

**REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2016
AT 5:00 PM IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS TO HEAR REPRESENTATION RELATIVE TO
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN BYLAW AND
ZONING BYLAW**

PRESENT: **Council:** Mayor Ruttan (Chair)
 Councillor Alemany
 Councillor McLeman
 Councillor Minions
 Councillor Paulson
 Councillor Sauvè
 Councillor Washington

City Staff: Tim Pley, CAO
 Davina Hartwell, City Clerk
 Scott Smith, City Planner

Members of the Public: approx. 50

The Chair explained the Public Hearing procedures for the meeting.

Applicant: John Jessup & Associates

1. Description of the Application

The applicant is applying to amend the Official Community Plan Bylaw and Zoning Bylaw to facilitate the expansion of the Rainbow Gardens care facility which occupies the adjacent property.

The proposed bylaws are:

- “Official Community Plan Amendment No. 23 (5350 Russell Street – Rainbow Gardens), Bylaw No. 4926”
- “Zoning Amendment No. 19 (5350 Russell Street – Rainbow Gardens), Bylaw No. 4927”

2. Background Information from the City Planner

The City Planner provided background information regarding the proposed amendments by way of summarizing his report of November 28, 2016, attached hereto and forming part of this report.

3. Correspondence

None.

4. Input from the Public regarding the Bylaw

John Jessup, Applicant, advised that the proposed development is 20 units of one bed housing, roughly 550 sq.ft./unit which will accommodate either couples or single seniors. The units are intended to support seniors with annual incomes of between \$15 and \$30,000.

He advised that if approved, planned construction would begin the Fall of 2017 with 20 new units being completed by Fall of 2018.

Mr. Jessup said he recognizes the difficult decision between a park and affordable housing and suggested the proposal of an intergenerational park on a portion of the property to accommodate both seniors and families is a compromise. He indicated the area will be fenced, landscaped, and will be a safe environment. He indicated childrens' park equipment and pickleball may be delayed due to funding and that the focus will be on affordable housing for seniors in the Valley. He suggested they will approach other potential funders for child play apparatus.

He noted the proposal is for a single storey structure with a double loaded corridor which they feel will blend into the primarily single family home neighbourhood and the potential for 8-10 additional units in the future.

Monique Begg, 5401 Westporte Place, opposed the application and the sale of the land stating the Westporte subdivision represents the ideal place to live encompassing all elements that make a great neighbourhood.

The letter dated December 5, 2016 from Monique Begg is attached hereto in its entirety and forms part of the record.

John Bennie, 6110 Westporte Boulevard, expressed opposition and objection on behalf of himself and his wife to the development application urging Council to review previous submissions made during the previous rezoning application.

The letter dated December 5, 2016 from John and Karen Bennie is attached hereto in its entirety and forms part of the record.

Mr. Bennie read a letter from his wife **Karen Bennie** (attached hereto and forming part of the record) asking that Council put the rezoning off until there are actual plans, measurements, park designs and traffic studies and take the time to go back to minutes of past meetings and read letters.

Dorothy Patterson, 5559 Woodland Cres. W., said she understood the controversy. She said she is an RN and works as a seniors nurse consultant in the lives of the frail and elderly. She indicated we are in dire need for complex care beds and noted the current crisis and the heartbreak of families when their loved ones are forced out of town for care. She indicated Rainbow Gardens is the first place that has come up with a solution and that complex care/subsidized housing often has to be added to current facilities. She felt more details need to be in place but this is a good place to start. She commented on the fact that peoples' lives can change in a moment and stated the importance of couples being able to stay together.

Roland Goehl, 2752 14th Avenue stated he was glad Rainbow Gardens had come forward. He commented on his experience with colon cancer and being in hospital where there were not enough beds due to the amount of people who should be in care homes. He stated the elderly were as important as children.

Rob Ackerman, 6120 Westport Boulevard advised that one of the deciding factors in purchasing his home was the park. He indicated that while he sees a need in town for a facility, this proposal is a drop in the bucket and will not meet the need.

Don Langlois, 5496 Westport Place, stated his objection to the rezoning and commented there won't be a park left after 20 units are built. He expressed his displeasure at the sale of the property for \$163,000.

Gerry Walerius, 5367 Russell Street, provided his reasons for opposing the rezoning by reading his letter dated December 4, 2016 attached hereto and forming part of the record.

Daniel Watts advised he is closely associated with Rainbow Gardens and supports them 100%. He stated they were offering a good thing for the entire City in offering homes for the elderly.

Phil Classen, 5456 Westport Place advised that the park was a major decision in the purchase of their house noting his 9 year old daughter plays there probably 5 days per week.

Sarah Classen, 5456 Westport Place advised she is a LPN and knows there is a need for beds. She suggested that the proposed 10 complex care beds were in the wrong place.

Donna Black, 5455 Woodland Cres. E. asked whether the park would be fenced and stated security checks would be needed. She also commented on the cost of the land stating it works out to \$47,000 per lot.

Ray Kirouac, 5464 Westporte Place suggested Council walk in the area and count the kids playing there. He commented on the City's lease of the property and asked who was paying the taxes on it and who would reimburse the people losing value.

Nancy Czigany, 38-5558 Beaver Creek Road advised she brings her kids to Westporte Park commenting on the good visibility and safety of the park. She also advised of her 25 years working in long term care and that being involved with Pioneer Towers, Heritage Place and Abbeyfield, she knows the need, however, feels this project is inadequate to meet the needs of the community.

Her email letter dated December 5, 2016 is attached hereto and forms part of the record.

Shaunee Casavant, Director of Care and Administrator of Rainbow Gardens Facility said Rainbow Gardens is known for the best care. She commented they already own the land; they have a good plan; they have been approved by BC Housing and they have invited input. She confirmed they do not choose who lives at Rainbow Gardens – the Health Authority decides the priority. She advised this proposal will be meaningful to 10 people whose lives count.

Ben David, said Rainbow Gardens is about people, they create employment. He commented that the 20 units are for people who need to live somewhere.

Peter Burton, 5465 Westporte Place stated that the residents are not unreasonable people and care very much. He advised they like their park and that this is the wrong location in their minds. He felt Council should be thinking bigger; better.

Derek Appleton, 9597 Sproat Place, Chair of the Building Committee, reminded Council this is a land use issue and advised that Rainbow Gardens wants to work with the community. He said they have never said they don't want a park – they want to develop that park.

Derek Reddick, 5413 Woodland Cres. W said he has a young family and that while seniors care is important, should land be taken away from our children. He asked if the plan for another park was still on the table.

Wendy Friberg, 5415 Woodland Cres. E. said she was disappointed there was not more complex care. She expressed her concern over deals being done in-camera behind closed doors. She asked whether due diligence has been done.

Hazel Fortais, 5442 Woodland Cres. E. questioned the 20 low cost rental units as she understood the funding was for 9 long term care beds.

Les Sam, 6850 Pacific Rim Hwy said he was a former Tseshaht Councillor and supported the application. He said it would be a nice, affordable place for seniors and that he welcomed the opportunity for development and employment of young people.

Arnold Begg, 5401 Westporte Place spoke at length about the previous rezoning application and their willingness to get involved and find a way to do things. He said they were proud to be neighbours of Rainbow Gardens but they were against losing the park and upset by the lack of consideration he feels was shown by Council.

5. Late Correspondence Regarding the Matter

Eleanor Peterson, for FW Stuef and family, 6110 Russell Place dated December 5, 2016 (attached hereto and forming part of the record) expressing concern regarding the expansion of Rainbow Gardens care facility onto the only park and open green space in the area.

6. Questions from Council:

None

7. Calling for any Further Input:

The Chair asked for any further input from the public. There was none.

The Chair called a second time for input. There was none.

The Chair asked for input for a third and final time. There was none.

8. Closing Remarks by the Chair:

The Chair made closing remarks on the matters of the public hearing.

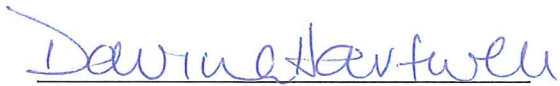
It was moved and seconded:

That the Public Hearing terminate at 6:48 pm.

CARRIED

Pursuant to Sections 464, 465 and 466 of the *Local Government Act*, I hereby certify the foregoing to be a fair and accurate summary of the representations made at the Public Hearing held December 5, 2016 regarding:

- "Official Community Plan Amendment No. 23 (5350 Russell Street – Rainbow Gardens), Bylaw No. 4926"
- "Zoning Amendment No. 19 (5350 Russell Street – Rainbow Gardens), Bylaw No. 4927"



Davina Hartwell
City Clerk

Dec. 05, 2016

To: Mayor and Council

cc. City Clerk

To: Mayor, Councillors, City Clerk,

Regarding Westporte Park sale and acquisition of new lands

My husband and I oppose the applications from Rainbow Gardens and the City of Port Alberni Rezoning changes bylaws to sell Westporte Park land and the designation changes from Parks and Recreation P2 to Institutional P1.

The Westporte subdivision represents the ideal place to live. Westporte Place was designed and well planned and it encompasses all the elements that make a great neighbourhood.

It includes a mixture of living choices ranging from single family homes, townhomes, self owned and rental condominium including a Community Living home with 24hour care. In their brochures, Rainbow Gardens once again wishes to develop our park.

Westporte Place Park is the heart of our neighbourhood for young and old. It is a green space with a selection of benches, hockey and basketball area, monkey bars, slide, as well as many other amenities. It is secure for our children as the park is bordering front facing and backyards and is seen from the adjacent streets. People of all ages utilize the park on a daily basis to either, contemplate, read, exercise, play and is wheelchair accessible.

Port Alberni prides itself with green spaces, trails, outdoor activities, as well as attracting older citizens to move here. I question the rational of the city planner and the planning committee to take a well functioning active park away for the Rainbow Gardens project.

According to Port Alberni property for sale report, the city offers many properties advertised on their site that are better suited for a larger project like Rainbow Gardens's development.

For instance: School District property, 4000 Burde, 22.7 acres already P1,

North Island College, 3699 Roger, 10.6 acres already P1, and many more.

The Official Community Plan which is the guiding light for all land usage touching all aspects of development while protecting its natural attributes. The City does not appear to follow their own Policies in regards to Rainbow Gardens.

Council Policy for Parks and Open spaces reads:

Parks will be located in prominent locations designed to act as a focal point for the neighbourhood they serve. Public land identified for park and recreation shall be protected from incompatible purposes and be protected from land that are visually intrusive, noisy and or impede access.

New park and upgraded park shall be designed and planned in consultation with the community.

The city shall continue the 5% parkland dedication requirements or cash equivalent through the building approval process in order to acquire land for parks and open spaces. We need our park!

Per OCP, Institutional uses will be permitted in areas designated as INS on Schedule A

Multi Family Residential shall be designated to control the form and character of the existing adjacent neighbourhood.

It also should be located within walking distance of all facilities like stores, commercial, recreational , community scale parks, should also be located near transit to reduce traffic from impacts on local roads like Hwy 4.

The closed schools and the old High School properties would accommodate several levels of care housing for our seniors.

We understand the necessity of this project but not at the expense of a park!

A green space lost is gone forever!

The park area offered by the City of Port Alberni to replace Wesporte Park, is not suitable and certainly not appropriate for a children's playground!

I attended the Open House at Rainbow Gardens, I was once again disappointed that there were no representation from the City Council, Staff and I heard that the Mayor had attended earlier in the day.

Unfortunately, no official representative from the City of Port Alberni Planning Department or Council Members were in attendance. The information given by the Rainbow Gardens representatives and their brochures left us with more questions than answers. ~~The project is not~~

What happened to the transparency promised by our elected Mayor and Council?

6110 Westporte Boulevard,
Port Alberni, BC
V9Y 8E6
December 5, 2016

Mayor and Council,
City of Port Alberni,
4850 Argyle Street,
Port Alberni, BC
V9Y 1V8

Dear Mr. Mayor and Councillors:

Re: Development Application – Westporte Park Rezoning
Applicant: Westcoast Native Health Care Society (the "Society")

We wish to express our opposition and objection to the above-noted Application, which is set for public hearing on December 5, 2016.

As residents of Westporte Place, we are back before you once again approximately eighteen months after this Council voted down the application to rezone our Westporte Park, after consideration of a substantial body of written and oral submissions were made, outlining the many benefits and design features of the park for the community. I would strongly urge you, Mr. Mayor, and all members of council to review all of those submissions in the archives once again, or at the very least cast your minds and memories back to those arguments and observations in favour of keeping the park as it is, and not grant a rezoning. For your information, I'm attaching our written submission dated March 11, 2015. We feel that the points made then still ring true and are valid today.

As we see it, there are two major differences between where we were in March of 2015, and where we are today. Firstly, the Society now owns the park property and has leased it back to the City for the time being. Secondly, we are informed by the media through press releases that the Society has secured \$2.7 million dollars from BC Housing for 20 affordable housing spaces for seniors, as well as 10 complex care spaces for seniors.

As to the first point, I cannot leave this proceeding today without expressing my deep-seated disappointment and sense of betrayal by this council, in selling the park property to the Society this past spring, after consideration of the issue in in-camera meetings, and without any sort of consultation with the Westporte neighbourhood in particular or the community as a whole. We were simply led to believe that parks were "sacrosanct", and that the City was looking at an RFP for the tract of land to the east of

Westporte Place towards Golden Street, to be used for a housing development and potentially a park to replace Westporte Park. What happened? The park was sold, the RFP idea shelved, and now no promise whatsoever (or even a reference to) any sort of replacement park! As you have heard or may likely hear from others on this point, shame on you!

As to the second point, the fact that the Society has received funding is certainly good news for the community, and for the issue of seniors housing. However, it does not necessarily mean that the Society has to limit its vision of expansion by applying the money to expansion on the Westporte Park property. It could apply those funds to expansion using other available properties in the community – again the old ADSS lands on Burde Street come to mind – sell the Westporte lands back to the City to retain our park, and use those monies along with the BC Housing funds for a more ambitious expansion of seniors housing. I guess it comes down to the old cliché “Go Big or Go Home”, to some extent.

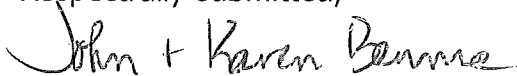
We feel that insufficient, or in the alternative, any consideration has been given to the increase in traffic flow and density that will result on Russell Street and Russell Place as a result of the Society's expansion plans as we understand them at this time. We are told that 20 550 square foot affordable senior housing spaces will be created, each suitable for one or two people. That adds 20 to 40 people to the area – each with family and friends to visit – not to mention their own vehicles that they may have, and then staffing needs. The other 10 complex care beds would also come with friends/family/staffing needs and vehicle requirements and.....well you get the idea.

There certainly will have to be fair consideration given for a traffic light at River Road at the foot of Russell Street, not to mention possible routing of public transit into the Westporte Place area, to permit the seniors living in the entire complex that do not have vehicles of their own to get into the downtown area for errands, appointments and other tasks.

However, Mr. Mayor and Council, if you are convinced that the rezoning should proceed as sought by the Society, then we implore you to add a condition for either you as the City, or in alternative the Society, to construct a replacement Westporte Park, either concurrently with or prior to the construction of new facilities on the present Westporte Park property planned by the Society.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John + Karen Bennie".

John and Karen Bennie

Mayor & City Counsel

I am asking my husband to read this as I am not sure I can either read it respectfully or gracefully.

My husband and I helped raise over 35 high risk youth over a period of 13 years, during that time I personally attended a few visits with some of our youth to visit family members and elders. *at Rainbow Gardens.*

I love the work Raindow Gardens does for seniors, I applaud them as with any senior facility in Port Alberni.

I enjoy visits in the park with a few of the elderly residents when I am out in the park with our little dog. There is one particular lady who has taken pictures of our little dog. I see George almost every morning on my way to work, and he I exchange hello's and short conversations. The one gentleman who struggles up that hill every day in his wheel chair and I have asked him if he needs help and he always gives the thumbs up. Not sure if I am strong enough to push him up.

That park is more than a chunk of land, it means more to me than the price of my home. I am not going to be able to take my home or money with me when I leave this earth. I will how ever take all my memories with me. My husband and I bought our home 20 years ago to blend our 2 families together. That park was a huge selling feature for us. My kids used that park for many things, one was practising their golf swings, playing baseball, our dogs learned how to fetch there. We played hockey on that cement pad. It's not just a play ground, it's a meeting place of new neighbors who have moved in.

My question to you is.... Now that you have \$ 163,000 dollars, that is supposed to be set aside for future park replacement according to the community charter, when will I see our new park being built possibly across from my home at 6110 Westporte Blvd.

I am not going to let a very poor misguided decision from our City Counsel take much more of my emotional time, I believe life is way too short to carry on bitter

feelings. I do however say in the 13 years that I helped raise over 35 high risk youth I never ever went back on my word to them. When I said we would be doing anything or they would be receiving something. I never went back on my word to them ever. I helped advocate with them with school, family and Ministries. I always told them the truth and kept my word.

I am asking you now. Keep your word, the 6 to 1 word where you said our park was sacred and should be saved. Everything I have seen and it's been very little on what they are proposing. It has gone from a pickle ball court to 1500 square foot park. Nothing Concrete, Nothing solid, Nothing that I can count on.

Put this re zoning off until there are actual plans, actual measurments, actual park designs. Actual traffic studies.

Take some time go back to all the minutes of past meetings, read our letters,

You need to look at what this community really needs, we need complex care, serious care for seniors, the ones that cannot take care of themselves.

The little piece of land will not put a dent into that need.

Once again, Please do not go back on your word

Karen Ben

KAREN BENNICE

6110 Westport Blvd.

~~1000~~ Pt. Alberni BC.

V9Y 8E6

LATE ITEM
December 5, 2016 5pm
Public Hearing
Item 5.2

December 4, 2016

Mayor Ruttan and City Councilors,
City of Port Alberni
4850 Argyle Street
Port Alberni, B.C.

Re: Rezoning of Westporte Park

Dear Mayor Ruttan,

Here we are again on the rezoning of Westporte Park, which was defeated by City Council March 26, 2015 in a 4-3 vote to defeat the bylaw to amend the zoning that would allow for the expansion of Rainbow Gardens.

I cannot believe that this is happening again - from the first public meeting, March 16, 2015 to the sale of the park July 18, 2016, I've been watching this all unravel and not for the benefit of Westporte Park and the residents of this community. See Item (A) AV News Article, March 26, 2015

For the City to blind-side the residents of Westporte Place with the sale of the Park, is just unfathomable. Such depths you went to, to sneak around and sell the land, when the residents still believed that the City was looking at an RFP for the City owned land which would see a housing development and a park (to replace Westporte Park), as discussed in early 2016. Sold without consultation or approval of the Westporte Residents. Now we all know how the First Nations feel when they haven't been consulted. Shame on you!

The residents of Westporte Place are now subjected to yet another Public Hearing to repeat the exact same reasons why we did not want our Park sold and rezoned in the first place.

The previous two times a replacement park was mentioned: (1) Land off Georgia/access by Oxford, (2) Park in newly proposed subdivision. This time, there is no alternative park planned, or did I miss that meeting or will it be discussed on Monday, December 5th?
See (B) Community Charter – Property Disposal

The reasons I dispute the rezoning on the Westporte Park are:

1. Replacement Park:

City council previously mentioned replacement parks and this time, no mention has been made.

- a. Originally there was a Replacement Park planned for: Georgia Street with additional access by way of Oxford. This was not a good plan.
- b. Next came the RFP development of City Land at the end of Russell Street and Westporte Blvd. After the sale of the Park to the WestCoast Native Health Care Society (WCNHCS), City Council placed the RFP on hold and since then a NEW park has not been mentioned. (September 15, 2016)
- c. Question: Is City Council relying on the WCNHCS to provide a very small percentage of Westporte Park for the residents of Westporte Place?

i. I Do not support this for two reasons:

1. The size of the land to be set aside is approximately the size of 2 city lots,
and using the size of our current lot sizes, this is NOT acceptable
2. Also, there is NO Guarantee that the park space set aside by the WCNHCS
would remain Parkland – it too may be considered for MORE seniors housing in another Phase.

Recommendation:

That City Council use the \$163,000 from the sale of Westporte Park to create a NEW Park in our subdivision. Suggestion: End of Russell Street, up to Oxford Street.

2. Increased Traffic:

Increased Density resulting in more Traffic Congestion with the new construction:

The WCNHCS is looking to expand their facility by:

* 30 Senior/Disabled low-income housing units, suitable for up to 2 people.

* 10 Complex Care Beds

Increase density by:

Low income housing – 20 to 40 people

Complex Care – 3 to 4 staffers/shift

Visitors – day/night (increased)

i. The issue of Traffic has not been addressed by WCNHCS or City Council.

1. In the morning, 7:40AM, traffic is steady from Sproat & McCoy Lake roads

Which can result in approximately a 3 to 5 minute delay to access Hwy.4

2. In the summer, anywhere from 11 AM to 4PM, the traffic is steady in both directions, which can result in a delay to access Hwy.4 by sometimes

5 minutes or more.

Recommendation:

That a traffic light be set up on Hwy. 4 & Russell Street (to dangerous for a light at Hwy. 4 & Falls Road due to the positioning of the bridge & bus stop).

With only two departure roads from Westporte Place this makes it very difficult for all Residents to make their way out of the sub-division. The two roads are: Russell St & Hwy 4 and Oxford & Falls Road.

ii. Emergency Exit from Westporte Place for all residents:

1. In case of an emergency such as a Tsunami or Forest Fire, ALL residents are left with only one road to depart the subdivision, Oxford to Falls Road. Russell Street & Hwy 4 are in the Tsunami zone and may not be accessible.

How will all the new residents of WCNHCS (20 to 40 new residents) and all the residents of Westporte Place evacuate? Tsunami Zone ends at Georgia Street.

Recommendation:

A NEW Road needs to be punched through to Golden (Tsunami Zone)? To Falls? To Georgia? To aid in the evacuation of all the residents from WCNHCS low-income seniors housing and the residents of Westporte Place.

- iii. Problem of drivers taking the incorrect exit of Hwy. 4 onto Russell Street: As we all know, drivers make wrong turns. When this happens the drivers will be driving up Russell Street from Hwy. 4 only to find themselves in a sub-division with more traffic and pedestrians in the area.

Recommendation:

That the end of Russell Street be changed to provide a turn-around area (end of Russell Street & Westporte Blvd).

- iv. Bus Stop:

Due to the type of accommodations (seniors low-cost housing), will transportation by City Transit be available?

Already, I see folks from Assisted & Complex care, either walk, use a wheelchair or walker to navigate the steep hill on Russell Street to Hwy 4. There is NO Sidewalk available to them and during the winter

months this is extremely dangerous due weather conditions & when drivers reach the crest of the hill.

Recommendation:

1. That the City create:

- a. a sidewalk for the seniors and disabled to use from Russell Place along Russell Street to Hwy. 4.
- b. Crosswalks also need to be added at the bottom of the hill and also across to the other side of Hwy. 4 to attach to the side walk on the river side of the road.
- c. On the other side of the highway a proper sidewalk needs to be laid from Riverbend Store to Riverbend Park where the bus stop is, so the the new low-income seniors can access transportation to the city amenities (groceries, entertainment, shopping, hospital, doctors).

2. or the City should consider bus service into the subdivision with a bus stop at the corner of Russell Street and Russell Place.

3. Proposed Accommodation:

The WCNHCS has been approved by BC Housing for \$2,700,000 to construct 20 low-income accommodation along with 10 complex care beds. I would like to make the following comments:

I sit on the Alberni Valley Senior Citizens Homes Society (AVSCHS). Our Board provides independent rental housing for seniors in our Community. *What I see is a need for more*

Assisted Living and Complex Care beds as a way reduce the strain on our local hospital, not

additional low-cost housing for seniors. I see too many seniors, who are no longer capable of

living on their own with minimal care provided by Community Care & other private providers.

Many of the seniors are stuck in independent living, who really need to move to the next level of care, such as Assisted Living with round the clock care.

4. What will WCNHCS construct on Westporte Park:

An open house was held to present the abstract drawing of what the WCNHCS project. My wife

spoke with the directors of WCNHCS following the Advisory Planning Committee meeting this

Fall, and they mentioned that the drawing could change from a building to 4-plexes. If the

concept changed to 4-plexes, then the footprint on the park will increase, thereby *decreasing*

whatever space was set-aside for the park.

Not knowing what WCNHCS will build is a concern.

5. Target Clients:

WCNHCS has been awarded by BC Housing, \$2,700,000 for the construction of "Affordable Rental Housing". There is nothing that says it's for Seniors Only.

WCNHCS has mentioned that their "Target Client" is: Seniors and disabled individuals (*no age specified*) including those who require complex care.

As there is **NO GUARANTEE** that the "Affordable RENTAL Housing" will be Seniors Only, and for this reason I remain OPPOSED to this development on Westporte Park.

6. Westporte Place & Low-Income Housing Future Tax Revenues:

Attached is a spreadsheet created from BC Assessments & City of Port Alberni websites

2015 Assessments & Tax Revenues:

Westporte Residents (29) that border on Westporte Park:

Assessed Property Values: \$5,663,600

Taxes Paid: \$72,862.77

Westcoast Native Health Care Society – Rainbow Gardens:

Assessed Property Values: \$3,949,300

Taxes Paid: \$3,353.71

Future Tax Base:

Through a Real Estate Agent, I've heard that Property Values for residents that are within 75m of Westporte Park, may see a decrease in their assessed values of up to 10%.

2015 Assessed Value: \$5,663,600 could be reduced to \$5,097,240

This may have an affect on Tax Revenues for the City of Port Alberni

Type of accomodate funded by BC Housing for WCNHCS is for:

Low-income & disabled.

This type of accommodation may qualify WCHNCS for a "Permissive Tax Exemption", resulting in "Zero" Taxes paid by the Society following the construction on Westporte Park.

How will this benefit our Community - Reduced Westporte Place tax assessments & taxes and a granting of a "Permissive Tax Exemption", with no guarantee of any job gains, except during the construction stage and will this even be a Local Contractor using Local supplies?

7. Previous Letter submitted March 15, 2015 prior to the First Public Meeting on the issue of selling/rezoning:

My other reasons for not rezoning were mentioned in my letter prior to the first Public meeting. I'm attaching it for your review.

Attached - March 15, 2015 Letter submitted prior to First Public meeting.

In Conclusion:

I've brought forward many points for Mayor and Council to consider before the vote takes place on whether to ReZone Westporte Park or not.

What it boils down to is, can the City of Port Alberni afford to rezone Westporte Park?

Can the City afford:

1. Additional costs for the rezoning to house seniors & the disabled:
 - a. NEW Replacement park for Westporte Place Subdivision
 - b. NEW Emergency Exit roadway from Westporte Place to Golden, Falls, Georgia????
 - c. Sidewalks – (1) From Russell Place, down Russell Street to Hwy. 4

(2) along the opposite side of Hwy. 4 from Riverbend Store to Riverbend Park where the Bus Stop is.

- d. Traffic Light – for seniors & disabled to cross Hwy.4 safely
- e. Crosswalks – (1) from Riverbend Store to opposite side of the Hwy. 4
(2) from Riverbend Store to current sidewalk on Hwy. 4
- f. Creation of additional Transit Services: Bus Stop in the Subdivision or better access along River Road to the bus stop and increased Bus Services during the week & weekends.

2. To Loose Tax Revenue:

- a. Can the City afford to see Property Assessments & corresponding taxes decline on the residential homes surrounding Westporte Park?
- b. Will the City be faced with an application for “Premissive Tax Exemption” for the construction of Low-Cost Housing on Westporte Park resulting in “Zero” taxes from the Low-Cost Seniors Housing Project.

Mayor and Council should consider all these items PRIOR to voting on these by-laws, knowing also that the residents of Westporte Place will not be interested in a tax hike to cover the costs associated with the new construction on OUR Park (as listed above). I also ask that you recall your reasons as to why you voted 4-3 to defeat the original re-zoning of Westporte Park on March 26, 2015 and vote as you did at that time as the elements of the argument have not changed.

Regards,
Gerry Walerius
5367 Russell Street
Port Alberni, B.C. V9Y 8E4
250-724-5134

Item (A)

Alberni Valley NEWS

City shoots down Westporte sale

- by Katya Slepian - Alberni Valley News
- posted Mar 26, 2015 at 12:00 AM— updated Apr 13, 2015 at 4:18 PM

Port Alberni city council has defeated a proposal to sell Westporte Park to the Westcoast Native Health Care Society for expansion of Rainbow Gardens.

Council voted 4-3 to defeat a bylaw amendment that would have allowed the expansion of Rainbow Gardens to continue. The vote followed a public hearing the week prior.

While Coun. Ron Paulson emphasized that he learned a lot at the public hearing on March 16, he said he felt let down by how it ended.

“I will scold people, I was very disappointed with the way the meeting degenerated towards the end.”

Paulson was also disappointed with Rainbow Gardens’ lack of a business plan.

Coun. Denis Sauve said at the council meeting that Rainbow Gardens never contacted Island Health about their expansion plans.

“Pretty much nobody knew anything about the expansion.”

Sauve said that although he believes more seniors housing is essential, he doesn’t feel that the independent living facilities that Rainbow Gardens had planned were what the city needs.

“What they need is acute care and assisted living which was never mentioned.”

Coun. Sharie Minions took issue with the location of the proposed replacement park.

“I really don’t feel that the selected location for the new park is a suitable location for a playground.”

Minions also didn’t feel like it was fiscally responsible to spend more money on building a new park than the \$163,000 the city would receive from the sale of the existing Westporte Park.

Minions said that while she fully supported Rainbow Gardens’ plans, she felt that other expansion options should have been more thoroughly explored.

“Selling off the park should be a worst case scenario,” Minions said. “We haven’t completely done our due diligence.”

Coun. Jack McLeman said that while he agreed with Rainbow Gardens’ need to expand adjacent to where they are, he “did not like at all any of the suggested places to put the new park.”

“For me, park space is sacrosanct and something that’s difficult for a city to get in the first place,” said Mayor Mike Ruttan. “I fully understand the need for seniors housing but I know that there are other options in terms of locations for seniors housing.”

Council ended their discussion with a call to action for Rainbow Gardens and the residents of Westporte to come together and work out a solution.

“Dwell on the solution and not the problem,” Paulson said. “We’re all in the same community, no villains in this one.”

ITEM (B)

Community Charter

Property Disposal

Municipalities have "natural person powers," or broad powers of a corporation. One of the things natural persons can do is acquire and dispose of real property. As well, Part 3, Division 3, (Municipal Property) of the *Community Charter* sets out additional powers and some limitations with respect to property disposition. The broad power of property disposal provides municipalities with the flexibility to dispose of municipal assets in ways that best suit the needs of their communities.

What is required

Some of the highlights of the broad power of property disposal include the following:

Disposal can be by bylaw or by resolution.

Council can dispose of most property without providing notice. However, before council can dispose of **land or improvements**, it must publish public notice of the proposed disposition in accordance with section 94.

In the case of land or improvements that are made available to the public for acquisition, the notice must contain the following:

- a description of the land or improvements;
- the nature and, if applicable, the term of the proposed disposition;
- the process by which the land or improvements may be acquired.

In the case of land or improvements which are not available to the public for acquisition, the notice must include the following:

- a description of the land or improvements;
- the person or public authority which is to acquire the property under the proposed disposition;
- the nature and, if applicable, the term of the proposed disposition;
- the consideration to be received.

Council is not legally obligated to place the proceeds of property sales in a reserve fund except in the case of:

- the sale of parkland dedicated on subdivision or received in place of a development cost charge; or
- the sale of closed roads which provided access to a body of water.

In a number of cases, specific powers and restrictions in relation to disposal of properties are unchanged. These include:

Exchange or disposal of parkland: Because of the significance of parks to community values, there are special provisions. Two cases need to be distinguished here:

Parkland dedicated on subdivision: Elector approval continues to be required for disposal of these parklands ([section 27](#)). All proceeds from sale must be placed in a parkland acquisition reserve fund;

Parkland dedicated by bylaw: Elector approval is required to remove the dedication ([section 30](#)). Once a dedication is removed, the municipality could dispose of the property under regular land disposal rules.

Disposal of water and sewer systems and other utilities: Special rules are laid out in [section 28](#) for sewer and water systems and other specified utilities (e.g., gas and transportation):

Sewer and water systems: These are core municipal services with high visibility and strong community interest. Council can only dispose of operating water and sewer systems where there is assent of the electors and where an agreement is in place to ensure that the water or sewer service is continued.

Other utilities: Council can only dispose of these with approval of the electors, which means either a vote or an alternative approval process.

Disposal of municipal roads: New specific provisions are provided since municipalities now have title to roads ([sections 40 and 41](#)). However, the general rules for disposing of closed and undedicated roads remains the same as for disposing of land.

Municipal forests: The rules for municipal forests are detailed, specific and, in practice, limited to a few municipalities. As a consequence, [section 307](#) of the *Local Government Act* continues to govern disposal of municipal forest lands.

Disposal of assets acquired using provincial grants: [Section 12](#) of the *Community Charter Transitional Provisions, Consequential Amendments and Other Amendments Act, 2003* continues the requirements formerly contained in [section 189](#) of the *Local Government Act*, but only in relation to grants provided prior to January 1, 2004.

Disposal of lands obtained by tax sales: These continue to be governed by [Part 11, Division 8](#), Annual Tax Sale of the *Local Government Act*.

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Specific rules regarding expropriation by municipalities and compensation for property expropriated are contained in *Community Charter*, [Part Division 4](#).

When to consider

Municipal lands are a valuable resource. They are a strategic community asset which can be used to achieve a variety of municipal objectives. Land resources can be used for public purposes: roads, parks, schools and community facilities. They can also be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of in various ways - for example, in a partnering agreement. Disposal of municipal lands can create an important revenue source, yield new development, produce additional property tax revenues, facilitate creation of municipal assets and contribute to community development objectives. This must be balanced against a municipality's purpose, under the *Community Charter*, to provide "for stewardship of the public assets of the community."

It is important that disposal of municipal land resources are considered in the context of the overall policies of the municipality, including:

The Official Community Plan, which establishes long-range physical development goals and objectives;

The five-year Financial Plan, which includes identification of capital expenditures and proposed revenue sources;

The Annual Report, which sets out municipal objectives, establishes measures and reports on progress.

These are the fundamental policy documents of council and are important touchstones for municipal policies and actions in all areas.

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What to consider

In addition to the context set by these three documents, other considerations in developing policies include:

To whom is council going to dispose of land?

If land is being disposed of to a business, council needs to be aware of the prohibition against assistance to business: “council must not provide a grant, benefit, advantage or other form of assistance to a business,” unless specifically provided for ([section 25](#)). Assistance includes disposing of land or improvements for less than market value.

If council wishes to dispose of land below market value to assist a business it can only do so in the context of a partnering agreement ([section 21](#)). A partnering agreement enables a person to provide a service on behalf of council. Council must provide prior notice of its intention to provide such assistance ([section 24](#)).

If lands are going to be disposed of to a non-profit organization, council may want to have a consistent policy to guide these decisions to ensure fairness to all groups (e.g., for what purposes will it dispose of land; to which type of non-profit organizations; for what consideration).

If council proposes to dispose of land below market value to non-profit organizations (e.g., to encourage an affordable housing project), it must provide prior notice of its intentions to provide this form of assistance ([section 24](#)).

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What process is council going to use to dispose of land?

Councils have choices to dispose of land by public offer or by direct offer to a single person or organization. Councils may want to start with a policy that all property should be offered for sale by public offer unless there are strong identifiable reasons to make an exception. For example, council may decide a direct offer is appropriate when:

- Selling a closed road to an adjacent property owner;
- Leasing land as part of a private-public partnership;
- Selling land to the regional district for the regional water supply service;
- Exchanging land as a component of a comprehensive urban redevelopment project;
- Leasing land under an agreement with a non-profit housing provider to develop affordable housing.

What is council going to do with the proceeds of property sales?

Subject to the exceptions noted earlier, municipalities have almost complete discretion to make decisions on the use of monies gained from disposal of lands. In exercising that discretion, some considerations for council include:

- What is the nature of the money received (i.e., is it extraordinary, one time or an on-going source of revenue?)
- Can it be relied upon for on-going operating revenues?

If placed in a reserve fund, what would be the purpose of the fund?

Please direct questions or comments to [Advisory Services Branch](#).

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Westporte Place Residents & PARK

July 2015 BC Assessed Values

Notes:

1. 2016 BC Assessed Values not available until January 2017
2. The following are residents that directly border on Westporte Place Park
3. A RealEstate firm suggested that property values with 75m of the park could result in a 10% decrease in Property Values.
4. Taxes: 1-Residential

Russell Place:	Prev. Year	Assessed Value	Comments	2015 Taxes	Potential decrease of 10% in Property Values
6110	2015	86,300	(House Burnt/now rebuilt)	\$1,158.99	(8,630)
6120	2015	203,800		\$2,705.95	(20,380)
6130	2015	179,800		\$2,367.19	(17,980)
6140	2015	235,600		\$3,124.61	(23,560)
Sub-Total		705,500		\$9,356.74	(70,550)

6151	2015	3,949,300	R.Gardens-Nursing Home	\$3,353.71	
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Russell Street					
5303	2015	178,600		\$2,374.17	(17,860)
5311	2015	398,500		\$5,269.31	(39,850)
5319	2015	335,500		\$4,439.87	(33,550)
5327	2015	352,300		\$4,661.05	(35,230)
5343	2015	317,300		\$4,200.35	(31,730)
5350	2015	157,000	Westport Place Park	\$0.00	
5359	2015	265,500		\$3,495.49	(26,550)
5367	2015	248,500		\$3,294.45	(24,850)
5375	2015	408,400	Duplex	\$5,399.66	(40,840)
5382	2015	347,400		\$4,596.55	(34,740)
5383	2015	346,300		\$4,582.06	(34,630)
5391	2015	316,400		\$4,188.40	(31,640)
Sub-total		3,671,700		\$46,501.36	(367,170)

Westporte Blvd.					
6110	2015	381400		\$5,044.18	(38,140)
6120	2015	360300		\$4,766.38	(36,030)
6130	2015	261000		\$3,459.02	(26,100)
6140	2015	283700		\$3,735.09	(28,370)
SubTotal		1,286,400		\$17,004.67	(128,640)
Total Assessed Value					
		\$5,663,600.00	Total of 2015 Property Taxes		
			\$72,862.77		(566,360)

Total Assessed Value with 10% Decrease

5,097,240

Gerry Walerius
5367 Russell Street
Port Alberni, B.C. V9Y 8E4

March 15, 2015

To: Mayor Ruttan
CC: Councilor S. Minions
Councilor J. McLeman
Councilor D. Washington
Councilor D. Sauve
Councilor C. Alemany
Councilor R. Paulson

RE: Westporte Place Playground

Thump, Bump, Jump and Run. The air is filled with laughter and light-hearted shrieks of excitement. Parents supervise their children at play and seniors roll & stroll through Westporte Place Playground & Park on another sunny afternoon.

The residents of Westporte Place know they are lucky enough to live near the playground and green space. They know the joy it brings: the calming view of trees and open skies, green grass, birds singing and fresh air. Our park improves our physical and psychological health, strengthens our community and makes it a more attractive place to live. Port Alberni needs more subdivisions like ours.

Real Estate

Subdivision developers want to get the best value when planning a subdivision in favor of public spaces versus designing around the automobile, in favor of public spaces that welcome and engage the community in general and the pedestrian in particular.

In Westporte Place, two green areas were developed. One is a smaller playground located on a footpath, the other larger playground and open space park at the entrance to Westporte Place. These areas were strategically located for easy access for all residents and their families by foot, bike or automobile.

Lot sizes were reduced (most only large enough to play bean bag toss, but not to throw a ball) and a playground was created where children can play basketball, hockey or romp on the playground equipment.

The real estate market has shown that people are willing to pay a larger sum for property that is located close to parks and open space areas than for a house that does

not offer this amenity. And of course, higher value houses means property owners pay higher property taxes. These higher taxes fund the maintenance of a park. As Council knows, Westporte Place pays higher property taxes to the City of Port Alberni. What will happen when this amenity disappears?

Health Benefits

The residents of Westporte Place are always out and about, riding their bikes, pushing a stroller, checking their mailbox and it seems they all end up at the playground. Research has shown that where people have nowhere to walk, they gain weight. Obesity goes down when walkability goes up. Dense housing, well-connected streets and mixed land uses reduce the probability that residents will be obese. This describes Westporte Place.

And everyone knows playing outside is not just about letting off steam. It is a vital part of childhood that helps children develop physical strength, coordination and balance. It also provides opportunities for children to learn and develop.

Seniors Facility

Not once have I said that we are against increasing seniors housing in Port Alberni. In fact, Leslie has & continues to participate on various boards for senior's facilities:

ACCCS (Alberni-Clayquot Continuing Care Society) for Fir Park/Echo Village
AVALS (Alberni Valley Assisted Living Society) for Heritage Place
AVSCHS (Alberni Valley Senior Citizens Homes Society) for Pioneer Towers/Pioneer Cottages (Currently Secretary-Treasurer)
Rainbow Gardens Auxiliary to raise funds to enhance the lives of seniors

AVSCHS – Pioneer Towers/Pioneer Cottages:

- Not-for-Profit
- Affordable **rental** housing to seniors (55+).
- The Screening Committee interviews each applicant.
- Not government funded.

Abbyfield –

- Not-for-Profit
- Independent Living
- Committee interviews each applicant for suitability.
- Independent of nursing care but residents can contract their own nursing care.
- 24-hour emergency response

AVALS – Heritage Place:

Not-for-Profit

Assisted Living

Community Care assesses each resident.

Provided: Daily 2 meals, social opportunities and night monitoring

Residents pay % of Net Income.

Government Funded

ACCCS – Fir Park Village/Echo Village

Not-for-Profit

Multilevel Care

On-site nursing and personal care

Government Funded

And for a short time, Leslie's father was a resident at Rainbow Gardens.

Questions following the Advisory Planning Commission Meeting held January 22, 2015 at City Hall about Rainbow Gardens Expansion:

The information provided by Derek Appleton, presenting on behalf of the Rainbow Gardens Board of Directors and Lillian Thomas.

1. *Goal is to develop an independent living expansion to add to the existing capacity for assisted living and complex care giving people a facility that will allow them to move from lower levels to the higher levels of care.*

To the best of my knowledge, the scenario provided is not necessarily the case. To move from one level of care to another requires the resident to be assessed by Community Care and also on availability of beds.

Leslie's father, when he was a resident at Fir Park Village had a serious fall. He broke his leg, where he required hospitalization and surgery in Nanaimo (he was never able to walk again). Fir Park Village could not accommodate his needs, as he required an overhead lift. This resulted in him being moved to Rainbow Gardens.

2. *The number of units in the proposed expansion will be determined through a co-operative planning process with Island Health as the funding authority.*

It has come to my attention, that the Rainbow Gardens Board of Directors has yet to approach Island Health about this project, so the conceptual plan maybe just that.

On the Island Health website there does not appear to be any information on "Independent Living". Does Island Health fund such projects, I haven't heard of any, as I believe this type of housing was left to the Private Sector.

Check out: Retirement Concepts <http://www.retirementconcepts.com>

The closest development is "The Gardens" in Qualicum where they offer Independent Living, Assisted Living and Residential Care, to allow seniors to age in place. (Their website describes the differences between the levels of care).

Currently Port Alberni does not offer one facility to allow seniors to age in place, however, due to the close proximity for the current facilities, this is what our community has to offer:

Independent Living at Pioneer Towers and Abbyfield

Assisted Living at Heritage Place and Rainbow Gardens

Residential Care at Fir Park/Echo Village, Westhaven and Rainbow Gardens

Where placement is through Community Care, the results of continuum of care may result in a different scenario – e.g. Pioneer Towers (Rental) to Rainbow Gardens (Assisted Living) to Fir Park/Echo Village (Multilevel Care). As Rainbow Gardens is also government funded, to stay within their continuum of care, may not be possible either.

Replacement Playground/Park

Advisory Planning Commission Meeting held on January 22, 2015 at City Hall – The APC discussed the application as follows:

- *.....If the amendments are approved, City Parks staff would work to design a new park with public input.*
- *Comments received to date by the City Planner have indicated that there is interest in the neighbourhood in ensuring that there is a commitment from the City that the park would be developed once the current park is no longer available.*

The City of Port Alberni is willing to sell the Westporte Place Playground for \$163,000. Does City Council realistically think that they could replace the existing playground in the newly proposed area of undeveloped City land for the funds received from the sale?

For the development of a new park/playground, who bears the burden – the Westporte Place residents or the Community of Port Alberni?

Has funding been addressed in the Five Year Plan as the time line for construction is to begin within the next two to three years? This is a concern, as there is a quote from

Derek Appleton, vice president and building chair of Westcoast Native Healthcare Society for Rainbow Gardens stating that they have been working with the City for the past six (6) years on this.

AV News January 29 2015 *"Don't take our Park,' says Westporte resident*

Quote:

"We've been working on this for six years with the city to make sure the neighbourhood benefits," said Appleton, adding that any construction is still at least two years away. "We're working under a memorandum of understanding with the city and in that MOU there are plans to replace the park with a park 16 times the size."

Flags are raised when a statement like this is made. We moved across from Westporte Place Park three years ago. We did not hear anything about this through our Real Estate Agent nor have we been approached by the Advisory Planning Commission as to whether or not we are in agreement about the sale and moving of the playground.

Sale should not proceed until

As Derek Appleton mentioned in the AV News article, that they have been in discussion with the City of Port Alberni for six (6) years, then better information should be made available before the Sale of Westporte Place Playground takes place.

The sale of Westporte Place Playground should not proceed until:

1. Rainbow Gardens makes available from Island Health to the Mayor and City Councilors, a more formalized Proposal, site development plan, funding availability from Island Health and a waiting list of numbers, for the proposed "Independent Living".
2. The City of Port Alberni provides the residents of Westporte Place with a formalized plan rather than the diagram found on page 84 of the Regular Council Agenda of February 10, 2015. (approx.. 10.0 ha Portion of site proposed to be re-designated from a mix of Parks and Open Space and Future Residential to Parks and Open Space and rezoned from FD Future Residential to PS Parks and Recreation)
3. The City of Port Alberni provides information as to the costs to relocate & develop the Westporte Playground from its current location to the development of a new park/playground.
4. The City of Port Alberni provides information on how the City proposes to pay & commit to the costs to develop the newly located park/playground. *APC "Comments received to date by the City Planner have indicated that there is interest in the neighbourhood in ensuring that there is a commitment from the City that the park would be developed once the current park is no longer available."*

5. The City of Port Alberni looks into alternatives for Rainbow Gardens request to purchase the Westporte Place Playground.

Solutions - Proposals

1. I propose that the City of Port Alberni stop the proposed sale & lease until Westcoast Native Healthcare Society for Rainbow Gardens and the residents of Westporte Place have an opportunity to enter into meaningful discussions (mediated if required) in regards to the construction of Independent Living spaces for seniors and the sale and relocation of the existing Westporte Place Playground.
2. When various parcels of land are available, then sale of private property should be considered before City Land.
 - a. Land Sale: 5.84 acres on Falls Road - former mobile home park.
This piece of property is within a 2-minute walk of Rainbow Gardens facility (down Compton) and has a beautiful view of the River. Currently zoned RM1. There is also easy access to the Bus service. MLS 362356 Coast Realty – Alease Arcus 888-712-1800
3. Propose that Rainbow Gardens set aside and donate back to Westporte Place a portion of the land for a green space. Design the facility to face inwards towards Rainbow Gardens current facility and landscape it in such a way as to provide privacy for their new extension, yet beautify the area, leaving 100' of green space along Russell Street and Russell Place for the use of kids and pets. The place could possibly accommodate playground equipment and a horseshoe pit for all age groups to enjoy.

I leave you with this thought:

Take a moment, relax, close your eyes and remember your own childhood – where was your favourite place to play?

Best Regards,

Gerry Walerius

LATE ITEM
December 5, 2016 5pm
Public Hearing
Item 5.3

Mayor Mike Ruttan and Council
City of Port Alberni
4850 Argyle Street
Port Alberni, BC

December 5, 2016

Dear Mayor Ruttan and Council;

I wish to go on record as being opposed to your decision to sell the Westporte Place neighbourhood park to the West Coast Native Healthcare Society and to re-zone the property to allow the Society to construct twenty units of housing and ten multi-level care beds.

I do not dispute that the housing units and care beds are needed in our community. However, I do not feel that this sale was transacted in an open and transparent manner, nor was the decision to sell made with consideration to the impact on the residents of Westporte Place nor the residents of the City in general.

I attended several public meetings that were held on this issue. Opposition to the sale was overwhelming and alternatives were suggested. Despite the concerns and objections expressed, I do not feel that the Council made a sincere effort to understand and address those concerns or to work in good faith with the residents of the area to find a mutually agreeable alternative.

I do not live in Westporte Place. However, I have two young grandchildren who visit often. Westporte Place Park is our playground of choice. First, it is close to my home; second, the children like the equipment in the park – especially the basketball hoop (I believe it was provided by neighbourhood parents) that is adjustable to the height of younger children; and, third but perhaps most important, I feel comfortable that Westporte Place Park is a SAFE environment for my grandchildren and that they can be free to run and play without encountering drug paraphernalia, used condoms, smelling the stench of urine or encountering people lurking or sleeping in the park.

I am disappointed and angry at the way this entire issue has been handled and these feelings will be reflected at the ballot box at the next election.

Yours truly,

Nancy Czigany
Port Alberni Taxpayer
czigany@shaw.ca
250-724-1139

LATE ITEM
December 5, 2016 5pm
Public Hearing
Item 5.1

City of Port Alberni,
4850 Argyle Street,
Port Alberni, B.C.
V9Y 1V8

To Mr. Scott Smith(city planner), Mr. Mayor, and City Councillors,

I am writing in response to the notice regarding the hearing scheduled for Dec. 5, 2016, for discussion about proposed amendments to the city community plan map, zoning map, and related bylaws for expansion of Rainbow Gardens at 5350 Russell Street as follows:

A. "Official Community Plan Map Amendment No. 23 (5350 Russell Street - Rainbow Gardens), Bylaw No. 4926"

B. "Zoning Amendment No. 19 (5350 Russell Street - (5350 Russell Street - Rainbow Gardens), Bylaw No. 4927"

Since I am presently out of the country and unable to appear in person, nor deliver or mail a traditional letter to City Hall, my apologies and I hope this email letter will be acceptable.

Before I begin, may I point out a discrepancy in the address for Rainbow Gardens, between the address written above which is the same as the ones in the published notice, and what I believe the address to be. Since the driveway entering Rainbow Gardens comes off of Russell Place, isn't their address 5350 Russell Place, rather than Russell Street which runs beside the park? Our house is on the same road as Rainbow Gardens, and our address is Russell Place.

I am writing to express my and my family's concerns re. the expansion of Rainbow Gardens care facility onto the only public park and open green space in our area. When we bought in the Westport Place neighbourhood more than ten years ago, we were pleased that there was a park in such close proximity, and was an important factor in our decision to purchase in this particular location.

We have enjoyed this park for many reasons: We regularly walked our dogs through the park as well went for strolls just to enjoy the ambiance of the trees and open green space. We often saw children enjoying the playground equipment, teens playing hockey and basketball, and people of all ages using the walkways and benches. Many types of birds frequent this area, some building nests in spring, using the trees for shelter in the winter, and sometimes even eagles or hawks sitting on the treetops, watching for prey. It has always been a wonderful asset having a view of the park through our living room windows, and sitting looking out to the park was a relaxing pastime. We often walked through the park late in the evenings and early in the mornings, and always felt safe, unlike many other of our city parks. It would be a detriment to this Westport Place neighbourhood to lose this park to any kind of development. Unfortunately, loss of parkland in general has a negative impact on the environment, on our air quality, and on people's mental health and well-being. Ironical that in this instance, the expansion of a health care facility, may have a negative impact on the health and well-being of the people in this neighbourhood. Another point to consider is the noise that will be generated by a larger facility, not only during construction, but every day after completion, as more employees and visitors travel to and from this facility. We already have a lot of traffic on our road that can be directly attributed to Rainbow Gardens, and an increase in traffic would be undesirable as well as dangerous for pedestrians.

Although it would be advantageous to have another (or larger) residential health care facility within city limits, this is not the place to have it. It is too far away from community services such as hospital, doctors' offices, community center, shopping and other amenities and services. The distance of Rainbow Gardens from our city center makes accessing city services difficult for their clients. A different location, such as the previous senior secondary school (the old ADSS) property on Burde Street, would be a much more logical choice for a residential health care facility within city limits.

The only other designated green space within the Westport Place area is the little "north" park on the far edge of this large and heavily developed residential area. We need the park and green space next to

Rainbow Gardens to maintain the present ambiance and high quality livability of this neighbourhood. Elimination of this park and open space may have a negative impact of the property values in the area, as well as a negative impact on the people that presently live here.

Please consider these factors before making decisions involving the amendments to the aforementioned city bylaws, community plans and zoning maps.

Thank-you for your time and consideration,
Sincerely
Eleanor Peterson
for F.W. Stuef and family
6110 Russell Place,
Port Alberni, B.C.
V9Y 7W3

P.S. Please disregard the first email letter sent to you from this address as it was incomplete and sent in error.
Thank-you,
E.P.