



Saltair District Residents Association (SDRA)

www.sunnysaltair.ca

www.saltairdra.ca

MARCH 2024

Feedback & Reports – 1st Focus Groups Meeting – Housing & Development



There were about 40 people participating in total among the Focus Groups. Each group was led by a facilitator; either the facilitator or individuals in the group wrote down key points of the discussion on a flip chart.

The tabulations of the Focus Groups' flip chart contents and the evaluation sheets are attached to this newsletter. Notations from the charts have been taken 'verbatim' from the sheets except, where there were significant similarities, the gist was recorded once and the number of instances noted. The same was true of the evaluation comments. The document has been posted on the website and notices of same on other Saltair Facebook pages.

Note: for those folks not in attendance, this is important: there were no "scribes" assigned in the discussion groups – the focus was primarily on encouraging interaction, respectful listening, and opportunities for all to take part. So, after the fact, it is nearly impossible to attribute

context to the brief (sometimes one word) comments recorded by the facilitators. But 'minutes' were far less important than fostering inclusion, sharing and the visioning process.

Personal Opinions & Observations – augmented by casual feedback and "tea leaf" reading of all the material:

1. People were smiling coming out of their discussion sessions; they reported the process was engaging, interesting and FUN. And they want more of the same. There were a few who expected to be talked to (or at) a la CVRD presentations and seemed a little uncomfortable. Hopefully, they'll be more relaxed next time.
2. Most folks got the idea of "visioning" – blue sky, what-if, and wouldn't-it-be-great-to.... never mind what the rules are now, let's figure out what we think we should/could have and we'll figure out how to get there a little later. Gold stars for all that effort, because it is very hard to jump outside one's comfort zone.
3. The whole idea of small focus groups is to foster interchange of ideas, give everyone a chance to contribute, and thereby be productive. From the extent of the output, my personal opinion is that – it worked.
4. Jesse McClinton, Area G Director, attended as a citizen. He seemed to concur with all of the above.
5. There are some really good ideas in the material. Folks seemed to have been thinking about these issues for a while and the new legislation precipitated thoughts toward concrete suggestions.
6. There is a distinct flavour of unease and frustration, even distrust and anger with the CVRD in some responses. They have been at the OCP process (and other projects) for literally decades – the molasses approach. Now they have to respond in literally months – get plans made and implemented to contend with what is coming. They fail to listen, micromanage, but can't contend with issues and budgets NOW – what is it going to be like when stuff has to get **done**? Consensus seems to be that a new model is definitely required. Personally, I concur.
7. NEXT – If we make some (broad) assumptions about what might be a reasonable approach for Saltair to manage significant population pressures, what do we need to plan and implement to get there in terms of infrastructure – specifically: water, waste disposal, transportation (including roads) and accessibility (e.g. aging in place).

Bring the family to Centennial Park for the HUGE Easter Egg Hunt & Celebration

Sunday March 31, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. – enjoy the entertainment, refreshments, prizes and (we hope) spring! Poster is attached. Please share with neighbours and friends.

REMINDER

Membership renewals for the 2024/25 SDR fiscal year are due by the Annual General Meeting. Please save us a little time by coming forward with your renewal? These are the funds that help pay for functions like the Focus Groups meetings (i.e. the above) and our other events. Every little bit helps – please pay up.

SDRA Annual General Meeting – 2024-2025

April 20 10:30 – 11:45 a.m. Saltair Community Centre – Members only – please mark your calendars

We're doing this earlier in the day (to free folks up for the rest of their day) and on a weekend so folks with children have a better opportunity to attend.

Agenda:

- Introduction and opening remarks
- Business meeting (board elections, confirmation of dues amount, financial statements, summary of 2023/24 accomplishments)
- Proposed events and activities for 2024/25
- Guest speaker(s) – still in negotiations - TBA
- Questions and suggestions from the floor – as time permits

Pitt Meadows proposes tax changes for B.C. farmland

Recommendations to help reduce unused farmland was approved in 6-1 vote

<https://www.mapleridgenews.com/local-news/> March 6, 2024

To tackle what City Council says is an epidemic of unused farming potential, they have proposed a collection of three taxation proposals which arose from the city's recently adopted Agricultural Viability Strategy.

1. The Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) call upon the provincial government to create an unarmored land tax that would be applied to any property within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) that is not being utilized for farming.
2. The UBCM to encourage the province to remove the eligibility for vacant or unused farmland to receive the school tax exemption. The intent of this resolution is to provide a financial incentive to farm or lease agricultural land.
3. Change the minimum gross income required in order for a property to receive farm classification and receive the corresponding tax benefits (from \$2500 to \$7000 for small holdings) – a value that has not been changed since 1993.

This farm classification change, along with the other two proposals, will go a long way in reducing the number of ALR properties that go unfarmed – and if the owner does not wish to farm the land, it could be leased to an enterprise which would optimize land use for food production – increasing local food security.

If approved by the Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA) and UBCM, the resolutions will then be forwarded to the provincial government for further consideration.



Forget downsizing: Canadian seniors staying in large houses

Following up our Visioning Meeting: Housing Options on February 24, reports like this are moving into the forefront.

Due in part to lack of options, seniors are staying in large houses well into their 80s. [The report](#), titled Understanding the Impact of Senior Households on Canada's Housing Market, said the sell rate among that age group has fallen about six percentage points in the past 30 years. CMHC economist Francis Cortellino wrote a large part of the report, and said "better health and better wealth" is part of what is keeping people at home longer, but so is a lack of options. Those who would be willing to downsize, he said, are often stymied by a lack of housing variety in their communities, so they stay in their homes to remain close to their friends. This trend is putting pressure on housing markets for families and the demographic shift needed to free up a meaningful amount of housing stock won't start happening for several years. "Solutions aimed at increasing supply from existing units (by creating secondary suites or laneway homes, for example) could be increasingly considered." the report said.

Final oil and gas permits for B.C. waters have been relinquished

Federal government says Chevron voluntarily gave up its final 23 permits on Feb. 9 (<https://www.coastmountainnews.com/news/> February 21, 2024)

A news release from the office of Energy and Natural Resources Minister Jonathan Wilkinson says the relinquishment came from Chevron Canada, which has given up its 23 offshore permits along the coast of British Columbia as of Feb. 9.

A spokeswoman from Wilkinson's office says that represents the last of the 227 offshore oil and gas permits for British Columbia's coastal waters. The release says giving up the oil and gas permits in Pacific waters fulfils a condition in the federal government's commitment to an Indigenous-led conservation initiative that received a pledge of \$800 million in support from Ottawa two years ago. The permits were within protected wildlife areas on B.C.'s West Coast and are estimated at 5,700 square kilometres, overlapping parts of federal marine protection areas off B.C.

(Let's have a quiet Yippee! Shall we?)

Natural gas overtaking forestry as top contributor to B.C. government's resource revenue

www.theglobeandmail.com/business/ (So we're moving from one climate change contributor to another)

The provincial government is counting on rising revenue from the royalties paid by producers of natural gas in northeastern B.C. to soften the blow of a stagnant forest industry. Annual government revenue from [forestry](#) has exceeded natural gas royalties in 12 of the past 13 fiscal years. But with reduced timber supplies, forestry is expected to play a supporting role in the economy, trailing natural gas for the foreseeable future.

Key discoveries of natural gas more than 20 years ago in northeastern B.C. and advances in fracking technology helped set the stage for the role reversal. LNG Canada, which is building an export terminal in Kitimat, is gearing up to start shipping liquefied natural gas to Asia by mid-2025. As a result, the province's producers are planning to boost their output. The government is banking on slumping lumber prices to rebound, so forestry revenue is forecast to reach \$789-million in the 2026-27 fiscal year. But the province expects to reap much greater rewards from natural gas royalties, as much as \$1.43-billion in the 2026-27 fiscal year as the result of both higher production volumes and increased fuel prices.

(With the significant increase in population coming down the pipe (so to speak), why doesn't BC start investing a whole lot more in manufacturing – value added industries – rather than straight extraction. And maybe climate-positive ones at that?)

Community Conversations Meeting - #3 – deferred until ????? Director McClinton - TBA.

Please check out our new website (www.saltairdra.ca) [There is a new quiz!](#)

"Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much." – Helen Keller

EASTER EGG HUNT



SUNDAY, MARCH 31
11 AM – 1 PM

**Come enjoy an Easter egg hunt, crafts &
refreshments**

SALTAIR CENTENNIAL PARK

Hosted by the Saltair District Residents Association
(SDRA)



Report on Focus Group Findings: Meeting February 24, 2024

Saltair Housing & Development Options 10+ Years

Saltair Community Centre

Instead of writing out the comments from every group, in group order, the comments have been transcribed as written, but grouped by common characteristics. The numbers of comments, where virtually identical, have been noted.

	Concept, Idea, Suggestion	#
1	Lots/Parcels a. Variety is better b. Need freedom to exercise options based on needs, more flexibility c. May want to age in place or offer second home, suite or carriage house d. Small groups of homes with shared services? e. Some large lots could be subdivided, used for future small home clusters f. Manufactured homes g. NO multi-level housing h. NO subdividing other than possibly family or if lots greater than 2 acres i. Prefer little/no change	 6 12 3 4 2 2 2
2	Character a. Quiet area; both traffic and visual noise will go up as density does b. Not just a bedroom community for commuters c. Respect landowners d. Protect parks and green belts, greenways e. Protect views f. Control deforestation g. Accommodate/support diverse population h. Currently a culture of “no change” i. Mission statement must direct change	 2 3 3
3	Affordability a. Need housing for middle income families not just \$million homes b. Need affordable options for seniors, reduced circumstances c. Reasonable housing for workers, local business d. Accommodate live/work options e. Keep taxes low	 4 5 3 2 2
4	Housing Options Needed a. Patio homes b. Assisted living c. Town homes d. Duplexes e. Co-op / rental housing to max 3 stories for those saving for homes and new families starting out f. R7 zone expanded – manufactured homes (strata – like Ladysmith) g. Sizes of carriage houses, suites may not support families; should only be implemented on lots large enough to support them h. No changes except for very large lots	 6 2 2 3 2 3 2

5	ALR Land a. Need a strategic plan to protect the ALR b. Diversify agricultural uses c. Do not allow rezoning for housing	
6	Community a. Neighbours need to talk and share concerns, common issues b. Foster harmony; understand compromises c. Diverse population – age, work/retired, families d. Caregivers, young people should be accommodated in a home (share spaces) e. Range of care available for seniors; understanding needs f. Make Saltair attractive to young families g. Need to band together to get attention h. Indigenous land acknowledgements i. Need to emphasize communication: feedback, action items, implementation plan; broader involvement; more proactive	 3 2 3 3 2 2
7	Commercial Property a. “core” to attract services, provide local youth with employment opportunity b. Would expand tax base c. Central site for transportation d. Accessibility for older residents (reduce travel) e. Senior centre – care centre f. Commercial expansion with residency above it	 5 2 3 2 2
8	Not Sure Where/How to Categorize a. Liability provisions (<i>in reference to?</i>)	2
Parking Lot1	Planning & Policy – Dependency a. More meetings like this b. Enlist partners - at all levels of government c. Better planning – be flexible and creative in how/where we expand d. Amalgamation? e. Better and faster zoning and variance management/changes and decision-making, less interference from regional government/CVRD; clearer rules f. Lower costs to upgrade, make changes, process variances – simplify. Cost should be at back end, not up front only to have negative decision – no cost recovery available g. Less reliance on consultants – use staff – more staff involvement & implementation h. Understand legislation, zoning – more clarity; define where and how should it affect Saltair; i. Should be NO changes until CVRD clarifies legislation and service issues are understood j. Storm water management plan / implementation; understand the slope stability issues k. Infrastructure before growth; slow growth; density must dictate capacity l. Parcel taxes have to be adjusted to ensure fairness	 2 4 2 7 4 3

Parking Lot2	Services – Dependency	
	a. Water – systems and sources	4
	b. Sewer – at least in some places; utilize newest technologies	6
	c. Roads – maintenance, improvements, cross-walks, lighting (intersections)	2
	d. Traffic – redirect (additional road access?)	2
	e. Transportation – bus service? Transport issues will not be solved with BC Transit	
	f. Access to schools, libraries	
	g. Amalgamation?	2
	h. Not enough water to support any large change in population	

EVALUATIONS FORMS' SUMMARY

1	<p>How productive did you find the meeting to be (what did you like / not like)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectful • Interesting range of views; shared understanding; good conversations, input • Fantastic; excellent • Valuable; productive; good • (Very) informative; more of same • Well run; organized • 5 of 10; 7 of 10 • Only productive if means found to put ideas into planning and into action • Great summaries; great facilitator • MUCH better than the CVRD's • More background on allowable options would have helped • More facilitator intervention at times would have helped • More time for discussion 	# occur.
		6
		7
		3
		7
		6
		2
		2
		2
		4
		1
		1
		1
		2
2	<p>How likely are you to participate in future meetings (every form submitted answered this)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%; absolutely; yes • Very likely • Likely • Maybe • Only if results and feedback are presented to (1) all residents; (2) the CVRD 	#
		14
		11
		3
		2
		2
3	<p>What would you suggest to improve future meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More advertising (x3) • More community involvement (x2) • Same facilitators; same process; same model; ensure all voices heard; round table at end of focus group session • Supporting info package circulated for background (Provincial documentation; CVRD docs) 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the same meeting with area businesses • Do a similar meeting with representatives from other districts • Ask groups for recommendations • More coffee 	
4	<p>How did you hear about the meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media / Facebook • Mailbox / poster • Newspaper • Family member • SDRA / email 	<p>10 11 1 3 6</p>