

OTTER POINT & SHIRLEY RESIDENTS & RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION (OPSRRA) INFORMATION UPDATE OCTOBER 2007

The Otter Point & Shirley Residents & Ratepayers Association (OPSRRA) is a registered non-profit society with an elected Board of Directors and strives to present the points-of-view of its members to local government. OPSRRA was founded in 1992 and has a membership of about **375**. Any resident or property owner in Shirley and Otter Point is eligible for membership.

Lifetime memberships cost \$5.00 per person and are available from OPSRRA directors—see our web site (www.opsrra.ca) for further information and on-line registration.

The purpose of our society is to:

- Ensure that the development of the two communities of Shirley and Otter Point takes place in an orderly way and in the best interests of its residents.
- Co-operate with local government and other public bodies in the furtherance of the objectives of the society and benefits to the community.
- Concern itself with the performance of government agencies.
- Encourage citizens to stand for public office.
- Promote community spirit and sense of identity by organizing or supporting appropriate activities.

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 **165** of our members. Contact Arnie Campbell at: d.acampbell@shaw.ca if you want to receive this membership service.

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1. UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Contact Arnie Campbell at: d.acampbell@shaw.ca or 642-3113 to have your community event listed in our monthly community events calendar.

Tuesday
October 2

Economic Development & Community Change Forum

7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Otter Point Fire Hall

3727 Otter Point Road (at Kemp Lake Road)

Second in a workshop and forum series presented by the Developing a Strategic Vision Project & OPSRRA
See item 3 in this newsletter for details.

Thursday
October 4

Juan de Fuca Parks Committee

5:00 p.m.

JDF Electoral Area Services Office

2-6868 West Coast Road, Sooke BC

Saturday
October 6

Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society

Explore the stream sidewalks and the salmon run.

9:30 a.m.

Meet in the SEAPARC Leisure Centre parking lot (Phillips Road).

This is not a difficult walk (1 to 3 hours) and we may explore a few locations depending on the run.

Call 642-2767 for more information.

www.freewebs.com/communitytrails

Sunday
October 7

Shirley Education and Action Society

Annual General Meeting

2:00 p.m.

Shirley Community Hall

Tuesday
October 9

**Developing a Strategic Vision Steering Committee
Monthly Meeting**

9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Board Room "A"
SEAPARC Leisure Complex
2168 Philips Road Sooke BC

Tuesday
October 9

JDF Land Use Committee Meeting

7:00 p.m.
District of Sooke Council Chambers
2225 Otter Point Road

You can obtain the agenda at the CRD Planning Services office,
2-6868 West Coast Road or on the CRD website at:

www.crd.bc.ca/jdf/index.htm

Click on "Agenda" at the top of the page.

Sunday
October 14

Shirley Volunteer Fire Protection Society

2:00 p.m.
Shirley Community Hall

Extraordinary Meeting

Consideration: Changes to Constitution and Bylaws

Monday
October 15

**OPSRRA Directors Meeting
Members welcome!**

7:30 p.m.
Board Room "A"
SEAPARC Leisure Complex
2168 Philips Road Sooke BC

Thursday
October 18

**Sooke Electoral Area Recreation Commission (SEAPARC)
Meeting**

7:00 p.m.
Multi-Purpose Room "A"
SEAPARC Leisure Complex
2168 Philips Road Sooke BC

Saturday
October 20

**CRD Transportation & Health Initiative:
Let's Get Moving Forum**

8:30 to 4:00 p.m.
Edward Milne Community School

Advance registration required

Contact Emma Taylor: 642-1094 or chipcom@shaw.ca

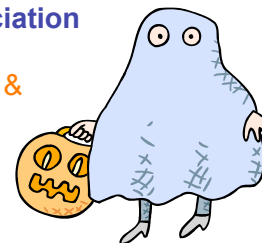
Wednesday
October 31

**Otter Point Volunteer Fire Fighters Association
Annual Hallowe'en Party**

6:00 p.m. hot chocolate, hot dogs, sparklers &
candy bags for the kids

Fireworks 7:30 p.m.

Scouts Canada Camp Barnard
(Young's Lake Road)



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| Thursday November 1 | Juan de Fuca Parks Committee 5:00 p.m. JDF Electoral Area Services Office 2-6868 West Coast Road, Sooke BC | |
| Saturday November 3 | Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society Finding Bradford Swamp Check the web site for hike details: www.freewebs.com/communitytrails | |
| Sunday November 4 | Shirley Fall Fair 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Shirley Community Hall |  |
| Friday, Saturday, Sunday November 16, 17 & 18 | All Sooke Arts and Crafts Christmas Fair November 16 1:00 to 8:00 p.m. November 17 & 18 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sooke Community Hall Two floors of our wonderful local artisans. Don't miss it! |  |
| Second & Fourth Thursday of every month | Shirley Quilters and Crafters 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Shirley Community Hall | |

2. UPDATE: DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC VISION PROJECT FOR OTTER POINT AND SHIRLEY

The Steering Committee has begun planning for two forums for this fall. The first will be on Economic Development & Community Change and is tentatively scheduled for early October. The second will be on the Environment and will be held in late November. Forums and workshops on taxation, governance, community services and other topics will be scheduled for the New Year.

The **Developing a Strategic Vision** project has a web site. The name www.jdffuture.org has been registered and we are presently designing the web page. (Visit the web site by clicking on the web site address.) The web site provides information about the project and upcoming events, and retains a record of meetings, forums and workshops. Other features, such as an interactive component that will allow ideas, questions, and comments to be exchanged, are being considered. Send your suggestions for information that could be included on the web site to Wayne Fritz, Chair of the Steering Committee: wfritz@shaw.ca

The **Developing a Strategic Vision** project has now released three Information Bulletins that monitor the project's progress. Contact Arnie Campbell at d.acampbell@shaw.ca if you wish to have the Information Bulletins sent to your email address.

3. DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC VISION PROJECT FORUM

Date: Tuesday, October 2

Time: 7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Place: Otter Point Fire Hall

Speakers Mona Brash, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria.
“Silver Spray: a Cautionary Tale”

Brian White, Director, Tourism & Hotel Management Program, Royal Roads University.

“Leading the Vision: Growth Management and the Quality of Community Life”

Nicole Chaland, Learning and Development Director, Canadian Community Economic Development Network.

“Managing Change Through Economic Development: Stories From Small Town Canada”

Format 15 minute presentation by each speaker followed by a moderated question and answer session and concluded by brief “wrap-up” comments from each speaker.

Questions:

- What is economic development?
- How are economic development and community change interconnected?
- What planning tools are needed to guide economic development and community change in Otter Point & Shirley to support the residents’ vision for their community?
- What economic development and community change options do residents of Otter Point & Shirley want to see in their community?

Everyone Welcome

No Charge

It’s Your Community!

This public information forum is the second in a series of workshops and community information forums sponsored by the Otter Point & Shirley Residents and Ratepayers Association (OPSRRA) and the Developing a Strategic Vision Steering Committee.

4. WESTERN FOREST PRODUCTS LAND SALES IN SHIRLEY AND JORDAN RIVER

The September 11 Special Edition of the OPSRRA Newsletter broke the news of the placement for sale of about 4,500 acres of Western Forest Product’s (WFP) private forest lands in Shirley and Jordan River.

An interesting series of events then ensued to ensure that the news was given broad public awareness. An OPSRRA member who receives the newsletter is a freelance journalist. Seeing the OPSRRA story she wrote a follow-up story about these private WFP lands being put up for sale and submitted it to the Globe & Mail newspaper. This story was published on the front of the Globe & Mail’s “B” Section and was immediately picked-up by CBC Radio and C-FAX Radio in Victoria. CBC Radio contacted OPSRRA as did Monday Magazine to do interviews on reaction to

the lands coming up for sale and the possible impacts on the community. Camosun College Radio—AM 900, the Rural Observer, CBC Radio and the Shirley Education & Action Society (SEAS) newsletter have either used the OPSRRA newsletter article or asked for more comprehensive comment.

What seems to be the biggest, immediate concerns? The loss of the recreation facilities at the mouth of River Jordan and continued access to the Jordan River waterfront seems to be the dominant concerns. However, as important as protecting these recreation areas may be, there are other reasons OPSRRA wants to know more about what might be planned for these properties if they are eventually sold and turned from forestry to some other use.

About 4,000 of the 4,500 acres being offered for sale are within the newly approved Shirley/Jordan River Official Community Plan (OCP) boundary. The total land area covered by this OCP is 9,428 acres, of which 8,917 acres has been identified as Settlement Area (the remaining 511 acres is used for roads, parks or is in the Agricultural Land Reserve). Therefore, about 45% of the Settlement Land identified within the Shirley/Jordan River OCP area is now on the real estate market. Although presently used for forestry, the present JDF Electoral Area zoning bylaw permits residential development on 10 acre subdivisions: with either one dwelling on each 10 acre parcel or 4 dwellings if the property is strata-titled (4 on 10). The remaining approximately 500 acres that is being offered for sale is within the soon to be created Resource Land OCP area and an existing CRD zoning bylaw limits subdivision to 300 acres with one dwelling.

Are the communities of Jordan River and Shirley ready for more development? OPSRRA wrote the Minister of Forests in February of 2007 when Western Forest Products first announced that it was asking the province for permission to remove their private forest lands from Tree Farm Licence (TFL) 25. Our letter asked that the province delay making that decision until numerous things had happened:

- The OCPs for Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River were completed.
- The Resource Lands OCP was completed.
- New zoning bylaws for the area were completed.
- The Developing a Strategic Vision project had completed its report.

The minister replied in May, 2007 informing us that: the decision had already been made; the Minister had no ability to restrict the sale of private lands which were now outside of the TFL; and that we should be speaking to WFP regarding our concerns. OPSRRA did this and met with representatives of WFP on two occasions and extended an invitation for WFP to join the Vision project Advisory Committee.

OPSRRA's concern with this amount of forest land possibly being developed for other than forestry related purposes was one incentive for the Developing a Strategic Vision project a year ago. In our opinion, the area west of Sooke through to Port Renfrew is facing tremendous development pressure as large parcels of land—mostly previously used for forestry—are now being sold for residential development. This has the potential of radically changing land use patterns in our area. As a community, we are not ready for it:

- Our present zoning bylaw is out of date and drafting a new one has been delayed for over a year;
- CRD mapping of the area to identify sensitive eco-systems such as wetlands, streams and watersheds is incomplete;
- Stronger local bylaws are needed to protect watersheds and other environmental features.
- The Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Parks Plan for the area is still in an early draft stage;

- The CRD Master Parks Plan will not be officially updated to include planning for the area until 2010;
- Our understanding of where potable water is and how to keep it safe is limited;
- Fire protection is non-existent in some areas;
- Residents in Shirley and Otter Point are exploring governance options as many are not satisfied with the present system.

The above are identified areas that need to be addressed. Unless the community takes the time to properly plan for growth, the only certainty is that there will continue to be uncertainty about how our community will look a decade from now. Meanwhile, OPSRRA will continue to lobby the province, CRD and the Electoral Area to request that measures are in place to ensure that development happens in an orderly way and in the best interest of the community before they consider any subdivision and development applications for the WFP lands.

Municipalities have this right. Why should we, as an Electoral Area, accept anything less?

5. WESTERN FOREST PRODUCTS: FOREST STEWARDSHIP PLAN

WFP held an Open House in the Shirley Hall on September 21 and 22 to show the public their planned forest development (logging) plans for that portion of Tree Farm Licence (TFL) 25 that is located on provincial Crown land.

The draft Jordan River Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP) can be accessed at www.westernforest.com/fstew/fplanning.html or during regular working hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) at their office in Jordan River until November 5. To ensure consideration, comments must be received in writing by November 5, 2007.

6. BURNING REGULATIONS

A reminder that the Fire Season extends until October 31. If you plan to do any burning in October, you will need a fire permit from your local fire department.

7. BUILDING BUDGET FOR THE JUAN DE FUCA ELECTORAL AREA

This is the time of the year when the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area budget is being put together. Here is how the process works (sort of):

- The service providers (e.g. CRD affiliated fire departments, Economic Development Commission, Parks & Recreation Commission) discuss their proposed budgets for the coming year in open meetings.
- The previous year's budgets are customarily used as guidelines and extraordinary expenses are considered.
- The regional director establishes a Grants in Aid and Administration budget.
- These budgets are presented to the JDF EA Regional Director.
- A rough budget for the JDF EA is prepared. The draft budget then goes to the CRD Finance Committee for further consideration.
- "Tweaking" continues through-out the fall and the final budget goes to the CRD Board in January for final approval.
- Based upon the current year's property assessments, mil rates are then set to determine how much each property owner will pay, in the forthcoming year, toward their share of the total budget in the forthcoming year.

Some important notes:

- The JDF EA budget is only a small portion of our total property tax bill. Other major portions of our taxes are decided by the School District, the CRD Board and the province.
- CRD budgets are normally set high to allow for a surplus rather than a deficit.
- The JDF Electoral Area Planning Services budget is different as this is done by CRD Planning Services.
- The JDF Electoral Area budget was \$769,017 in 2006 and \$955,176 in 2007. Added to this amount is our share of area wide CRD operating costs and regional hospital capital costs.

The complete budgets for the past two years can be seen on the JDF Regional Director's web site. Go to www.crd.ca/jdf/index.htm and then click on the Juan de Fuca EA 2007 Requisition.

8. TRADE, INVESTMENT & LABOUR MOBILITY AGREEMENT

At the June forum on Rural Land Use & Community Change, someone in the audience raised the matter of the Trade, Investment & Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA). Mayor Ranns from Metchosin, who was one of the forum's guest speakers, described some of TILMA's possible implications for municipalities and regional districts and why everyone should be concerned about the impact that TILMA might have on the future of our community.

The following comments are made by OPSRRA after further research.

TILMA is a Provincial trade agreement between the Provinces of British Columbia and Alberta that came into effect April 1, 2007. It is intended to liberalize trade, investment and labour mobility between the two provinces; however, the agreement is set up in such a way that every aspect of trade, investment and labour mobility is covered by the agreement unless it is "expressly excluded." This raises the possibility that British Columbia municipalities and regional districts could be required to change their bylaws for zoning, subdivision development, noise, business, tax exemption and other such matters as environmental protection and waste disposal to conform to the provincial agreement.

TILMA is seen as favourable to business (which is the whole purpose of the agreement) but may weaken bylaws that are intended to protect the environment, public health and other municipal and regional district areas of concern. It is important for local governments to identify what needs to be "expressly excluded" from TILMA. There is a two-year transition/consultation period during which time the province and the municipalities and regional districts can review the possible impact of the agreement. The Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM) has become involved in the consultation process.

9. PROPOSED JUAN DE FUCA PARKS MASTER PLAN

The deadline for submissions to the Juan de Fuca Parks & Recreation Commission regarding their draft Master Parks Plan was September 30. OPSRRA made the following submission.

Most of these comments relate to Appendix B, Specific Community Objectives:

1. Mention should be made about acquiring Crown Land in Otter Point (e.g. the "Old Emerson School" site on Otter Point Rd.) for a park and future community hall site.
2. Need to preserve areas wet lands as aquatic parks. This is important to the eco-system.

3. Need to balance emphasis on trails with other uses such as playing fields.
4. Too many parks are being left as “Natural” as there is no current money or long-term strategy to develop them. Need to find sources of funding to enable the movement of some parks from passive to active status.
5. Signage needs to be installed to identify where parks are. Some parks risk becoming extensions of neighbouring private property because the public doesn’t know they are there and are not using them.
6. Provision needs to be made to ensure that parks and trails can be maintained. Section 5.1 refers to this, but no recommendation (suggestions) on increasing the maintenance budget and where extra funds could be located.
7. Could local organizations be recruited (per Section 5.1) to take-on the maintenance and development – subject to JDF Parks & Recreation Commission approval, of some of the natural parks similar to the Adopt-A-Highway program?
8. Who gets to comment on if, when and where parks should be located when acquired as part of the development subdivision process? Should this be exclusively the role and responsibility of the staff and the JDF Parks & Recreation commissioners or should there be more opportunity for public comment? Recommend that a list of community organizations be gathered (and kept updated) that could be called upon to comment on proposed parks acquisitions.
9. Presently, the park acquisition recommendations go from staff to the JDF Land Use Committee. LUC should seek input from the JDF Parks & Recreation commissioners who should then be seeking community input as described in #8 above.
10. The future status of the Sheringham Lighthouse needs to be clarified. Although the federal government might divest itself of some of the Crown land around the lighthouse, there is little likelihood that the light itself will ever be decommissioned.
11. The recent announcement that Western Forest Products has placed almost all of its Jordan River and Shirley forest lands on the real estate market raises concerns about retaining public access to Crown land across these forest lands and the immanent loss of the WFP Recreation Park at the mouth of River Jordan.

10. UPDATE: SOOKE REGION MUSEUM

The matter of trying to reach an agreement between the District of Sooke and the JDF Electoral Area on how to continue taxpayer support for the Sooke Region Museum went to a joint committee of representatives from the JDF Electoral Area, the District of Sooke and the CRD in June, 2007. There was an initial meeting of the committee in August and another is scheduled for October 16. The Sooke Historical Society, which operates the museum, had requested an increase of the annual taxpayer subsidy for the museum. The JDF Regional Director felt that the proposed increase would not be supported by the taxpayers of the Electoral Area; and that if a referendum was held it would fail. Alternatives to the original request for increased taxpayer support are being explored.

Meanwhile the museum continues to explore other sources of revenue to continue in operation. For example, it has entered into an agreement to rent some of its space to a local community business service.

Note: For a more complete background to the museum funding issue see the June and August issues of the OPSRRA newsletter available on the OPSRRA web site.

11. UPDATE: JUAN DE FUCA ELECTORAL AREA ZONING BYLAW

The standstill for over a year in any public discussion for a new zoning bylaw for the JDF Electoral Area is cause for concern. OPSRRA wrote the Regional Director in April 2007 asking when the process would resume and whether the Zoning Advisory Committees in Shirley/Jordan River and Otter Point would be asked to resume their public meetings. There had also been a decision at a March, 2007 Land Use Committee to refer the possibly contentious changes to the Rural "A" (4 on 10) zoning to the Advisory Planning Commissions (APCs) with a request that they hold public meetings on the possible options. So far, only the East Sooke APC has heard any public comment on this issue.

When no reply was received to OPSRRA's initial letter, another was sent in early September. The CRD Planner/Administrator replied to this letter on the Regional Director's behalf. The reply acknowledged delays in getting the draft zoning bylaw completed—in part because of the existing demands on staff time to respond to ongoing development applications. Assurance was given that the draft zoning bylaw was being worked on. The Planning Department is currently recommending one land use and subdivision bylaw for the entire Electoral Area. Where "unique characteristics" or "land use patterns" are identified in the separate OCPs, they will be provided for in specific zones or by expanded definitions and regulatory provisions.

OPSRRA will keep pursuing this issue as the development of an updated zoning bylaw and provision for public input into the process are important steps in the development of Shirley, Jordan River and Otter Point.

12. FREE SMALL BUSINESS LISTING ON OPSRRA'S WEB SITE

Do you operate a small business? Are you an OPSRRA member? OPSRRA is offering a free business listing service for members, on its web site: www.opsrra.ca We will list non-members for a suitable donation!

The purpose of this service is to provide an opportunity for businesses in Jordan River, Shirley and Otter Point to advertise their goods and services to their local community. We anticipate having listings for accommodation, farm produce, art, furniture-making, fishing charters, eco-tours, firewood, knitting, soaps, landscaping, bookkeeping, sewing, spas and more. More information, businesses already listed, and an on-line registration form are available on OPSRRA's web site (www.opsrra.ca) under **Business Listings**.

OPSRRA welcomes Bear Home Remodeling to the OPSRRA web site Business Services listings. Professional design and remodelling of kitchens, bathrooms, decks and other home improvement projects in the Greater Victoria area. Contact Ken Lindholm, info@bear-remodeling.com or visit www.bear-remodeling.com

The OPSRRA web site has more information about the following business listings:

1001 Welding & Equipment Repair

Accent in Grooming

ALM Organic Farm

A Point of View B&B

Beaches West B&B

Bear Home Remodeling

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|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Birds Edge Press | Blue Waters B&B |
| Eagle Cove Beachfront Guest Suite | Fancy That Esthetics & Body Care |
| Full Circle Seeds | Heron's Rest B&B |
| Jambo Pet Sitting Service | Kemp Lake Store |
| Knotty Beds by Nature | Le Sooke Spa |
| Otter Point Beach House | Rhythm's Edge Percussion Shop |
| Road's End Construction | Sandy's Drywall Ltd |
| Straitview Ridge Bed & Breakfast | Tugwell Creek Honey Farm |
| Tugwell Creek Meadery | Wood Visions |

13. BACK ISSUES OF THE OPSRRA NEWSLETTER

Back issues of the OPSRRA newsletter are available on the OPSRRA web site.

This monthly newsletter is prepared by the directors of OPSRRA. It is available to members by e-mail and to others on our web site: www.opsrra.ca. To have an item you would like to have considered for placement in the newsletter, or make a comment about the newsletter, contact an OPSRRA director. OPSRRA tries to verify the correctness of the information in this newsletter; if we have got it wrong we will acknowledge that and make a correction as quickly as possible.
