

RE:	South Highlands Local Area Plan – Task Force Members Email
Email from:	Scott Richardson
To:	Laura Beckett, Bob McMinn, Evan Peterson, Jennifer Kay, Kim Vincent, Leslie Anderson, Lexie LeGrand-Biegun, Liz Condon, Marcie McLean, Mel Sangha, Regine Klein, Rick Lester, Terri Wood, Loranne Hilton, Melisa Miles, Ann Baird, Gord Baird, Karel Roessingh, Ken Williams, Rose Stanton
Date Received:	September 17, 2021

Thank you Laura for the updated agenda.

Could I also ask Task Force Members to consider my remarks below that emerged after reading some of the other input and reflecting on the comments of a Tsartlip elder?

Most Appreciatively,
Scott

Hi all

I am weighing in this time in an attempt to:

- 1: document and organize the various discussion items proposed under item “other” for our meeting Monday evening; and
- 2: to respond to some of the comments made on September 9th and 10th.

1. **For discussion Monday night under “other”**

A. Hannington Road:

- o Discussion item: To consider adding a statement that would prevent the opening of Hannington Road other than to emergency vehicles to minimize shortcutting through the Highlands to Saanich and the Peninsula.

B. Who fills out the survey...

- o Currently anyone can fill out the survey and how they self identify is on the honour system. This undermines the value of the survey in guiding decisions. I proposed a motion that “the survey be made available exclusively to Highlands Residents and Land Owners.” I requested that, if seconded, this motion be put to a vote before the end of the meeting.
- o On September 10th, Terri proposed that MIP Tenants be added to the list of those filling out the survey.

C. Gateway Options 1 & 2:

- o I proposed a rewording of Options 1 & 2. I recommended further collective wordsmithing by those interested. I asked that this be addressed prior to voting.
- o On September 10th Terri shared a number of questions and suggested that Option 1 may limit future possibilities.

D. Gateway Option 3:

- o On September 9th Mel proposed that an Option 3 be added to a contained area consisting solely of the 4 lots, maintaining the language of the 2007 OCP.
- o On September 10th Terri shared a proposal sent to Evan asking that the land use designation for the 4 properties remain unchanged from the 2007 OCP.

2. Response to some of the comments made...

I am making the following comments in response to the suggestion that the Highlands would be better off maintaining the 2007 wording from the OCP, and in response to the implied suggestion that my comments of September 9th were motivated by a desire to penalize OKI, and not focussed on the good of the public.

I wish that all members of the Task Force could have been present when Tsartlip elder Tom Sampson addressed our community (Including Mayor and 5 Councillors) at the Highlands Fling last weekend. He spoke about the land we were gathered on, - the Place of the Deer. He spoke about how the land had sustained his people and how the Ancestors are still here in the land. And he spoke about how in a short two hundred years so much has been destroyed. Science is telling us we can't continue. He shared his hope that here in Highlands we can find a way to work together to change that path, to restore some of what has been lost. He recognized this transition is a hard time.

I share this because my sense was that all present were touched by his plea to see land as more than a commodity, indeed as a life sustaining element of our home on Earth. It is such a simple irrefutable truth, really. How might we test the product of our discussions against this simple truth?

I also appreciated his acknowledgment of it being a hard time because I don't think it matters what side of the development debate you are on, it is harder than it ever used to be. I acknowledge that as likely ringing as true for OKI, GFL, MIP, and CRD as it is true for those opposed to development. Times of transition are hard.

By implication he was also referring to climate change. I highlight that here because although I know you all know this and there isn't a climate change denier among us, it is our common enemy! It is showing itself to be the most powerful force on earth today. It is progressing faster and more powerfully than our science based forecasts predicted. It is unrelenting, and worst of all, it doesn't seem open to negotiation. Close to home evidence includes – 104 degrees F in the Highlands on June 28th, 700 or more BC elders perishing under the heat dome, and the driest conditions ever on the Island.

Further afield, the peaks of Greenland received never before experienced rain early this month, while scientists began to detect signs that the Gulf Stream may be headed towards collapse. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/aug/05/climate-crisis-scientists-spot-warning-signs-of-gulf-stream-collapse> . I share this because like any powerful enemy, it is requiring us to think decades ahead and begin taking as much evasive action as we can imagine today, right now.

It is not overly dramatic to suggest that it is a call to 'arms' to all members of our species, whatever one's livelihood or occupation, to change. Unfortunately, change is arguably our species biggest weakness and hence our carbon output continues to increase, rather than decline. We urgently need to figure out how to change individually and globally.

This really is the 'tragedy of the commons' playing out before our eyes, as we sit seemingly helplessly transfixed by the disaster unfolding all around us, unable to think or behave in new ways, and unwilling to forgo our own piece of the 'commons' pie. This is sobering because there are a long list of 'commons' tragedies witnessed in the Americas (e.g. Easter Island, buffalo, and cod). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tragedy_of_the_commons. Is our Pacific salmon sadly on the same trajectory? Now the tragedy is playing out on a global scale through climate change. Can we

acknowledge that? Can we self-regulate to the extent necessary? Can we at least take it into account in our long term planning?

I find it paradoxical that I don't think a single member of our task force would take issue with the preceding paragraphs and yet acting on those truths in our businesses is a much harder sell. I experience this myself on a relatively miniscule but personal scale, in respect of our small 'fold' of Highland cattle on our modest Highlands homestead (kindwood). It too is consuming a part of the global commons 'pie' that we have yet to reconcile in our long range planning for Kindwood. Back to what Tom said: "transition is a hard time".

I apologize for making you read through all of the above before getting to my main point. What I am really trying to say is that our choices in the South Highlands are bigger than the Highlands or even the CRD. The choices are bigger than the tax revenue, or the depth of the MIP quarry. It isn't about Mel or Scott, OKI or the HDCA. Just as the family bickering suddenly stops when the enemy is at the door, these are side issues that we can choose to see beyond, if we believe there is something even more concerning. The over-arching influence in long range policy decisions, for at least the rest of this century, will be our common enemy of climate change. It makes sense then for us to be thinking about climate change and adapting our policies in earnest now, to better prepare us for the future. Einstein said: "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them." Is it not therefore essential that we bring new approaches and ways of thinking into play? In this way, what confidence can we have that the land use policy created for our commercial industrial lands in 2007 (e.g. Option 3), will be up to the task of addressing the climate change challenges we face today and likely for the next century? Instead of that, let's focus on how we co-create new land use policies more suitable for our rapidly changing environment, while supporting current landowners and stakeholders in finding funding for the transition?

As we feel the pressure of the CRD, and landowners on what land use policies to apply to the South Highlands let's listen just as carefully to the United Nations, which writes that the replacement of wild areas has a vital role to play in tackling climate change. Paving over the land to make batteries or other technological fixes destroys the natural systems that life depends on. Let's think globally and act locally in respect of our common enemy.

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