cordova Bay Local Area Plan, Policy 7.2, be amended to state that a minimum area of 930m² for standard lot and 1300m² for a panhandle lot may be considered for those lots shown on Map 7.1 as a Restricted Subdivision Area and that Map 7.1 be amended to designate the Helvetia Crescent study area as Residential 1.

APPLICANT:

The District of Saanich

PUBLIC INPUT:

Mr. S. Ball, 743 Helvetia Crescent, stated:

- The majority of lots on Helvetia Crescent are 1/2 acre or larger, part of a dense urban forest with a rural feel.
- Option 1 in the Director of Planning's report which would allow consideration of panhandle lot subdivisions, is not acceptable since it will result in increased cars, parking problems and potential loss of trees and will change the character of the neighbourhood.
- He supports Option 3, which is recommended by the Planning Department.

Mr. R. Casey, 767 Helvetia Crescent, stated:

- He supports Option 1 as there is room for tasteful infill development on Helvetia Crescent which will not take away from the character of the neighbourhood.
- These ½ acre lots are larger than anything else in the area.

Ms. K. Krane, 768 Helvetia Crescent, stated:

- She and 15 other residents of the area have submitted a letter in support of Option 3.
- Helvetia Crescent is on a ridge and is not well served by transit. Cars are a necessity. Option 1 would significantly increase the number of houses and thus cars on the street.
- Helvetia Crescent is a unique neighbourhood not suited to increased density.

Mr. D. Noel, 751 Helvetia Crescent, stated:

- He supports Option 3.
- Helvetia Crescent does not fit within the current urban planning goals of densification and reduced carbon footprint, etc.
- Subdivision of lots on this street will result in increased traffic since alternative transit options are not available.

Mr. G. Klassen, 5154 Del Monte Avenue, stated:

- He supports Option 3 in the Director of Planning's report of June 26, 2008; this option will support preservation of the urban forest and assist in maintaining the diverse character of Cordova Bay neighbourhoods.

Mr. B. Cunnin, Brad Cunnin Land Surveyor, on behalf of the owners of 759 Helvetia Crescent, stated:

- The owners of this property submitted an application to rezone and subdivide under the current Local Area Plan and wish to proceed on that basis.

Mr. I. Brambell, 768 Piedmont Drive, stated:

- He supports Option 3; it will offer some protection for the urban forest and avoid increased traffic and parking issues in the neighbourhood.

Mr. G. Flaig, on behalf of the owners of 763 Helvetia Crescent, stated:

- He submitted a written presentation outlining the history since July 2007 of their application to rezone the property at 763 Helvetia Crescent.
- Their rezoning and subdivision application would require removal of only one tree and the homes would be of the same size and character as existing houses in the area.
- The owners would prefer that the existing Local Area Plan not be amended and that their application proceed without delay.

Ms. June Klassen, 5154 Del Monte Avenue, stated:

- The Helvetia Crescent neighbourhood is on top of a hill and is hard to reach without a car; it is not suited to densification and the existing Local Area Plan (Option 1) would allow for up to 16 additional lots on the street.
- It is important to preserve the forest and the character of the area.

 Councillor Ngai entered the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Mr. J. Vernon, 764 Helvetia Crescent, stated:

- He supports Option 3.

Ms. A. Bakonyi, 776 Helvetia Crescent, stated:

- She supports Option 3.

Ms. M. Menegozzo, 780 Helvetia Crescent, stated:

- She supports Option 3.

Ms. B. Croizier, 764 Helvetia Crescent, stated:

- She is concerned about maintaining the character of the neighbourhood and supports Option 3.

Ms. S. Carr-Harris, 5951 Killdeer Road, stated:

- She supports Option 3.
- Although developers have every intention of preserving trees when constructing new homes, the reality is that tree roots get damaged and eventually the tree must be removed.

Ms. B. Ruscheinski, 771 Helvetia Crescent, stated:

- She purchased her property recently understanding its subdivision potential.
- She supports Option 2 in the Director of Planning's report which would allow for a study of the entire Residential 2 area rather than giving one street special restrictions.
- Do not change the Local Area Plan now but consider each application on its merits as they come forward.

APPLICANT'S RESPONSE

Nil

MOTION:

MOVED by Councillor Derman and Seconded by Councillor Brownoff: "That a Public Hearing be called to consider proposed amendments to the Cordova Bay Local Area Plan with respect to the Helvetia Crescent Study Area."

Councillor Derman stated:

- It appears that Option 3 may best preserve the forested and rural character of the neighbourhood.
- We do not need more cars on our roads and if Helvetia Crescent were to be fully developed, many more cars would result.

Councillor Brownoff stated:

- This area is not suited to densification; transit service will not be available.
- An urban forest strategy will be a key initiative for Saanich.

Councillor Sanders stated:

- She appreciates the efforts of the neighbourhood to present their views on preserving this unique, forested neighbourhood.
- A Local Area Plan is only a guide to land use and does not guarantee that rezoning will be permitted.
- She appreciates Smart Growth principles, however, they may not be applicable to this neighbourhood since, for example, transit service is not likely to be provided.

Councillor Brice stated:

- Urban forest preservation is paramount.
- Helvetia Crescent does not appear to be suited to densification.
- In order to maintain the character of the neighbourhood, Option 3 may

be the best alternative.

Counillor Gillespie stated:

- It is important to maintain the urban forest.
- He supports calling a Public Hearing.

The Motion was then Put and CARRIED.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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MUNICIPAL CLERK