

Hornby Island Fire Hall Project
Community Consultation Meetings Summer 2013
Summary Report - Preliminary Stage

Community consultation meetings were set up in six identified communities or areas of Hornby Island. In addition, two extra meetings were scheduled at New Horizons Hall if residents were unable to attend one of the six community meetings.

The meetings provided an opportunity for the Regional District along with the HIFR to educate the residents of Hornby Island about the identified need of a new Hornby Island Fire Hall, to outline the process and timeline of the Fire Hall project, and to gather input and broad design themes from the residents in this preliminary stage of design. The decision to go with smaller meetings was to create smaller more intimate meetings in order for full individual participation and more vibrant discussions.

The local residents of Hornby Islands were initially informed of the community meetings through an announcement that was placed in the local weekly Grapevine newsletter (see attached). A week following the announcement (July 18, 2013), an insert (see attached) was placed in the Grapevine with details about the community consultation meetings. In addition, letter and tabloid sized posters were posted around Hornby Island (mailboxes, bulletin boards in well known public areas) and a table was set up outside of the Coop on three occasions to announce the meetings and answer any questions people may have. Also an announcement on a flip chart was setup outside the Coop on one occasion. Responses to the Grapevine insert, posters on bulletin boards, and "Coop porch table presence" was favorable. Some residents were not impressed with posters on the mailbox and they were removed.

All the community meetings were held outside and, except for Whaling Station, the setup was in presentation style with a Powerpoint display connected to a 40 inch flat screen. All participants signed an attendance list and offered their email addresses if they wish to join our mailing list and receive future announcements.

The presentation contained content directly from the Comox Valley Regional District website page "Hornby Island Fire Hall Project" along with a short video of the state of the current fire hall (video created by the HIFR and Dale Devost). Additional presentation materials were the HIFD website flow chart (attached) and STSA flow chart (attached), both of which are from the CVRD website, plus a complete copy of the HI Fire Hall Project website in the event any of the attendees have no or easy web access. The website was presented as the chief source of information regarding the project and it was conveyed that it will be updated throughout the project.

Overall, the presentation material and specifically the video was greatly appreciated and attendees felt they were well informed. Discussion was open and continuous throughout the meetings.

Community Consultation Meetings - Discussion Comments & Questions

Whaling Station Meeting

Monday, July 22nd, 2013

730 pm, Lynne & Andrew Carmichael Residence

10 locals, 5 others

Meeting began with discussion about substantial tax increases over the past 5 years on Hornby Island, including the portion paid toward Fire Services from Commercial Owner Matthew Fredbeck. Off island resident presented emotional statements for increased high taxes for waterfront property, taxes are double than what they pay at home and they receive very little in comparison.

Group watched the video about the state of the current fire hall and appreciated the identified need for a new fire hall based on the reasons presented but were very sensitive and wary about the costs. Local residents expressed their thanks and support for the volunteer firefighters and that they support a new hall given their sensitive to keeping costs down.

There were some issues of mistrust in the information presented, particularly with respect to tax numbers (commercial rates - Fredbeck) and STSA fire insurance premium reductions.

Community is confused whether the new fire hall is a done deal or not. They would like to know how it looks before they can vote on it. Keep it simple.

At the end of the discussion, the group was in favor of a new firehall but keep it "Very very basic", keep costs to a minimum given added costs of the additional tanker.

Questions:

1. Do we need an architect?
2. Explanation regarding the tax implications to commercial properties. What is the rate? Come clean on the STSA benefits - get examples from other commercial properties.

Sandpiper Meeting
Tuesday, July 23rd, 2013
730 pm, Outer Island B&B
9 Locals, 4 Others, 1 Donkey

Powerpoint presentation with video.

Powerpoint was very effective in presenting the data from the Regional District website. Residents had positive comments about our volunteer firefighters and questions about what the firefighters need in the way of tools to complete.

Keep the design functional and low cost. Functionality over form. Extensive discussion about whether an architect is needed and if so could we save substantial dollars by adopting a "proven plan" from another community that would work here on Hornby Island.

Questions about process, specifically about AAP and Referendum.

Keep it visible from the road... be proud of our building and also important for service.

Save the old building.

Very supportive of volunteer fire department.

Good discussion of the costs and benefits of STSA and Sandpiper residents' ongoing work to achieve "Hydrant" status with an additional tank. Reductions in \$1200 were quoted from Jim Garton.

Overall residents were supportive of a new firehall for the department but keep it simple and look into "plans from other communities" to lower overall costs.

Questions:

Do we need an architect?

Is there a time in the future that the present building would be condemned?

Who votes in a referendum?

Could design include space for Emergency Services Storage?

New Horizons Meeting
Thursday, July 25th, 2013
730 pm
7 Locals, 3 Others Mostly, Roburn Road attendees

Powerpoint presentation with video.

Don't trust the figures provided by Comox Valley Regional District. Fire insurance premium reduction is not in line with what they have found from their insurance provider. Talked with Baynes Sound and reduction would only be \$150 - different for each home based on specifics.

Not sure that a new fire hall would help fire service. Sell the new fire hall based on the increased benefits of having better service as a result of a new fire hall.

"Have more than one firehall" idea presented by an attendee - given the extent of damage of a disaster such as an earthquake we may need more than one hall. Upon further discussion, perhaps the idea would not be economically feasible. Very big interest in improving the level of service.

Idea presented by Dale Devost about a Basic Firehall to house the vehicles and then a separate locally built "Clubhouse Building" (funded by CVRD) which would include the kitchen, meeting space, and other ideas (similar to the building of our Health Clinic).

Lund Fire Hall example was presented by an attendee - local builder was hired but couldn't follow through due to inexperience. They hired an experienced contractor and then came within budget.

Questions:

Do the tanks need to be large enough to be accredited under STSA?

Can there be added communication for emergency events? eg. Tree over road. Service was slow to respond.

Can BC Ambulance financially contribute? Giff/RD - exploration of a pilot program. Put it in RD ballpark "we requested"

Is the net increase of \$45 in taxes affected by interest rates?

Does Fire Department have a plan in the event of an earthquake? Family comes first and then go to fire dept - they have an emergency plan. Tower is post disaster. Chainsaws. What is the total amount of money from \$0.95 to \$1 per \$1000 for assessed value this year?

What happens if we went to referendum and result was no new fire hall? What would happen? Is fire service / medical first response / forestry fire service an option? Can CVRD mandate a new fire hall?

New Horizons Meeting
Sunday, July 28th, 2013
2 pm
4 Locals, 3 Others

Powerpoint presentation with video.

Low attendance with Brian and Jeff Bishop from Seabreeze Lodge, a commercial resort property on Hornby Island.

Bishops venting about increasing taxes for commercial properties and lack of return for these increases.

One resident very supportive of volunteer fire department and would appreciate what they need to do their job - no empathy for off island resident tax increases.

More firehalls idea presented given the extent of damage of a disaster such as an earthquake.

Keep the design simple, adequate, sufficient and secure.

Questions:

How will a new firehall improve the training/service level of the firefighters?

High Salal Meeting
Sunday July 28th, 2013
730 pm Margaret and Glen Rabena Residence
9 locals, 2 Others

Powerpoint presentation with video.

How will a new fire hall improve the training of our firefighters? Get specifics

Lobby government for funding and ask for support based on our unique situation. Basic Human rights, number of residents from off season to summer season.

Would a ring road be suitable for FUS?

Need to get the BIG picture of the costs of the project? Septic included in estimate or not? Removal of present building - environmental hazard of oil spill? RD is not telling us everything.

Would like to see the master plan.... STSA costs, Ambulance down the road?, other costs and timing implementation for next 10 years?

Renter vs owner - clarify referendum voting process.

Could we use existing building for training, meeting, kitchen purposes?

Did Hornby Island community give approval to go ahead with the STSA?

Heron Rocks Meeting
Monday July 29th, 2013
730 pm
2 people (Rob Z, Fred Hunt), 2 others

Powerpoint presentation with video.

New fire hall on a new site would bring better site conditions for training.

Benefit of STSA - better benefit for added water supply (restrictive factor in a fire). Note: this was added into presentation for future dates.

Most of the meeting involved Rob speaking as a fire department officer.

* the low cost self-supporting steel barns are not appropriate for the truck bays. A steel framed, steel clad building as typically used for commercial/industrial applications would be acceptable. Plain, rectangular building design is okay with the fire fighters. Landscaping can be employed to soften the appearance.

Project cost has to include the cost of site development including paved training/burn area, liquid containment area and liquid treatment

- on-site water storage (above/below ground)

- 6 truck bays required: 1 front line pumper, two tankers, one ambulance, one rescue truck and one spare. The spare would be available to take advantage of insurance premium reductions associated with the addition of appropriate apparatus.

Overall favorable to new fire hall for the future.

No questions.

Galleon Beach Meeting
Tuesday, July 30th, 2013
730 pm, Richard and Heather Goldman Residence
11 Locals, 5 Others

Powerpoint presentation with video.

Attendee presented idea about Fire Hall on Bowen Island. Self supporting, steel building to house the Tanker truck and simple meeting space. Thought to be approx \$250 K in cost. Check with Bob Clark as contact. Check with local resident Al Dickey (sp?) about steel fabricated structure.

Included the firefighters in the design of the new hall.

After seeing the video, the state of the fire hall needs to be updated for the volunteers.

Good discussion about the STSA. Dick presented his "expedite the process". Lets move it forward, move it fast.

Why do we need an architect? Only hire one to sign off on the project and meet inherent 4 conditions by RD.

Select an existing design from another community. Keep it basic. Look into Steel fabrication.

Shinglespit Beach Meeting
Wednesday, July 31st, 2013
730 pm, John McLachlan and Darren Bond residence
9 Locals, 4 Others

Powerpoint presentation with video.

Do we need an architect? How is the architect getting paid?

Address the community with the video - use realhornby.com or other sites!!

Idea posed for housing above the hall.

Mistrust issue about last year's presentation. Feel the idea is being pushed through without our input.

What conditions, space do firefighters need?

Do we have enough firefighters at the present time? What would happen if we didn't have enough? would we still have fire service? what is the option?

Involve the community in the labour process.

Good discussion about the STSA. Separate program but looks like it is being promoted alongside the new fire hall.

Could we have a steel building like Bowen Island - Al Dickey contact. Two building option - cost effective? find out what architect thinks.

Cost effective, basic, disclose all costs, Find out designs from other communities.

Keep us informed by other means than email.... aging population who is not connected to the internet.

Overall Summary

The majority of the attendees or just over 80% were on island residents. Average age was over 60 years of age which is consistent with the average age of the Hornby Island community.

The following discussion points or broad themes were consistent throughout all eight meetings:

With the video presented about the current state of the fire hall, everyone understood that the current fire hall is aging and doesn't meet the current needs of the firefighters, according to safety post-disaster, and Worksafe BC conditions.

Overall, taxes are increasing on Hornby Island and we need to be conscious of this and keep the design of the fire hall simple, adequate, sufficient. Prefer function over form. Look for creative ways with smaller budget and look into other forms of construction or design to keep cost low - steel structure?

Look into other fire hall designs to save architect fees. Find a design that would work and then adjust to our specific needs. Designs that we were asked to look at - Quadra Island, Lund, and Bowen Island.

All attendees endorse the Superior Tanker Shuttle Accreditation program which provides insurance premium savings from \$150 - 500 per year, depending on your house size and your insurance provider. These savings would offset the net increase in taxes for the building. This program is separate from the new hall.

Attendees expressed overwhelming positive support for our volunteer firefighters and that they should be included in the design of the new hall - find out what is needed for them to do their job.

Explore areas in the design where residents could participate in a facet of the building of the firehall. One option presented was to have a contractor build the hall for the vehicles and residents would build a separate 'clubhouse' building where meeting space, kitchen, social activities occur.

Very supportive of keeping the old fire hall building for future use in the community depending on costs.

As the process develops, disclose all costs of the project including site development, septic, etc and any future costs that are potentially planned.