

MINUTES of a special meeting of the COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE of the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the District of Oak Bay, held in the Monterey Centre, 1442 Monterey Avenue, Victoria, B.C., on Tuesday February 2, 2016 at 7:00 PM.

PRESENT: Mayor N. Jensen, Chair  
Councillor H. Braithwaite  
Councillor T. Croft  
Councillor M. Kirby  
Councillor K. Murdoch  
Councillor T. Ney  
Councillor E. Zhelka

STAFF: Chief Administrative Officer, H. Koning  
Deputy Director of Corporate Services, M. Jones

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Mayor Jensen welcomed the public to the meeting, noting that tonight was an opportunity for a review of the Uplands Combined Sewer Separation Project and also an opportunity to hear from the public, but confirmed that decisions with respect to selection of an option would not be made tonight.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. ***Special Committee of the Whole - Uplands Combined Sewer Separation Project - Overview of Process***
  - Memo - Chief Administrative Officer, Jan. 25, 2016

The Chief Administrative Officer provided an overview of her memo and introduced the members of the project team.

2. ***Uplands Combined Sewer Separation - Project Manager's Report and Presentation***
  - Report - Project Manager, Feb. 2, 2016
  - Rpt. Attach. 1 - Overflow Data 2013 to 2015
  - Rpt. Attach. 2 - Sewer Separation Options Summary - Nov. 9, 2015
  - Rpt. Attach. 3 - Public Engagement Overview
  - Rpt. Attach. 4 - Report on Survey Research
  - Rpt. Attach. 5 - Public Sewer Bylaw
  - ADDENDA – Corresp. – Uplands Combined Sewer Separation, Jan 26 – Feb 2, 2016

*Jack Hull, Project Manager, HJA Consulting, Kathi Springer, Communications Consultant and Ian Whitehead, McElhanney Consulting Services Ltd. in attendance for this item.*

The Project Manager made a presentation to the Committee, providing an overview of the project to date as outlined in his report dated February 2, 2016.

The Communications Consultant continued the presentation, outlining the public engagement process and reviewing the results of that process, including the survey results.

The Project Manager then continued the presentation, addressing the response from staff to suggestions and comments that arose during the public engagement process. Mr. Hull also commented on: the advantages and the disadvantages of providing a new sanitary sewer versus a new stormwater sewer; funding alternatives for the project; and potential sewer connection policies. Mr. Hull then concluded the presentation by noting that the Committee will need to provide direction to staff with respect to next steps on the project, including consideration of staff providing additional information and/or undertaking further public consultation.

A discussion ensued in which Mr. Hull responded to questions from the Committee with respect to the different options, their potential impacts, addressing overflows at the pump stations, varying construction techniques, and the requirements under the Public Sewer Bylaw, as further described in his report of February 2, 2016.

The Committee gave consideration to the question of the appropriate length of time for the project. Mr. Hull noted that the Ministry will need to approve the proposed time period for completion and that it has been indicated that 100 years will not be acceptable, but that consideration could be given to a timeframe of 20 to 30 years. It was also noted that the timeframe for the project would be impacted by the funding.

During the Committee discussion, the representative from McElhanney Consulting Services Ltd. responded to questions with regards to the challenges in estimating the rate of inflow and infiltration (I & I) into the existing combined pipe in the Uplands. Mr. Whitehead also commented on current pipe lining techniques using plastic resin, noting that this technique is commonly used and found to be successful.

Committee members also raised questions with regards to:

- the potential impact of the project on the urban forest;
- the environmental impact of combined sewer overflows and any potential monitoring in this regard by the Capital Regional District;
- the amount of impermeable surface in the Uplands and the associated capacity in the Uplands for onsite stormwater management;
- the carbon footprint of the options;
- the appropriate timing for undertaking a geotechnical report;
- what if any process could be followed with respect to use of easements where practicable; and
- whether it would be possible for homeowners to make use of tax deferrals to address the cost of connecting to the new service.

A presentation was provided by Oak Bay residents Marilyn Harris, Geoff Buck, Bruce Campbell and Brent Baldock, with respect to comments they have received from other residents of the Uplands in regards to the project.

Ms. Harris spoke with respect to the process undertaken by the District to date on the project, including the survey, open houses and consultant reports. She noted that, while the survey received 117 responses, the presentation from herself and her co-presenters is based on responses received from 180 residents in the Uplands.

Mr. Buck continued the presentation, commenting that the six options were basically variations on either gravity or pumps. He then spoke with respect to his understanding of the aggregated 50-year costs for options 1, 2 and 3. The greatest concern to Uplands homeowners, he said, was the use of pumps. Mr. Buck concluded his remarks by stating that the District should pursue either option 1 or option 2 and make use of easements for construction where possible.

As the presentation continued, Mr. Campbell spoke with respect to the public concerns regarding option 3 and the required pumps. He commented that pumps would reduce property values and that the need for a back up generator was problematic. He encouraged the Committee to pursue a quality sewer system with low maintenance requirements, instead of prioritizing a lower initial cost to the Municipality.

Mr. Baldock continued the presentation, reviewing grinder pump technology, including comments on a pump alarm box and outdoor installation challenges. He spoke in favour of redirecting stormwater from the roadways to reduce overflows and commented that connection to a separated sewer should be required in the event of substantial renovations and/or new constructions. He emphasized that a gravity-based solution should be pursued and that the costs of pump maintenance would be borne by individual homeowners. He concluded the presentation by expressing thanks to the Committee for the opportunity to provide input and noted that residents look forward to continuing with a collaborative process on this project.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding whether the potentially greater impact of archaeological costs resulting from trenching for gravity-based solutions was a consideration for residents, Ms. Harris stated that archaeological concerns were mentioned in many email responses.

Pourandokht Ahmadisatari, Oak Bay resident, expressed her concerns regarding the impact on Uplands residents of separating the combined sewers. She stated that residents should not be forced to put in pumps and that she supported the option which used the deeper pipe for sewage.

Rob Adams, Oak Bay resident, noted that he supported the comments of the previous speakers. Mr. Adams commented that he is not in support of the use of pumps. He stated that, during an earlier iteration of the process, the cost estimate for his property was over \$20,000 and that finding a location for a pump is challenging. He commented that newer construction techniques should make it feasible for construction to occur on some the existing easements and questioned what consideration has been given to repairing the existing pipe at the same time a new pipe is installed. He concluded his remarks by emphasizing the importance of reducing stormwater overflows as quickly as possible.

In response to Mr. Adams, Mr. Hull noted that installing two pipes into one trench, while potentially feasible, would require a wider trench and as such increase costs. Mr. Hull also stated that addressing stormwater run off from roads would not meet the Ministry's requirements for the separation of the combined sewers.

Ron Carter, Oak Bay resident, spoke with respect to the importance of the urban forest in the Uplands, noting that it already provides for stormwater management and that the loss of trees would ultimately increase the amount of stormwater in the drainage system. Mr. Carter commented that he would suggest that option 3 be undertaken and that the Municipality then use the cost savings to offset the cost to the homeowners for the required pumps.

Dianne McKerrell, Oak Bay resident, asked the Committee to consider if using renovations as a trigger to separate the sewer on private property might discourage owners from applying for permits.

Tibbie Adams, Oak Bay resident, commented that the presentations and open houses on the Uplands project have been excellent. She commented that the District should use new construction as the trigger to require separating the sewer on private property. She also expressed concern regarding the cost of electricity for pumps and their reliability.

Derek Thompson, Oak Bay resident, noted that he appreciates the thoroughness taken in this project. Mr. Thompson commented that a strategic heritage assessment should be undertaken to assess the Uplands and identify heritage sites. He stated that, from his experience it would be possible to utilize the easements for construction and further stated that the stormwater runoff from roadways should be addressed to reduce the peak flow problem. He commented that Council should be cautious with the use of new technology like pumps and noted that gravity made the most sense for the Uplands. He concluded his remarks by noting the complexity of the challenge faced by the District and offered his thanks for the ongoing communication.

Peter Reader, Oak Bay resident, stated that stormwater is the issue that needs to be addressed and that it is already challenging to manage on his property. Mr. Reader noted that it was important that the right option be selected and spoke in favour of option 2. He concluded his remarks by emphasizing that a gravity-based option makes the most sense, given the topography of the Uplands, and that the number of pumps should be kept to a minimum.

Jim Collins, Oak Bay resident, spoke in favour of a gravity system and noted that managing stormwater was an ongoing challenge in the Uplands. Mr. Collins also questioned how many residences outside the Uplands have pumps and asked if the requirement to separate the sewers would apply outside the Uplands as well.

In response to Mr. Collins, Mr. Hull stated that the exact number of properties using pumps outside the Uplands is not known and confirmed that the Public Sewer Bylaw would apply throughout Oak Bay.

The public remarks having concluded, Mayor Jensen thanked staff and the project team for their work on the project and offered thanks as well to the public for their participation. The Mayor noted that the next step for the project was for the Committee to have an opportunity to comment. He advised that this would occur at the next regular Committee of the Whole meeting on February 15, 2016.

ADJOURNMENT:

3. ***Motion to Adjourn***

MOVED and seconded: That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Certified Correct:

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Mayor

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Acting Director of Corporate Services