



FINAL

Victoria Esquimalt Harbour Society Member Meeting

January 10, 2017, 5:15pm
City of Victoria Council Antechamber

MEMBERS PRESENT:

VEHS directors: Hannah Horn, Ryan Burles (Black Ball), Bernie Talbot (ILWU 508), Mark Braithwaite, Jon Sector, John Sanderson (BG Neighbourhood Assoc), Brian Henry (Ocean River)

GVHA Board representatives: Nick Banks (Hidden Harbour Marina), Ryan Burles, Pete Hartman (former)

VEHS members: Leslie Welsh, Margo Goodhand (FW Community Association), Doug Crowder, Gary Leibel (Ralmax), Shawn McBride (King Bros), Samantha Wilson (Wilson's Transportation), Andy Glover (Clipper), Steven Baxter (Helijet), Craig Norris, Eric, Melissa Kirby (Vic International Marina), Don Prittie (Canoe Cove Marina), Kevin Ashley (Seaspan), Sonterra Ross and Dave Cowen (GVHA), John Briant (Western Stevedoring), Rod Burkhart (Victoria AM Assoc), Nick Cheong (V2V Vacations)

Guests: Greg Marshall (Naval Architect & Luxury Yacht Design); Paul Haines (Master, Cable Innovator), Bruce Hale (Finest at Sea), Milton Barnes (Mercury Marine), Rick Gonder, Tristan Briant

REGRETS: Paul Ridout, Dee Govang

NOTE TAKER: Trish Suzanne

Hannah Horn called meeting to Order at 5:15pm.

Introductions and amendments to the meeting agenda. Bernie Talbot moved to approve the amended agenda and minutes of October 11 Special General Meeting. Ryan Burles Seconded. All in favour.

Congratulations to Ryan Burles, new VEHS representative to the GVHA Board and a special thank you to Pete Hartman who is stepping down from the GVHA Board after a three year term.



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1. Business: Kevin Ashley, Seaspan – Johnson Street Bridge Issues

Kevin presented information on the fendering design for the Johnston St Bridge. The cost of the bridge to date is \$105M and it is still not finished. The issue is that the proposed fendering will not withstand the impact of a laden barge at more than 3.5 knots. Also, the old bridge supports will be left in, meaning there is twice the bridge width to transit.

Transport Canada rules are 5 knots in the harbour. At that speed, the fenders would need to be able to deflect the force of an impact. Concern that the tugs' masters cannot reasonably control a barge at 3.5 knots. Seaspan fears it could have to cease doing business in the upper harbor because of liabilities. This would have serious implications for economics in the upper harbour, including VEHS members.

Proper fendering is very expensive. Seaspan has written a letter to the City of Victoria (distributed to the members in paper form). Transport Canada has approved the plans for operation through the bridge and they would need to approve any alteration to the speed limit.

Discussion

Q: What has to be done?

A. The City has to take responsibility for its faulty design. They are proposing tractor tugs but proper fendering is the most appropriate solution. The speed limit has to be left as it is. The 5 knot speed limit is a rule in all harbours in Canada. It is understood that you have to go at whatever speed to get through safely, sometimes up to 7 knots depending on the current.

Q. How urgent is this issue?

A. This is a big issue. The nature of the issue is urgent and a strategy should commence rather quickly.

Q: How did the 3.5 knots get decided?

A. The design of the fendering system was for that speed, but it is not a safe speed.

Comment that one solution might be to insure the bridge for damage from transiting vessels and have the City pay for the insurance.

Q: Has the media weighed in on this?

A. Not at this point

Suggestion to set up a VEHS subcommittee to give support to the businesses that use the upper harbour. Hannah cautioned that VEHS will not take the lead on a campaign to address this issue. The issue belongs to Seaspan and our members and other business interests in the upper harbour and we will support them in whatever way they feel is appropriate.

Follow-up: VEHS members to send Hannah an email if you want to get involved with a committee to support our members on this issue.



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2. Presentation: Craig Norris, CEO Victoria International Marina

Craig introduced his team, some of whom were present. VIM is working on the project with Farmer Construction and Bluewater Management Systems. The development group seeks to be ambassadors of the Pacific Marine Lifestyle and make this to the world.

Craig presented the recent changes in the development. The final plan is for 28 slips, 65 feet up to 180 feet and two buildings. One building will hold marine offices, a crew facility, rental space, boardroom and 7 offices to lease. The other will be a 7000sq foot restaurant. There will be an 8m wide paddle route along the shore-side under the buildings.

The marina will be divided into four moorages; daily, weekly, monthly and 4 year leases. It is designed to have the option of bringing in barges to hold events. The restaurant is locally owned and will be managed by Stuart Brown on a west coast theme.

Status: Dredging was done two years ago by Bluewater Systems. Three floats are completed and three more are under construction. An environmental monitor is on site at all times. The goal is for all the floats to be in place end of June 2017.

Discussion

Q: Concern about the placement of pilings and the ability of kayaks to transit the shoreline passage.

A: The Marina was moved seven inches out to accommodate the placement of the pilings.

Q: Who are the owners of the marine?

A: It is owned privately.

Q: Has all the work been contracted out?

A: No, Farmer Construction is working on the contracts for the final trades

Q: How will people access these yachts to service them?

A: There is a double-wide road with two lanes of parking and a space for service vehicles. There will be two golf carts and trailers to haul stuff down. VIM would like to work with a green motor group to run vehicles down.

Q: Are you planning a big splash for the opening?

A: We are hoping to be open for the summer for the 150 year celebration in the harbour.

Comment: After many years it's great to see this major asset come to fruition. Congratulations.



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3. Presentation: Greg Marshall, Naval Architect & Luxury Yacht Design

Greg's company is a local design firm who design for clients all over the world. Greg stated that the goal of his presentation is to dispel the myths of super yacht owners. He presented a different view of luxury yacht owners – that it is not all about glamour and Hollywood-like gatherings. As an example there is an organization of superyacht owners called SeaKeepers that collects oceanographic data and some owners voluntarily deliver emergency supplies to disaster-struck areas.

Greg spoke of the economic benefits of luxury yacht construction and support locally and globally. From just one marina, these yachts can bring in \$3.6 million revenue per month for supplies and servicing. Victoria will need to be prepared to provide that level of services and supplies.

Discussion

Q: Yacht owners do not stay with their yachts. How does that work?

A: The yacht typically comes to the marina first and gets prepared for the owner to arrive. The owner will only stay for two to three weeks. The yacht may stay for three or four months during which time a lot of money is being spent in Victoria.

4. Greater Victoria Harbour Authority – Follow-up discussion on Ogden Point rezoning

Dave Cowen (GVHA Chair) and Sonterra Ross (GVHA COO) responded to VEHS's position that our organization does not support a hotel or residential development at Ogden Point.

Residential has never been anticipated at Ogden Point. The GVHA Board has taken the position that residential development is not appropriate on the site and GVHA staff are exploring various legal tools to prohibit residential use as part of the rezoning. The City of Victoria has characterized OP as Employment Lands in its Official Community Plan so also considers the area unsuitable for residential use.

The GVHA Board considered the VEHS concerns, consulted with VEHS founding members, and decided nonetheless to support a hotel on the site. This relates to home-porting and the hotel is considered important to support GVHA's business options. GVHA has a goal of having a home-port at Ogden Point by 2020. OP is one of GVHA's revenue assets – the income from OP supports management and maintenance of its other properties.

At this stage, this is just about the rezoning. If and when a hotel proposal comes forward after the rezoning, there will be a whole set of checks and balances to go through before any proposal is approved and VEHS will have input at that point both as an organization of stakeholders and as a member agency.

Discussion

Comment: Concern that a hotel could turn into residential if its use as a hotel is unprofitable.

A: GVHA is looking into ways to ensure that residential is prohibited.

Comment: We don't want to see a big building put into the middle of the property as this will limit other commercial/industrial uses of the site.

Q: Is a home port feasible for Victoria?

A: There are a few other things that need to be in place, such as expansion of the runway at the airport; available hotel rooms in Victoria need to be ramped up.

Q: What additional infrastructure are you considering?

A: There is a lot of space to use at Ogden Pt. We want a mixed use. The concept is to build for the community first, then for tourism.

Q: How many rooms are you talking about for the hotel?

A: 100 rooms, three to five floors.

Q: What is the timeline for the rezoning?

A: We have to do a transportation impact study and project impact study. Maybe before summer.

Comment: Cruise is one of the strongest mechanisms to bring economy to Victoria through this working port. If there are strong rules in place to prevent a hotel from becoming residential, then it is time to support this rezoning proposal with the hotel in it.

Comment: Global Marine (cable ship) has been at the OP site since 1990 and hopes to continue at the site into the future.



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5. Other Business: Burnside Gorge Neighbourhood Plan

Hannah presented members with a draft letter to City of Victoria on the BC Neighbourhood Plan. The letter states that VEHS supports the City's zoning for heavier industrial on the waterfront and points out that any public walkways along the waterfront need to consider and not impede access of businesses to the water.

Follow-up: Let Hannah know if you have inputs to the BG Neighbourhood Plan.

6. Announcements

VEHS AGM will be on April 11. Please consider if you would like to support VEHS by being on the Board.

Dinner fundraiser for Camosun Bursary in the Marine Trades – Date TBA.

Next VEHS meeting is Wednesday, February 22nd @ the City of Victoria Antechamber.