Gabriola Public Information Session for Planning at Descanso Bay Terminal

Summary of Comments

This summary was prepared by Stantec.

Close to 50 people attended during the three hours (3PM to 6PM) on February 19, 2019 at the Gabriola Arts and Heritage Centre. The intent of the meeting was to describe the proposals for amendments to the Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw. In addition, for background information, the draft Terminal Development Plan was also presented. Format of the meeting was an informal drop in with a series of panels illustrating the proposals. Proponent representative were Stephen Mayall and Halyna Tartaryn from BC Ferries and John Steil and Shane O’Hanlon from Stantec. The meeting was advertised in the local newspaper. Information panels were also posted on the BC Ferries website for subsequent viewing.

Attendees were asked to complete a comment sheet at the meeting, submit one before March 1, 2019. In addition, reference was made in Received 18 pieces of correspondence (comment sheets at the meeting and after; emails). The written comments were very similar to verbal comments made at the information session. They are summarized below. Note that some comments to certain questions have categorized in more appropriate summaries in the discussion below.

- A copy of the public notice is attached.
- A copy of the information panels is attached.
- A blank copy of the 2-sided comment sheet is attached.

Q1: Your Interest?

Most responses, where interest was indicated, were from people living on Gabriola—a few indicated they were located nearby to the terminal. Most responses were from people that indicated they were or had been frequent ferry users (regularly, once a week, twice a week, once every two weeks, etc.) by either car or as foot passengers.

Q2: Official Community Plan Comments

  General
  - Strongly in favour, fully support, long overdue,
  - OK, seems reasonable, good luck with it, no concerns, good as far as it goes?

  Specific
  - Concern over ‘optimization’ wording that gives more ‘power’ to BC Ferries
  - Changes the relationship between residents and BC Ferries—which removes specific points of concern from dialogue between parties

Q3: Land Use Bylaw Comments

  General
  - A straight forward change with minimal delays/red tape
  - Fully support, long overdue
  - OK, seems reasonable, no concerns, agree, fine
Specific
• Wonder why alter WC3 as opposed to split zone?

Q4: Terminal Development Plan Comments

General
• Fully support, get on with it
• Seems like a very positive improvement and modernization
• Great planned improvement

Specific: Impacts on Nearby Property
• Extending the water lot will extend into my view and lower my property values (concern for privacy, property value, peaceful living, a nuisance, disturbance, impact on view, noise, diesel small, artificial lighting)—bought by the terminal and don’t object to existing, just the proposal
• Expanded ferry schedule doubles the effects of ferry disruption on neighbour (ship engine, wash noise, excessive announcement noise, wave erosion, dock damage, light pollution, vibration—all which impact adjacent residents, marine animals and general wildlife (needs operational improvements, especially for announcements)

Specific: Traffic Safety
• Projections of annual trips are erroneous—should be higher with population growth
• Something should be done to increase safety getting on and off ferry for vehicles and pedestrians
• Appreciate the focus on pedestrian safety
• Ensure foot passengers can disembark from portside
• A separate passenger ramp
• Consider a passenger on and off ramp separate from the car ramp
• Congestion is an issue
• Roundabout is an interesting concept, worth a study, but some people are challenged driving them
• What about better access along Eastham?
• Maybe concrete barriers for lineups
• Pedestrians need a safe way to cross both Taylor Bay Road and Eastham (but, note this will hold up ferry traffic)
• Needs better separation of pedestrians and cars—traffic light?

Specific: Parking
• Only negative is lack of parking—how can this be solved?
• Worry that there isn’t enough parking?
• Looks good but don’t want to lose parking spaces—actually an increase is preferable
• Less parking for walk-ons than currently—will be a challenge for the infirm as option is off-site and uphill
• Needs more wheelchair parking spots
• A 3-land holding area will require extremely clear signage or staffing
• Any more customer parking?
• Hope the new waiting room goes through—desperately needed
Specific: Building and Landscape
- Benefits to be had by including a coffee shop
- Butterfly roof looks nicest
- “goats on the roof” for the green option?
- Bioswales look a bit small
- Bench area is nice, but would also like outdoor seating areas for those waiting to be picked up
- Need an area for children to play while waiting (suggested a structure)

Specific: Operations
- Seniors subsidy should be rationalized (not in rush hour, etc.)
- Vehicle lengths to be monitored—charge more for longer vehicles
- Use compressed natural gas for the fuel source
- Charge only for the vehicle; would free foot passengers mean fewer vehicles?
- Use time of day pricing
- 5:25 AM sailing is necessary to be able to get to 6:30 at Departure Bay
- Need display for ‘ferry out of commission’
- Drinking water on the ferry
- Address fire procedures on the ferry
- Purchase a second ferry
- Use both Duke Point and Nanaimo terminals
- Await the schedule for the replacement ferries
- Reduce ferry speeds

Specific: RDN Dock
- What about water taxi access to the RDN dock?
- Consider moving the RDN dock to the other side of the ferry
- What about an allowance for a water taxi?

Q5: Other Comments
- Option A for fill looks great—Option B extends too far out
- There are eagle nests along the Taylor Bay corridor that need protection.

Q2: Public Session Comments
- Yes, yes, yes—communication is always important, yes it was helpful
- Yes! Very helpful. Keep up the good work!
- Would have preferred a panel discussion with Q&A
- Would have preferred a panel and question and answer format
- I need to talk to a planner!
- This offered additional information for ongoing process
- Wish you luck and are looking forward to what comes next
- Very helpful. Keep it moving!!
- I am requesting a meeting with BC Ferries management staff to answer my questions
Sample Photos Taken During Public Info Session