

HandyDART Neighbourhood Working Group

WebEx Meeting

Tuesday, July 7th, 2020 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Attendees

Katie Hamilton (Chair)	Tavola Strategy Group
Errol Nordstrom	BC Transit
Lori Beaulieu	BC Transit
Geoff Huber	BC Transit
Doug Ferrier	Burnside Neighbourhood
Melanie Austin	Burnside Neighbourhood
Don Monsour	Accessibility Transportation Advisory Committee
Miranda Benn	Burnside Neighbourhood
Bill Emile	Esquimalt Anglers Streamkeepers
Jane Devonshire	View Royal Climate Coalition

Regrets

Ed Pullman	Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition
Alf Eamer	Our Place/Choices Therapeutic Recovery Centre
Gerry Gaydos	View Royal Climate Action Coalition
Levi Timmermans	BC Transit
Dallas Perry	handyDART operations

Notes

New Business:

- Katie Hamilton called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

Agenda for meeting:

1. Update on recent activities on site including geotechnical boreholes, nesting survey, First Nations observers
2. Overview of draft What We Heard public engagement report
3. Jane Devonshire – letter advocating for Clean Air federal funding

4. What's next

Katie Hamilton walked members through the draft *What We Heard* document, outlining the recent engagement process and what was heard. The draft was under review by BC Transit and once approved will be shared with neighbourhood working group, Town of View Royal, Ministry of Transportation, MLA Mitzi Dean, and posted on the project website. The final version is posted on the BC Transit project website at:

<https://www.bctransit.com/viewroyal/handyDART>

- 396 respondents to online survey between May 30th – June 12th, 2020.
- In addition to the information included in the *What We Heard* report, she noted that there was definitely interest in protecting Craigflower Creek, that there was a theme expressed about preserving the current “feeling/experience” within neighbourhood, sometimes references in terms of aesthetics, e.g. don't have to see it, should be state of the art, maintain green/rural feel.
- Katie noted surprise that there weren't a lot of comments about the preferred building location.
- In addition to the online survey, a letter was received from Jane Devonshire advocating for Clear Air Project funding. This letter will be distributed with the neighbourhood working group for information.
- During public engagement period, BC Transit also received two emails and one phone call posing questions about hours of operation, fleet and planned activities on site.
- Miranda Benn expressed appreciation for the update about engagement and was surprised there wasn't more preference stated about the building location.

South Island Climate Action Network (SI-CAN) Clear Air Project Proposal

- Jane Devonshire provide background on the application process advocating for funding a fully electric fleet at opening.
- Letter was submitted to BC Transit and MLA Mitzi Dean. Letter was circulated to Neighbourhood Working Group.
- 4,000 submissions - Victoria in Top 30 for applications.
- Jane will be meeting with Chad Berndt at BC Transit soon.

Activities on or near site

- Lori Beaulieu provided brief update on activities on and near site in recent days. Neighbourhood communication has occurred.
- Nesting survey completed, prior to geotechnical work on-site.
- Tree survey underway.
- Geotechnical drilling underway to confirm site conditions. Archaeologist and First Nations observers from Esquimalt Nation and Songhees Nation on site.
- Doug Ferrier noted that he heard question from a neighbour about whether the new entrance would allow for two vehicles to enter at the same time, or if it is a one-way entrance. Lori Beaulieu responded that the entrance will allow for vehicles to enter and exit at the same time.
- Lori Beaulieu explained the grade of the site has not yet been determined and is informed by determination of BC Hydro application regarding transmission tower – could be 12 weeks for application process.
- As a result, delay to preliminary design. Preliminary design now expected in September/October.

Next steps:

- BC Transit presenting to the CRD/Gorge Waterway Initiative next week.

- BC Transit staff are interested in identifying grant opportunities for onsite work – potential for First Nations, art, streamkeeping, environmental education. Welcome ideas for community partnership, potential grants that could be pursued as part of the project or to advance onsite efforts.
- Katie Hamilton emphasized that this period of time as the project awaits feedback from BC Hydro can be viewed as an opportunity to bring forward tangible ideas that can be considered in planning and design.
- Doug Ferrier – wanted to confirm that BC Transit is interested in working with local community groups and in pursuing grants. Lori Beaulieu confirmed yes.
- *What We Heard* report will be shared with the design team to inform preliminary design
- First Nations consultation continues.
- Share *What We Heard* report with Town, MLA and post on website.
- Due to delayed preliminary design as BC Transit awaits feedback from BC Hydro application process, there will be no meeting in August. Next meeting in September with email updates as needed.
- Meeting minutes and attachments will be shared.
- Katie Hamilton will follow-up with those who could not attend.

Meeting ended at 3 p.m.

May 19, 2020

The Honourable Mitzi Dean
MLA Esquimalt-Metchosin
104 - 1497 Admirals Road
Victoria BC V9A 2P8

Re: A Clean Air Project for the BC Economic Recovery Plan

Dear Ms. Dean,

The South Island Climate Action Network (SI-CAN) has a proposal for a clean air project. Since you are one of our MLAs, we are asking for your support in bringing this proposal to the Economic Recovery Task Force for consideration.

We have been informed that the government has \$1.5 billion dollars in stimulus money that can help our communities move forward after this COVID-19 pandemic. Such a fund provides an opportunity to ensure an economic recovery that enhances CleanBC values — a recovery that promotes health by investing in projects that lower BC's GHG emissions, support community resilience and create well-paying jobs.

SI-CAN asks that funding from the Economic Recovery Package be provided to enable BC Transit to:

1. Accelerate the conversion of the Victoria Regional Transit fleet — including the entire HandyDART bus fleet — to fully electric by starting now to replace retiring buses with electric ones, and bypass compressed natural gas (CNG) buses as a bridging option.

Matching funds from the Federal Green Recovery Plan could help offset costs and at the same time, support the EV-bus-manufacturing companies in Winnipeg (New Flyer) and Quebec (Nova).

2. Start ordering the fully electric HandyDART buses now (100+ will be needed) so they will be ready to be housed at the new HandyDART terminal at 2401 Burnside Rd West in View Royal. Make this facility a showcase piece for CleanBC with a building that exceeds LEED Gold certification. Also, enable BC Transit, with community input, to research the feasibility of:

- Rooftop solar panel arrays and sufficient battery storage backup
- Geothermal ground-source heat pumps
- Underground cisterns or other rainwater-harvesting systems to harvest rainwater for washing buses, watering green spaces and flushing toilets

3. Enable BC Transit to expand transit routes and increase bus frequency.

SI-CAN is mainly motivated by the urgent need to reduce GHG emissions so that BC will do its share to minimize global warming. However, we also support achieving the important health co-benefits of reducing air pollution. Physicians across Canada have been sounding the alarm bells on the huge toll climate change and air pollution are taking on our healthcare system.¹

¹ <https://www.cpha.ca/health-professionals-federal-political-parties-action-needed-prevent-catastrophic-climate-change>
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/covid-air-pollution-cut-1.5579452?>

It is well established that air pollution contributes to cardiovascular and respiratory illness, which increases susceptibility to illness, including viruses. A rapid switch to fully electric transit would reduce GHGs and decrease air pollution linked with cardiovascular and respiratory illness.

Providing convenient, electric bus service is also key to getting people out of their cars and changing the shape, sound and smell of our cities. Let's be proactive and act now to reduce GHGs and improve air quality. We will save the economy billions of dollars in the long run. Equally important, we will save countless lives, the healthcare system and its workers. This is an ideal opportunity to put some of that stimulus money into investing in people's health and wellness, while creating well-paying jobs in Canada.

Let's build it better now.

In closing, we would like to express our sincere thanks to all members of the BC Government for working so diligently to keep us as safe as possible during this pandemic. Keeping us apprised of the situation with your daily updates has been tremendously appreciated as well.

Respectfully yours,

The South Island Climate Action Network (SI-CAN)

SI-CAN is a group of climate action teams and individual members from around southern Vancouver Island:

- Colwood: Citizens Environmental Network in Colwood (CENIC)
- Esquimalt: Esquimalt Climate Organizers (ECO)
- Oak Bay: Oak Bay Climate Force (OBCF)
- Saanich: What's Next Gorge Tillicum (WN)
- View Royal: View Royal Climate Coalition (VRCC)
- Individual members: from Victoria, North Saanich, Metchosin, Sooke and the Highlands.

Endorsed by Transition Sooke (TS) and the BC Sustainable Energy Association (BCSEA)

Contact Information

Jane Devonshire

Janedev.lee@gmail.com

250-479-0569

250-889-6641

CC: Honourable John Horgan, Premier

Honourable George Heyman, Minister of the Environment

Honourable Carol James, Deputy Premier and Finance Minister; MLA Victoria-Beacon Hill

Honourable Claire Trevina, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure

Honourable Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture; MLA Saanich South

Honourable Rob Fleming, Minister of Education; MLA Victoria-Swan Lake

Adam Olsen, MLA Saanich North and the Islands

Andrew Weaver, MLA Oak Bay-Gordon Head