

PUBLIC HEARING REPORT
Monday, May 12, 2025 @ 6:00 PM
In the City Hall Council Chambers | 4850 Argyle Street, Port Alberni, BC

PRESENT: Mayor S. Minions (Chair)
Councillor D. Dame
Councillor D. Haggard
Councillor C. Mealey
Councillor T. Verbrugge

Absent: Councillor T. Patola
Councillor C. Solda

Staff: M. Fox, CAO
S. Darling, Director of Corporate Services
B. McLoughlin, Manager of Planning
K. Motiuk, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Gallery: 34

CALL TO ORDER & APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT the agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

Chair Minions noted that the Public Hearing is held pursuant to sections 465 and 466 of the *Local Government Act*. Chair Minions then invited the Director of Corporate Services to provide a summary of the application.

1. Description of the Application:

The Director of Corporate Services provided a summary of the application as follows:

- The applicant has applied to change the zoning of the property located at 6123 and 6151 Russell Place to enable future development of affordable seniors housing.

The proposed bylaws are:

- i. "Official Community Plan Amendment (6123 and 6151 Russell Place) Bylaw No. 5118".

If amended, this bylaw:

- Adds text to *Section D: Plan Policies, 3.1 Public Administration / Institutional* to support residential rental units and limited accessory services as part of a care facility on lands designated Institutional (INST); and
- Adds text to *Section D: Plan Policies, 4.0 Residential – Affordable Housing* to support the co-location of rental housing with care facilities on Institutional (INST) lands as part of a care facility campus.

ii. "Zoning Amendment (6123 and 6151 Russell Place) Bylaw No. 5119".

If amended, this bylaw:

- Adds text to *Section 5: Establishment of Zones* to create 'P3 Care Campus' as a new zone.
- Changes the zoning bylaw map to rezone 6123 and 6151 Russell Place from 'P1 Institutional' to 'P3 Care Campus'.

2. **Background Information from the Development Services Department:**

The Manager of Planning provided background information regarding the proposed amendment by way of summarizing the report of May 7, 2025.

3. **Correspondence:**

- Email dated May 5, 2025 from R. Williams
- Email dated May 7, 2025 from G. and L. Walerius
- Letter received May 8, 2025 from D. Hunter

4. **Late Correspondence Regarding the Matter:**

- Email dated May 11, 2025 from C. De St. Remy

5. **Questions/Comments from Council:**

Council asked staff about the lack of an appropriate location bus stop for Rainbow Gardens residents, and the ability for the City to contact BC Transit about moving a bus stop closer to facility.

- *CAO, M. Fox informed Council that changes in service are possible, but would affect the details and cost of the service agreement with BC Transit.*

Council inquired about the parameters of the rental rates for seniors.

6. **Questions/Comments from Public:**

J. Jessup & Associates Consultant, J. Jessup: Spoke to current cost for rentals as per BC Housing rates and percentages of allocated housing units in the proposed build.

P. Mendelson: Confirmed the current rates for affordable housing for seniors.

A. Pohar: Commented on area issues during construction, general quality of life for residents, and tsunami preparedness concerns.

G Price: Spoke to loss of neighbourhood park space, children using streets for play, marked crosswalk access in the area, and senior's transportation options for residents.

W. Freeburg: Shared approval of the Transportation Master Plan Study, and summer traffic access concerns in the area, and asked about the difference in tax rates for apartment buildings vs. a Care Campus.

- *Manager of Planning B. McLoughlin explained how properties are taxed according to their actual use.*

D. Hunter: Spoke to densification in the area, and tsunami zone evacuation concerns.

D. Appleton, President of West Coast Native Health Care Society (WCNHS) Board of Directors, spoke to current evacuation plans for the site.

D. Firouzli, Architect, spoke to flood plains data used in site planning.

- *Manager of Planning B. McLoughlin spoke to a requirement of a geotechnical study as part of the building permit application process.*

P. Cote: Spoke to operations of the facility in regard to tsunami planning, ACRD emergency planning considerations for the area, and her positive experience on the Rainbow Gardens Board of Directors, the facility operations, and effect the proposed development would have on the greater City community.

K. Casey: Asked about bylaw regulations being amended for this building in regard to fire prevention, and spoke to potential future water pressure concerns in the subdivision.

- *Manager of Planning B. McLoughlin explained how minimum fire separation requirements are specified in the BC Building Code, and that engineering studies would be required for service provision prior to building permit issuance.*

M. Solmer: Expressed concerns about existing traffic issues in the area, accessibility, sidewalk access (safety), ambulance access to Rainbow Gardens, delivery vehicle traffic, and public parking issues in the cul-de-sac.

- *Chair Minions addressed the loss of park space in the area, and current development of the Parks Master Plan.*

J. Charlesworth: Spoke to neighbourhood vehicle traffic on Halloween, and public parking access on private property.

C. De St. Remy: Shared concern regarding continuous development of structures in the neighbourhood, seniors lack of access to greenspaces, lack of park spaces for kids, overall increased neighbourhood traffic and the need for increased traffic safety in the area.

K. Nesbitt: Asked about the possibility of future safety improvements to the area including sidewalk access, marked crosswalks, street parking and location of proposed parking, speed regulation, and development of recreation places for neighbourhood children.

- *Manager of Planning B. McLoughlin informed Council that the construction of sidewalks would not likely be considered for this development, and Council is not likely to secure that infrastructure through development of subsidized and below market housing. The City would likely need to make that investment.*

Chair Minions asked about conducting a future traffic safety pattern study in the neighbourhood of the proposed development.

- *CAO, M. Fox stated that a traffic/speed count could be considered for the area.*

WCNHS Board of Directors President, D. Appleton: Shared that reducing speed in the area has been discussed previously. He stated that a planned sidewalk at Russell Place is part of the new proposed development. He also described the many available options for Rainbow Gardens residents to access transportation.

L. Walerius: Shared concerns about local Halloween traffic, area tsunami safety and evacuation plans, BC Transit bus zones, and the need for speed control measures in the neighbourhood.

A. Pohar: Asked about the height of the proposed building development.

J. Cook: Spoke to traffic safety issues in the area.

D Hunter: Asked a question regarding earthquake evacuation plan for Rainbow Gardens residents.

- *WCNHS Board of Directors Vice President, B. Denning addressed delivery truck issues and staff driving speeds, and spoke to evacuation plans for the care home for various critical incidents/natural disaster plans.*

H. Nielsen: Expressed frustration with parking/delivery truck issues, and requested changes to city infrastructure for traffic control in the area.

7. Closing Remarks from the Chair:

Chair Minions reminded those present that once the Public Hearing has closed members of Council may not, as a group or as individuals, receive any further oral or written presentations on this matter including what might be perceived as informal discussions immediately after the termination of this meeting. She asked all parties to comply with this.

Before closing the Public Hearing, Chair Minions called three times for any further speakers on any of the matters contained in the proposed bylaw.

Chair Minions called the first time for input from the public.

Chair Minions called for a second time for input from the public.

Chair Minions called for a third time for input from the public.

There being no further speakers, Chair Minions declared the Public Hearing closed.

8. Termination of the Public Hearing:

MOVED and SECONDED, THAT this Public Hearing terminate at 7:52 p.m.

CARRIED



Sara Darling
Director of Corporate Services