



HORNBY ISLAND FIRE HALL PROJECT UPDATE

December 2014

What's Inside?

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Premiums from STSA
\$150-500 annual savings for
most Residents/Homeowners**

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(AAP) for Owners/Residents**

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of \$24/year over 2014**

New Fire Hall Design

Lower Fire Insurance Premiums Annually

A new fire hall and added tanker truck means we could apply for Superior Tanker Shuttle Accreditation. STSA means that residents of Hornby Island will have a **higher level of fire protection service** and most Hornby Island residents and homeowners will see a **reduction of between \$150 and \$500*** in their fire insurance premiums.

* Examples from on island residents:

Jim & Pauline Garton - Save ~ \$800
Tony Quin - Save ~ \$300
Tor & Lori Nawrot - Save \$487
Rob & Amanda Zielinski- **Save \$300**

NOTE: Some Vancouver insurance companies are saying that you will not receive savings because we have a **"volunteer" fire department**. This is in error. Although our volunteer firefighters receive the same training and are just as qualified at fighting fires as a career fire department, the requirements for STSA do not include that the firefighters be career. Errington and Gabriola Island have already achieved STSA with their volunteer fire departments. It may be helpful to call multiple insurance brokers to obtain multiple quotes based on the STSA."

Hornby Island Fire Hall Open House

On November 29th, 2014 at the Hornby Island Fire Hall, Bill Uhrich and Marko Simcic of SUA Architects presented the updated fire hall design to the Hornby Island community.

The volunteer fire department has been an integral part of the design process and is fully supportive of the updated layout. The layout of the hall is a safe, functional and efficient workplace and meets the spatial requirements for the volunteer emergency responders.

The new fire hall will be constructed to current B.C. Building Code, post -disaster standards and silver LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) equivalent for improved energy efficiency. This post-disaster building is being built to last at least 50 years.

The civil engineering consultants for the project have indicated that the slopes (road grades to/from the new fire hall) are acceptable and will not impact the functionality of the fire hall. There is sufficient property to accommodate expansion at a later date if required and to provide space for outside training programs.

The project cost estimate did increase from \$1.8 million to \$1.9 million due to incorporating a "passive house" standard of construction. This standard means drastically reduced energy consumption and low energy active components, resulting in lower operating and maintenance costs during the life of the building. However, this passive house standard also means that the fire hall project will receive an additional \$100,000 grant from Community Works Fund so the increase in cost estimate is offset by the grant.

Currently, the construction cost for the new fire hall is estimated to be \$1.9 million. \$200,000 will come from the Community Works Fund, \$100,000 from budgeted reserves, which leaves \$1.6 million. Pending electoral assent, the CVRD board has approval to borrow \$1.6 million from MFA for the construction of the new fire hall on Hornby Island.

Should the project gain elector approval, borrowed funds will be paid back through tax requisition. Based on the \$1.6 million estimate, the net increase to the tax levy over 2014, for the average Hornby Island residential property, assessed at approximately \$455,000, would be approximately \$24 per year.

The alternate approval process (AAP) is the approach to seeking elector approval. Information on the Hornby Island Fire Hall project and/or the AAP process can be found on pg 2 of this newsletter or on the CVRD website at: www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/hornbyislandfirehall

Elector Approval Process (AAP)

At its September 30, 2014 meeting, the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) board approved holding a referendum to seek elector approval. The referendum was postponed by the area director to provide for additional time for community awareness. Upon further reflection and consideration by the select committee and director, an alternate approval process (AAP) is the preferred approach to seeking elector approval for the Fire Hall Project.

Q. What is the alternate approval process (AAP)?

A. The alternative approval process (AAP) is a tool that municipalities and regional districts use to measure the approval for decisions through a public voting format. However, unlike referenda, the alternate approval process does not rely on voters showing up to cast their vote in favour of a certain matter. Rather, it is used to measure the number of people within a specific area who are opposed. The authority for a local government to adopt a bylaw, within the alternative approval process, is granted if fewer than 10 per cent of eligible electors in the area covered by the alternate approval process vote against the bylaw by submitting elector response forms.

Q. Who gets to take part in the alternative approval process?

A. People who live in or own property on Hornby Island. Individuals may only submit one elector response form each.

Q. Who can I contact if I want to learn more?

A. Visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/hornbyislandfirehall for more information about the AAP, or contact the Comox Valley Regional District office at 600 Comox Road, Courtenay, B.C. V9N 3P6 or by telephone at 250-334-6000 or toll-free at 1-800-331-6007 or by e-mail at administration@comoxvalleyrd.ca.

December 4 is the first day the AAP elector response form will be available on the CVRD website and at the front counter of the CVRD head office, 600 Comox Road, Courtenay. The deadline for receiving completed AAP forms will be 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 15, 2015.

The website link is available at:

www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/hornbyislandfirehall
Click on AAP from the menu below the photo.

Tax Increase Estimate of \$24/year

There have been some questions regarding the estimated tax increase of \$24 per year (based on \$455,000 assessed value) being able to cover the loan for the new hall.

The estimated increase of \$24 in 2015 is not specifically the debt servicing payment for fire hall construction, but rather, the net increase in the Hornby Island fire protection service over the 2014 requisition level.

The approved 2012 through 2014 budgets for the fire protection service included increased contributions to the capital reserve for this project to cover:

- The purchase of a second tanker truck required to achieve Superior Tanker Shuttle Accreditation (STSA) which may lower residential property insurance rates and,
- Fire hall pre-construction costs for such items as design, engineering, and public consultations.
- Any unexpected or emergency major repairs to fire equipment or apparatus (such as a replacement pump on the present pumper truck)
- A budget amount to decommission the existing fire hall building

Link for past financial plans for the Hornby Island fire protection service can be found at:

<http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/EN/main/departments/finance/past-financial-plans.html>

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Website Links:

***The Hornby Island Fire Hall Project has a website which is hosted by the Comox Valley Regional District. It is located at:
www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/hornbyislandfirehall***

***Hornby Island Fire Rescue Department
www.hifd.org***