

DIRECTOR'S NEWS OCTOBER/07

AN UPDATE FROM SCRD DIRECTOR, DONNA SHUGAR



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LIGHTING, NOISE, & SMOKE

The SCRD Board has recently considered 3 new regulatory bylaws. All of these documents can be viewed on my website.

The first is called “**Best Practices and Standards for Lighting.**” It covers both private and commercial development and offers guidelines for lighting that is safe, effective, and energy efficient but does not obscure the night sky or disturb neighbours. This document has been adopted by the Board. At present, the Regional District does not have the powers to regulate lighting, but if these powers are granted by the province, the Board may choose to change these “Best Practices and Standards” into regulations.

There have been quite a few complaints about noise as the development boom continues. Although we already have a **noise** bylaw, it does not cover the level of construction and machine noise that has been bothering many people. The Board is therefore considering amendments to the noise bylaw such as creating Sunday “quiet hours.” These amendments are still in the draft stage and will be taken to local community groups by Board Directors to get feedback. There is a link to the draft amendments on my website.

The last issue that has required new action is **smoke from backyard brush fires**. I wrote about this in detail in my June newsletter which you can view on my website. The new regulations that I mentioned in June are now ready in draft form. Like the noise bylaw amendments, these regulations are being referred to community groups for comment. I would like your feedback. A link to the bylaw is on my website.

Backyard burning will be the special topic at the **RCCA general meeting on October 24 at 7:30pm** where there will be copies of the draft bylaw for you to look at. (Also the proposed amendments to the noise bylaw) Dr. Paul Martiquet, Medical Health Officer, will be in attendance and the Clean Air Society will make a presentation on the health hazards of smoke at the meeting as well.

Please read the attached brochure which has ideas about alternatives to backyard and land clearing fires. Please note that residents of Area D (Roberts Creek) may also bring their brush to the Gibsons Green Waste Drop Off.

There is also very good information about burning on the Sunshine Coast Clean Air Society website: www.cleanaironthecoast.com

THE WATERSHED

The issues of the Chapman Creek watershed and safe drinking water were the main preoccupation for the SCRD Board this summer. The SCRD, acting as a Local Board of Health, issued an order regarding logging activity in the Chapman Creek watershed by Western Forest Products. WFP has appealed this order in BC Supreme Court. I spent several days in Vancouver observing at the hearings. At the first hearing, Mr. Justice Bruce Butler granted WFP a partial stay, allowing part of the order to stand, namely

that WFP must not cut any more trees on steep slopes of 60% or greater. He permitted a stay (or temporary suspension) of the part of the order that would not allow falling or yarding within 30m of streams. The 4 day appeal hearing concluded on Sept 13 with Judge Butler reserving his judgment until further notice. He may grant the appeal, deny the appeal, or he may vary the order if he sees fit. Meanwhile, logging by WFP continues on all but the steep slope cut blocks.

This issue and the SCR D's recent actions have gained national as well as provincial attention. SCR D Board members attended the Union of BC Municipalities annual convention September 24-28 where we had several opportunities to garner support from other BC local governments for our view that purveyors of drinking water should have control of the watersheds that feed our drinking water systems. We had a meeting with Premier Campbell and the Minister of the Environment where we put that view forward. While no promises were made, we felt confident that our voice was heard.

UNION OF BC MUNICIPALITIES

The annual convention of UBCM was an excellent opportunity for learning and networking with other local government representatives from across the province. I attended workshops on Watersheds and Private Managed Forest Land, Open Burning, Pesticide Use and Health, Fostering Age-friendly Communities, the Trade, Industry, and Labour Mobility Agreement (essentially a free trade agreement between BC and Alberta) I also attended meetings with provincial cabinet ministers.

In addition to our meeting with the Premier, we had a session with Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Pat Bell, about our need for an LRMP. We were disappointed as the minister informed us that the process will be put off once again. Policies have changed and now First Nations plans must be addressed first. Sometime in 2008 was what we were told this time.

At UBCM the SCR D Board brought forward a number of resolutions all of which were passed. These resolutions form the policy direction of the organization for the coming year and set the issues for the executive to take up with the provincial government. The resolutions dealt with geoduck farming, recycling of the mercury in compact florescent light bulbs, the formation of new resort municipalities, bike lane funding, watershed protection and local boards of health.

CNI

Recently the SCR D received confirmation from Community Services Minister Ida Chong that the CNI lands in upper Roberts Creek do not qualify to be considered for resort municipality status under Bill 11. Currently, these lands are under the jurisdiction of the Private Managed Forest Land Council which has its own set of rules and regulations about forestry practices. Unfortunately these regulations are very lax. However, if the lands are removed from the Private Managed Forest Land status, SCR D zoning then applies. Under the current zoning, subdivision and residential development are not permitted on these properties. If CNI plans to develop them, they will have to apply for a rezoning and go through all the required public processes.

ART GALLERIES

A few months ago, the Dragon and Unicorn Gallery on the highway had to close because it did not have the required zoning. There were a lot of disappointed artists, customers, and supporters of the gallery and it is clear to me that there is support for this type of activity in Roberts Creek. I have therefore asked the SCR D planning staff to prepare a possible amendment to the Roberts Creek OCP that would provide the option for people to apply for a spot zone to operate a gallery outside of the downtown commercial core. This amendment would require a definition of art gallery that would not allow other types of

commercial activity as well as ways to address any concerns there might be about traffic, access, and so on. The draft amendment would be referred to the Area Planning Commission and the Official Community Plan Commission for comment. After that, if the Board agrees, there would be a public information meeting and a public hearing before the amendment to the OCPC could be adopted.

ROBERTS CREEK GRANT IN AID

A small amount of money (\$5000) is set aside each year for grants for projects that directly benefit the citizens of Roberts Creek. So far, grants have been given to eel grass mapping off the Roberts Creek shoreline (\$1000), the 10th anniversary Mandala painting (\$1000), the RCCA for a bear proof garbage/recycling container at the gazebo and a contribution to the permits required to construct the gazebo (\$750.) There is still some money left. If your group has a project that needs assistance, you may apply by sending me an email, or writing to me at the SCRCD, 1975 Field Rd., Sechelt, BC, V0N 2A1. Please include details about your group, your project and your budget.

GAS TAX & BIKE LANES

We were very disappointed to have been turned down for a Cycling Infrastructure grant. Electoral areas B, D, E, and F had planned to pool our resources to come up with the required matching funds for this grant and we had suggested a project on Marine Drive in Area F. We had planned to use the federal gas tax grant which is given to communities on a per capita basis for projects that encourage clean air and clean water. Roberts Creek has received \$88,303 from this grant so far. I have allocated some of the funds for: 2 bike racks, one for the Pier Park and the other to go in the downtown core, and a survey of the roads in the downtown to help with planning parking improvements and walking paths. Now that we know we will not be receiving the CIPP grant I hope to use the rest of the gas tax money to implement the

results of the Roberts Creek parking study that was done last year and to develop a section of **bike lane along Lower Rd.**

VOLUNTEERS

A big thank you to Francesca Hollander and Robin Wheeler who both sat on the Roberts Creek Area Planning Commission for several years. They have both recently resigned for personal reasons and I would love to get **2 new people to serve on the APC.** This is a terrific group of citizens who meet once a month to discuss land use issues and certain types of development applications. They make recommendations to the SCRCD Planning and Development Committee. The meetings are on the last Monday of the month at 7pm at the Roberts Creek School. If you are interested in serving on the APC, please contact me.

The SCRCD has advertised for volunteers interested in serving on the 3 advisory committees for the recreation facilities. The committee for the swimming pools now has full membership, but we are still looking for people interested in serving on a committee for the ice rinks and another called the Community Programs and Services Committee which will deal with the community use portions of the facilities. If you have an interest in the coast's recreation facilities, contact Randy Udahl at the SCRCD 885-6800.

The new Sechelt pool is expected to open in November and the new ice rink in Gibsons by January.

RECYCLING

There has been quite a bit of discussion about recycling in the local papers recently. The SCRCD Board has allocated money to conduct an operational **review of the recycling program.** I am waiting for the results of the review before weighing in on the subject. We expect the review to be completed some time in 2008.

TO BURN OR NOT TO BURN?

A discussion of the health and environmental issues around

BACKYARD BURNING

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 24, 7:30PM

ROBERTS CREEK HALL

EVERYONE WELCOME!

Presentations by:

Dr Paul Martiquet and the Sunshine Coast Clean Air
Society

Draft copies of proposed new smoke regulations will be
available at the meeting and at www.creekdirector.ca

Sponsored by the Roberts Creek Community Association
and

Area D Director, Donna Shugar