

MINUTES
ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
Wednesday May 26, 2021 at 6:30 pm

Present: Councillor Nathalie Chambers (Chair), Deb Beaton-Smith (Via Teams), John Ellis (Via Teams), Heron Hanuman (Via Telephone), James Hesser (Via Teams), Sonia Nicholson (Via Teams), Leanna Rathkelly (Via Teams), Michele Sealey (Via Teams), Nik White (6:38).

Staff: Nadine Kawata, Planner (Community Planning); and Megan MacDonald, Committee Clerk.

Regrets: Mark Leiren-Young and Yashwant Reddy Katireddy (Youth).

MINUTES

MOVED by H. Hanuman and Seconded by J. Hesser: “That the Minutes of the Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee meeting held February 20, 2020, be adopted as circulated.”

CARRIED

CHAIR’S REMARKS

The Chair gave a brief verbal update on recent business, the following was noted:

- The West Coast has rich heritage and culture, both tangible and intangible.
- Council recently debated a motion related to the Fairy Creek logging blockade.
- There are ongoing efforts to preserve our heritage and the old growth forest.

GORGE TILlicUM COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – MURAL APPLICATION

N. Kawata, Planner (Community Planner) presented information on the mural application process, and provided an overview of an application by the Gorge Tillicum Community Association (GTCA) for a mural located at 100 Burnside Road West. The following was noted:

- The creation of a mural to enhance the public realm and build community is clearly supported by the Comprehensive Arts Policy. To paint a mural on a building the design must receive Council approval or be approved through the Public Art Jury process.
- The Comprehensive Arts Policy encourages the private sector to follow the public art jury process to choose a mural design, but the Policy does not require private property owners to use this process. Under the Unsightly Premises Bylaw, painting of a mural on an exterior wall is considered to be graffiti unless approved by Council.
- The Gorge Tillicum Community Association is proposing to paint a mural on a private commercial/residential building (corner lot) at 100 Burnside Road West.
- The location of the mural is on the Northeast facing wall, facing Wascana Street.
- The proposed mural will be photorealistic image of a local child.
- The GTCA indicated the mural project is designed to “brighten up and enliven a dreary stretch of road and spur investment and interest in this somewhat neglected corner of the community.”

During committee discussion, the following was noted:

- The committee would be interested in having a child of indigenous or diverse ethnicity.
- Members of the committee are supportive of the mural application.
- The sunflower is beautiful, however a local or indigenous species would be ideal.

MOVED by L. Rathkelly and Seconded by N. White: “That the Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee recommends that Saanich Council approve the mural application at 100 Burnside Road West by the Gorge Tillicum Community Association, with a recommendation to choose a young person of a more global racial ethnicity and indigenous plants.”

CARRIED

HERITAGE FOUNDATION UPDATE

S. Nicholson provided an update on the recent business of the Saanich Heritage Foundation.

- The recently created Saanich Heritage Foundation social media accounts are doing well. Success is being measured by gaining new followers and posts getting likes.
- The first draft of the coloring book has been sent to the committee, it is based on an architect alphabet series, with a different heritage related feature for each letter of the alphabet. The pictures included are heritage buildings within Saanich that include the feature mentioned. These pictures will be converted to coloring pages.
- It was noted that the noted feature within the page could be highlighted with bold lines.

SAANICH HOUSING STRATEGY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

N. Kawata, Planner (Community Planner) noted that the Housing Strategy Task Force Recommendations presentation had not been included on the agenda. The report will be going forward to Council soon, and committee feedback will not be considered in time for the report if the item is not discussed at the current meeting.

MOVED by N. Chambers and Seconded by N. White: “That the Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee add the Saanich Housing Strategy Task Force Recommendations Presentation to the agenda.”

CARRIED

The Planner presented information on the Saanich Housing Strategy Task Force Recommendations. The following was noted:

- The Housing Needs Report was an assessment mandated by the Province of BC, to better understand current and future housing needs, and to help ensure planning can be informed by the latest available housing needs data. This report identified key areas of local need, such as affordable housing, rental housing, housing for seniors, individuals with disabilities, one-person households, lone parent households, families and housing for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- The Housing Strategy is being developed to direct how we move forward to achieve a greater housing supply, affordability and diversity to accommodate a broad range of community housing needs now and into the future.
- The Housing Strategy provides a framework to improve housing across the housing

- spectrum over the next 10 years, the spectrum includes temporary housing (emergency shelters and transitional housing), non-market housing (supportive, social and co-op housing), and market housing (low end market rental, entry level market ownership, market rental housing and market home ownership).
- The Strategy will be considered for adoption by Saanich Council in July 2021.
 - The Housing Strategy Task Force (HSTF) was an advisory body that helped develop the Housing Strategy. The HSTF was composed of stakeholders with a diverse range of housing expertise and viewpoints, who worked collaboratively within a small, interactive format to design housing solutions and innovative ideas.
 - The recommendations from the HSTF are outlined in the Housing Strategy Report. Recommendations includes guiding principles, focus areas, strategies, prioritized actions, 3-year high priority actions, prioritization of parallel initiatives, over-arching directions and possible council referrals.
 - The guiding principles include equity, diversity, and inclusion; environmental, economic, and social sustainability; well-being and security; resilience and innovation; responsiveness; and partnerships.
 - The focus areas were: Increase affordable and supportive housing; Promote and protect rental housing; support housing diversity and increase supply; reduce barriers to housing development; strengthen partnerships; enhance community engagement of housing needs and initiatives; and understand housing demand and address land speculation.

The Planner outlined actions in the report that may be of interest to the committee.

ACTION 3.1 F: Review opportunities to develop a Single Detached Dwelling Conversion Policy and other tools that will incentivize conversion of single detached dwellings to multiple units, creating more rental and attainable home ownership. Examples of this action include:

- The City of Victoria, which recently updated their housing conversion regulations. This update included an increase to permitted number of units for buildings with heritage designation, rental units, or affordable units.
- The City of Vancouver, which recently updated zoning regulations and related design guidelines to support multiple conversion dwellings in conjunction with retention of character homes.

A discussion on Action 3.1 F took place, the following was noted:

- It would be beneficial for Saanich to implement a policy in line with those of Victoria and Vancouver, which promotes preserving heritage and character homes.
- Currently converting a heritage home to a multiple units would require a rezoning application, the intention of creating a policy is to simplify the conversion process.
- The committee requested the following be added in the action: “and incentivize retention of character homes and designation of heritage buildings.”
- There is less protection for character homes on the heritage register that are not designated as official heritage homes. Incentivizing heritage designation when converting character homes would be beneficial to protect the heritage.

MOVED by N. White and Seconded by S. Nicholson: “That Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee supports Action 3.1 with the consideration of feedback of the committee, including the best practice examples given for Victoria and Vancouver related to the retention and conversion of character homes.”

CARRIED

The Planner outlined an additional action in the report that may be of interest to the committee, item 3.3 G was discussed.

ACTION 3.3 G: Identify areas in rural Saanich, outside the urban containment boundary, where housing opportunities could be expanded while maintaining District goals for the protection of rural agriculture lands and enhancement of food security for current and future generations. Consideration should be given to housing needs in rural areas, agriculture land preservation and food security goals, interface between urban and rural areas, potential infrastructure costs, and the Regional Growth Strategy.

A discussion on Action 3.3 G took place, the following was noted:

- Housing should be kept within the Urban Containment Boundary, preserving farmland for food growth should be a priority.
- Rural Saanich should not be densified further than current allowances.
- Maintaining farmland for food production is imperative for food security.

MOVED by J. Ellis and Seconded by J. Hesser: “That the Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee recommends that when considering Housing Strategy Action 3.3 G, Saanich Council remove designated heritage buildings on farmland from consideration of densification.

CARRIED

ROUNDTABLE

A discussion on items of interest to the committee took place, the following was noted:

- The committee previously passed a motion related to the possible creation of a mural on the Galloping Goose Regional Trail sound barrier wall at the McKenzie interchange, as well as the Chinese Canadian Museum. The motions, which were passed by the committee will go forward to Council on June 21st.
- The jury process for the art at the new Saanich Fire hall #2 will proceed in the near future, the committee will be updated on this process as soon as possible.
- Esquimalt has recently started the process of developing a Public Art Plan, to define the future direction, philosophy, policies, priorities and actions relating to public art.
- Victoria recently expanded tax exemption eligibility guidelines, which now include cultural groups that own and operate in Victoria, Saanich provides some similar exemptions. There is interest in having a list of cultural associations in Saanich.
- Now that pandemic restrictions are beginning to lessen, there is hope that Saanich may be holding the small pop up concerts in parks again this year. There may be some revenue opportunities for local musicians, members would like to have information on how to participate in this initiative to share with the public and interested stakeholders.
- The next agenda will include an update on the Capital Regional District (CRD) Performing Arts Facility service.
- School District 61 is currently experiencing budget shortfalls, music and the strings program is currently hanging by a thread. The committee is interested in making a statement of support for music and art in schools. As this item is considered urgent, the committee was advised of options to bring this item forward prior to the minutes being approved, the Chair will bring the item forward as a Notice of Motion to Council.

MOVED by D. Beaton-Smith and Seconded by M. Sealey: “That the Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee recommends that the committee create a list of cultural associations in Saanich to raise awareness and promote diversity.”

CARRIED

MOVED by J. Ellis and Seconded by M. Sealey: “That the Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee recommends Saanich Council write a letter of support on behalf of continuing music programs in their current form at School District 61 schools.”

CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

- The committee clerk will forward information related to pop up music in parks.
- As the committee recommendation related to music programs at School District 61 will not reach Council prior to the finalization of the budget, the Chair will bring this item forward via a Notice of Motion.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is Wednesday, June 23, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Councillor Chambers, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary