



MEETING SUMMARY

District of Highlands: South Highlands Local Area Plan

What: Task Force Meeting #4 (Phase 2), South Highlands LAP

When: 12:00-2:00pm, Wednesday, February 10, 2021

Where: Zoom Meeting

Please note: *This document is meant to provide a summary of key discussion topics, discussion points, and outcomes from the meeting. These are not meeting Minutes nor a Record of Decision.*

PARTICIPANTS

Task Force

Leslie Anderson (Council Representative)
Marcie McLean (Council Alternate)
Rick Lester
Bob McMinn
Scott Richardson
Mel Sangha
Kim Vincent
Terri Wood
Lexie Beigun
Regine Klein

Project Team

Laura Beckett
Municipal Planner, Highlands

Evan Peterson
Barefoot Planning

Jennifer Kay
TownSquare Planning

Observers

Ann Baird
Karen Burns

SUMMARY NOTES

1. Evan presented on three topics, as requested at the previous meeting, and limited discussion (mostly clarifying questions) followed:
 - An overview of Development Permit Areas, including a brief review of DPAs 4, 5, and 6 and their relevance to the LAP.
 - A brief overview of the relationship between industrial zoning and the concept of “low impact” development – which is influenced not only by permitted uses (e.g., zoning, policy) but also by site and building design (e.g., Development Permit guidelines, policy),



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- and business operations (e.g., resources, waste management, transportation).
- A summary of a follow-up discussion between Evan and Ryan Mogenson from Ecoasis.
2. Following this presentation and discussion, Evan presented the draft Preliminary Directions to the group and then facilitated a discussion, with key comments summarized below.
 - Members raised a number of ideas, issues and perspectives and the group discussion was open, constructive and respectful of the sometimes differing opinions.
 3. One member noted the challenge of envisioning a future that is 15-20 years away, while the reality 'on the ground' remains quite different and potentially disparate from the future 'blue sky' visions. It is hard to anticipate what land uses may be appropriate, needed, viable, and acceptable to the community in the future.
 - Another member noted that there is potential for future land use changes to be realized more quickly if market conditions for aggregate expedite the lifespan of the extractive operations and if there are incentives for landowners to consider earlier land use changes.
 4. One member questioned the need for additional industrial/commercial land in the region, in light of the Western Speedway development application in Langford.
 - Another member noted how diverse commercial-industrial lands can be and the shortage of these lands in the region.
 5. One member questioned the subjectivity of policy and DP guidelines, in terms of informing future decision-making about development application. Evan suggested that, yes, there is always a level of discretion required by District staff and Council in interpreting policy in relation to development applications, but that this is also a benefit. Evan reiterated the importance of clear policy intent and detailed supporting policies and guidelines.
 6. One member suggested that the Ecoasis “commercial site” could be considered as the future community hub location.
 - It was suggested by Evan and other members that this site is likely to be a larger commercial scale than the “mum and pop”-scale (e.g., cafe) envisioned as part of a community hub.



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7. Some members suggested that cycling lanes on Finlayson Arm Road was not a practical idea and that trail connections through Ecoasis lands could offer a better east-west connection.
8. Some members checked-in about the treed buffer shown along the east side of Millstream Road and suggested that this should be shown on both sides of the road.
9. One member suggested that Millstream Creek should also be highlighted for its ecological value, along with Teanook Creek.
 - Protection of Teanook Lake and Matson Lake was also suggested.
 - Evan noted that Millstream Creek was (only) shown due to a focus on the Crown Lands and focus area; however, these other waterbodies would be incorporated into the full LAP.
10. A discussion was had about the difficulty of predicting future land use needs in the Commercial-Industrial area.
 - Some members suggested that the LAP land use direction should not try to predict what will be appropriate in 10-25 years.
 - One member suggested that designating future land uses raises expectations and reduces the ability for possible community benefits and amenities.
 - Evan suggested that clear policy direction actually helps in identifying and securing community benefits and amenities, as well as knowing what types of development may be considered by Council .
 - One member suggested that, from a developer's perspective, more clarity through policy is preferred.
11. One member stated that it was critical that the Climate Emergency is considered and addressed through the SHLAP.
12. A brief discussion was had about how Community Amenities are acquired and negotiated, including relevant legislation and best practices, as well as how this might be implemented in the Commercial-Industrial area.
13. Several members offered their thoughts on the best approach to determining future land use, as well as the Task Force's role in making this decision, in light of the extended timelines of existing on-site activities (e.g., quarrying) on these sites.



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- For example, one member suggested that future land use should be left to future community and Council members. Others suggested that direction is still needed, now, and that future Councils and community members will inevitably have opportunity to amend these land use policies (e.g., through future OCP review processes).
14. Several members offered their thoughts on the value (or lack thereof) of considering other uses to be located in Highlands, bringing them into closer proximity to residents (e.g., schools, cafes, grocery).
 15. One member pointed out the potential unintended consequences of precluding future development in the Commercial-industrial lands, such as disincentivizing landowners from shifting away from current impactful activities and shifting toward a future state consistent with District policies.
 16. Evan provided a brief summary of the “future land use” discussion, and proposed that a possible solution would be to [a] create robust policies to support lower-impact Commercial-Industrial development in the future (as presently in the draft Preliminary Directions) while also incorporating [b] policy direction that considers alternative future land uses, such as park, climate change amelioration, and other unforeseen uses.
 17. Evan suggested that the next steps could be to [a] update the Preliminary Directions based on Task Force input; [b] circulate the updated document to the Task Force for review and vetting; and then [c] undertake the next community survey on the updated Preliminary Directions.
 18. One member expressed a desire to discuss the Preliminary Directions, again, prior to the survey, while another was concerned about the survey format and presentation.
 - Evan provided a brief overview of the proposed survey format, which the group showed support for.
 19. It was agreed that the Preliminary Directions would be circulated and, if there were any red flags, then Evan and Laura would discuss the possibility of another meeting.



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