

# OTTER POINT & SHIRLEY RESIDENTS & RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION (OPSRRA) INFORMATION UPDATE APRIL 2004

**OPSRRA** is a representative community organization with an elected Board of Directors and strives to present the points-of-view of the residents of the rural communities of Shirley and Otter Point to local government. It was founded in 1992 and has a membership of about 350.

**Lifetime memberships are \$5.00** and available from OPSRRA directors—see our web site ([www.opsrra.com](http://www.opsrra.com)) for further information.

Are you an OPSRRA member? Do you want to receive the OPSRRA newsletter and notice of meetings directly to your e-mail address? OPSRRA is now e-mailing this newsletter to over 60 of our members.

Contact Arnie Campbell at: [d.acampbell@shaw.ca](mailto:d.acampbell@shaw.ca) if you want to receive this service.

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### 1. UPCOMING MEETINGS

Shirley Education And Action Society (SEAS) — General Meeting

Date: Sunday, April 4, 2004

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Place: Shirley Community Hall

Call 646-2820 for further information

Otter Point/Shirley Advisory Planning Commission (APC) Regarding an Application by Arden Log Hauling to Develop Their Muir Creek Property

Date: Tuesday, April 6, 2004

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Shirley Community Hall

Contact the CRD Planning Services Office (642-1620) to confirm that the meeting is going ahead.

Land Use Committee "A" (LUC "A")

Date: Wednesday, April 21, 2004

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: District of Sooke Council Chambers at 2225 Otter Point Road

Check with the CRD Planning Services Office (642-1620) for confirmation of the meeting and the agenda.

## 2. COMMUNITY NOTICES

### Open Burning Ends this Month

The Otter Point & Shirley Fire Departments want the residents of Otter Point and Shirley to be aware that open burning season ends Wednesday, April 14th. All fires after this date can only be done with the permission of your local fire department. No fires are permitted during the months of July, August and September. See the web site, for the fire department in your area. For further information and the procedure for applying for an out of season burning permit, contact the Otter Point Fire Department: [www.otterpointfire.bc.ca/](http://www.otterpointfire.bc.ca/) or the Shirley Fire Department: <http://shirleyfire.cjb.net/>

### Shirley Community Association Executive

The Shirley Community Association held its Annual General Meeting on March 17th and the following are the SCA executive for the coming year:

Chuck Minten	Chair
Michael Wood	Vice Chair
Karen VanVeen	Secretary
Colleen Minten	Treasurer
James Powell	Director
Margaret Wood	Director

### Temporary Change in OPSRRA Executive

During the four-month absence (mid April to mid August) of Ken Pungente, Arnie Campbell will become Acting President of OPSRRA and director Mitch Moneo will assume the duties of Vice President. Bon Voyage Ken!

### **3. APPOINTMENTS TO OTTER POINT OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN (OCP) COMMITTEE**

The CRD Planning Services have confirmed the following appointments to the Otter Point OCP committee:

Greg Whincup, Viktoria Schaum, Wayne Fritz, Ken Douch, Manfred Maurus, Wendy Miller and Sandra Barta.

The committee has held an initial orientation meeting but no regular meeting dates have been set for either the Otter Point or the Shirley OCP committees. Once underway, both committees will be holding public meetings: these dates will be publicized.

The current Otter Point/Shirley Local Area Plan can be seen on OPSRRA's web site: [www.opsrra.com](http://www.opsrra.com)

### **4. RECENT DECISION OF THE CRD BOARD REGARDING THE REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY (RGS)**

The CRD Board of Directors has recently approved the Corporate Implementation Strategy that is intended to guide CRD departments in "achieving consistency with the RGS." What this means is that requests to provide certain services, such as water and sewer, outside of identified Urban Containment Boundaries (UCB) has to be reviewed by CRD Regional Planning Services. The CRD Board would then make a final decision based upon the Regional Planning Services report. On March 10th, the CRD Board considered an application to extend services beyond a UCB and was offered an opinion that extension of water and sewer should not occur into the JDF Electoral Area until Official Community Plans had been updated and a decision made about UCBs in the JDF Electoral Area. Also, the Board was informed that the authors of the RGS never intended for UCBs to extend into the JDF Electoral Area. What this would seem to mean is that until the OCPs for Otter Point and Shirley are completed the CRD Board will likely not consider any requested to extend municipal water or sewer into these and other JDF Electoral Area communities. If the new OCPs do not identify a UCB in their plan then the service could only be granted at the CRD Board level by an amendment to the RGS.

### **5. SOME THINGS THAT OPSRRA DIDN'T DO**

Regular readers of the OPSRRA newsletter will have realized that much of the content of the monthly newsletter is taken-up with things that OPSRRA has done. Occasionally, though, we intentionally don't do something! Two recent examples:

1. OPSRRA was asked by the Regional Director to speak before the CRD Board of Directors on March 24<sup>th</sup> regarding the proposal to change the membership structure of the Electoral Area Land Use Committee (see the Regional

Director's newsletter on the CRD web site [www.crd.bc.ca/jdf/index.htm](http://www.crd.bc.ca/jdf/index.htm) for a detailed explanation of the proposed change). OPSRRA's directors voted not to attend as we felt that because of the importance of this change we could not speak to this issue without first going to the membership. Time did not permit this to happen.

2. OPSRRA's directors recently voted on a motion not to accept money from the Regional Director. This decision arose from an invitation for OPSRRA to attend a meeting of the JDF Economic Development Commission in support of a proposal for funding being made by a coalition of community groups in the JDF Electoral Area. The application was for money to study the need for a newsletter or newspaper for residents of the JDF Electoral Area: the EDC grant has been approved and will pay for a feasibility study. If the outcome of the study is positive, the group intends to then apply to the EDC for a further grant to help with the purchase of printing equipment. OPSRRA's directors felt that accepting public funds would put us in a conflict of interest when advocating to government on behalf of the membership.

## 6. LETTER TO CHAIR OF LAND USE COMMITTEE "A"

This letter was sent to the Chair of LUC "A" with copies to CRD Planning Services and the JDF Regional Director. In his reply of March 25th, the regional director pointed-out that Section 3.11 of CRD Bylaw 2945 (the bylaw that created the APC's) states that the regional director may advertise the date, time and place of APC meetings: in other words advertising is discretionary. **However, the regional director has now agreed that future APC meetings will be advertised in the local newspaper, starting with the April 6th APC meeting (see Notices above).**

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10 February 2004

Mr. Erik Lund  
Regional Director  
JDF Electoral Area  
2205 Otter Point Rd.  
Sooke, BC V0S 1N0

I am writing on behalf of OPSRRA, the Otter Point & Shirley Residents & Ratepayers Association, to ask for a clarification of the role of the Advisory Planning Commission. OPSRRA supported setting-up the APC because our association felt that it would compliment the Land Use Committee by encouraging local input on local land use issues, in a less formal setting, prior to a public hearing. Now we are not so sure that this purpose is being fully supported by LUC "A", CRD Planning Services and the Regional Director. Case in point: De Mamiel Estates at 2901 Otter Point Rd. This land use proposal, if approved, will have a significant impact on the future development of the northeast quadrant of Otter Point. It therefore provided a good opportunity to make use of the Otter Point/Shirley APC. While CRD Planning Services, the JDF Regional Director and LUC "A" should be commended for having agreed to include the APC's report in their decision-making process, no effort was made to ensure that the Otter Point community knew that the APC was meeting. Although the February 3rd meeting was well attended this was likely because of the efforts of the Salmon Enhancement Society.

There was no public advertisement of the meeting in the Sooke News Mirror or similar means: notice was limited to a mention on the Regional Director's web site and letters sent to adjacent property owners - most of whom were residents of the District of Sooke, not Otter Point. This does not constitute adequate public notice in our opinion. Even the chair of the APC was not made aware that the meeting wasn't being publicly advertised: he only found-out about this when contacted by OPSRRA.

Our other concern was that most of the meeting time was given over to a presentation by the developer and the Salmon Enhancement Society. Who should be given priority at these meetings? OPSRRA feels that hearing from residents of the local area should be the priority to ensure that their questions and concerns are being heard.

While the APC is new and can be expected to have some "growing pains" it was clear from this experience that these meetings need to be publicly advertised and that their main purpose should be to listen to the questions and concerns of the local community. The APC has been given an important job on behalf of the community and needs the support of the Land Use Committee, Regional Director and CRD Planning Services.

Regards.

Ken Pungente – President OPSRRA

Copy: Chair - LUC "A"  
CRD Planning Services  
Chair – Otter Point/Shirley APC

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## **7. LETTER TO REGIONAL DIRECTOR REQUESTING MINISTERIAL REVIEW OF SEAPARC ASSESSMENT**

The Regional Director has requested letters of support for a provincial review of the formula used to calculate the amount of tax paid by residents of the Electoral Area to support local recreation services (SEAPARC). Prior to the incorporation of the District of Sooke, this cost was based upon assessed property values throughout the unincorporated area. With the incorporation of Sooke this formula is now seemingly unfair as the Electoral Area, with a smaller population but higher property values, is apparently paying a disproportionately high share of the recreation tax. Elsewhere in the province the usual formula (where two or more jurisdictions share a recreation service), is for the assessment to be a combination of property value assessment and population. Using this method Electoral Area taxpayers could expect to receive a reduction in their property taxes because of their smaller population base in comparison to the District of Sooke. OPSRRA directors voted to send a letter to the Regional Director requesting a ministerial review of the present SEAPARC taxation formula.

## **8. GETTING YOUR MAIL BOX FIXED**

This does not refer to having your mailbox “neutered”! Are you frustrated with those leaning, misaligned and otherwise decrepit green boxes that carry our most important papers? Yes, your Canada Post mailbox. Well you may be waiting another year before they will be replaced with those fancier ones that everyone

else seems to have except Sooke and us. In the meantime, you can get your mailbox aligned and levelled—but probably not painted. Call or drop into the Canada Post Office in Sooke and explain the problem and they will obligingly and quickly have someone come-out and attend to the problem. And no, the bill will not be in the mail!

## **9. FREE ADVERTIZING FOR LOCAL BUSINESES**

OPSRRA would like to welcome the addition of ALM Organic Farm And Full Circle Seeds located at 3680 Otter Point Rd. ([www.fullcircleseeds.com](http://www.fullcircleseeds.com)) to the free Business Listing Service offered to OPSSRA members. Support local business – see the list of business services on our web site: [www.opsrra.com](http://www.opsrra.com)

## **10. BOUNDARY RESTRUCTURE COMMITTEE**

Representatives from the Juan de Fuca/District of Sooke Boundary Restructure committee met with Murray Coell, the minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services, on March 2nd to request a reply from the minister to two letters sent to the ministry in September 2003 by the District of Sooke. One letter requested an improved Offer of Assistance for the District of Sooke and the other sought clarification about the increased tax rate that the District could impose on the Managed forestlands that would come within the boundaries of the expanded District. The District of Sooke has made it quite clear to both the province and the Boundary Restructure committee that it will not proceed with any further discussion of boundary restructure or a referendum on amalgamation unless its need for increased tax income, to meet the increased costs of amalgamation, is met. The minister's reply was received March 30th by the District of Sooke and shared with members of the committee. It will be discussed with the committee at an April 15th meeting, at which time a decision may be made about whether the proposed amalgamation will proceed to referendum, be cancelled, or further delayed while the District continues negotiations with the province. Also outstanding, and awaiting a recommendation by the committee to the minister, is whether the rural areas would have their referendum votes counted separately. Public opinion at the first round of public meetings supported keeping the vote tally for Otter Point/Shirley/Jordan River separate from East Sooke. The Boundary Restructure committee meetings are open to the public.

Date: Thursday, April 15, 2004

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: District of Sooke Council Chambers, 2225 Otter Point Road.