Falaise Community Association

Growing a stronger community together

SCAN Special Meeting with MLAs– November 3, 2021

Guest panelists:
Mayor Fred Haynes (Saanich BC)
Honorable Rob Fleming (MLA) Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
Honorable Lana Popham (MLA) Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Honorable Murray Rankin (MLA) Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

Open Forum with Mayor Haynes (7:00 – 7:30 pm)

1. Panama Flats – community wants it preserved as natural habitat as opposed to agriculture. The land itself is not economically viable for agricultural use.
2. Raymond Street development – will be put forward as Metis Nation housing including a daycare. Still needs to go through zoning.
3. Blenkinsop Valley farmers are adversely impacted by deer and geese and request some assistance in controlling this issue. A secondary issue brought forward was housing for farm workers. A model which allows bunkhouse style housing or garden suites is being explored.
4. Residents in the Mount Tolmie Hospital area are expressing huge safety and property concerns due to the hospital now being used a homeless shelter. Saanich is currently working with the community association and representatives from BC Housing, VIHA, and Saanich Police to lobby for a complex care facility to alleviate the situation. Other options are also being explored.
5. Saanich is hiring three additional bylaw officers to work on traffic and parking concerns.
6. Saanich's Standing Committee on the Citizens' Assembly is a long way away from completing its work on amalgamation. There is no work being done currently on the possibility of creating a single police force within Greater Victoria.

Open questions to all MLAs (7:30 – 8:15)

1. Climate change
    a) Fleming: BC is leading in electric vehicle sales. By 2030, 90% of vehicles will be zero emission. 40% of carbon emissions come from transportation. Victoria is moving to electric buses. Next goal is to work on solutions for heavy duty vehicles (hydrogen fuel cells, electric).
    b) Rankin: CRD has created a well-thought-out new Climate Change plan.
    c) Popham: need to promote investments in active transportation (cycling, pedestrian). Agriculture is responsible for 4 – 5% carbon emissions largely due to transportation. Her ministry has been focussing on increasing access

to local food supply. Farmers are suffering from climate change and pandemic impacts.

2. Housing
    a) Rankin: BC's Affordable Housing Plan is a ten-year roadmap to alleviate the affordable housing crisis. The Foreign Buyers tax has had an impact (4% in 2018 vs 1.3% in 2021) and opened some housing options.
    b) Popham: Some ALR owners are not actively farming. ALR now allows small additional home to be built on ALR land (900 square foot home).
    c) Fleming: Pandemic has increased the price of real estate despite the speculation tax which unlocked additional homes for rent. New Zealand has banned single family addresses in some high housing needs areas. This may be where we need to go eventually. We need increased density.
3. Community Solutions for Mount Tolmie neighbourhood
    a) Rankin: We need more supportive housing / need to put roofs over people's heads to alleviate some stressors
    b) Popham: Saanich is currently trying to find locations to accommodate supportive housing.
    c) Fleming: The problem started with the closing of institutes such as Riverview without adequate supports in place. We need a medical support model of supportive housing for more complex cases.

Questions for Ministers re their portfolios (8:15 – 9:00 pm)

1. Hon. Rob Fleming- how do you plan to lead us to a less car-dependent future?
    a) There are active transportation grants available to make our communities more pedestrian friendly.
    b) The greatest need is to reduce vehicle traffic.
    c) Important to increase and improve rapid transit options and bus access (South Island Transportation Strategy 2019)
    d) The problem with reactivating the E and N corridor is that it misses many key destinations (e.g. hospitals, malls, downtown Victoria) and will carry few passengers.
2. Hon. Murray Rankin – In partnership with the Indigenous Community and the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty, what steps are being taken to ensure a strong support system is available for indigenous peoples coming out of the justice system?
    a) There is continual monitoring of the data to ensure current policies are helping to reduce the disproportionate numbers of indigenous people incarcerated.
    b) We need courts for indigenous people that will meet their cultural and specific needs.
    c) There is currently an initiative to consider the life story of the indigenous person going through the court system.
3. Hon. Lana Popham – The spectre of climate change and the effects of COVID on supply networks has increased concerns about food security in our area. Does your government have plans to ensure that residents have a consistent supply of healthy food?

a) Grow BC, Buy BC, Feed BC : several initiatives to assist farmers
b) Currently there are on-going projects to reduce the negative impact of deer on crops in Central Saanich
c) BC has a Land Matching program which matches landowners with people who wish to farm.
d) The Tech-Transfer program is effective in increasing numbers of pollinators (bees).
e) There are pilots of BC Network Food Hubs which allow farmers to process food at a common facility. Central Saanich is currently looking at this model.
f) Encouragement for BC foods to be served whenever possible in institutions such as hospitals (now 30% local foods) and post-secondary institutions (now 50% local foods) – significant increase in last two years.

Final questions directed toward Hon. Rob Fleming:

1. Regarding lack of follow through to promises given when the McKenzie interchange was approved.
   a) Marigold area was promised trees and effective noise mitigation but received neither.
   b) The funds slated for this ended up being diverted to protect Colquitz Creek.
   c) Minister Fleming to set up a meeting with the CA to look at this site.
2. Regarding continuing safety concerns at the Sayward / Pat Bay Highway intersection.
   a) Request for a left turn lane for Sayward going south toward Victoria.
   b) CA will contact Minister Fleming with further details.