



AREA H RATE PAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

BY EMAIL:

Regional District of Nanaimo
Board of Directors
6300 Hammond Bay Road
Nanaimo British Columbia V9T 6N2

June 25, 2018

**Regular Board Meeting – June 26, 2018 - 5.1.8 Zoning Amendment Application No. PL2018-013
Pitt Road, Electoral Area ‘H’ - Amendment Bylaw 500.420, 2018
Requested Action with Reasons**

Dear Directors:

Please include this letter on the agenda for your consideration of Agenda 5.1.8 Zoning Amendment Application No. PL2018-013 Pitt Road, Electoral Area ‘H’ - Amendment Bylaw 500.420, 2018 regarding the proposed Bowser Sewage Treatment Plant.

Requested Action:

The Board of the Regional District of Nanaimo not proceed with the Amendment Bylaw readings and public hearing.

Reasons:

- **Area H Residents have overwhelmingly said NO** to a zoning amendment for a sewage treatment plant that disposes of toxic effluent residuals into the Strait of Georgia marine environment and will likely cause odour problems (see page 235 - Attachment 4 - Proposed Building Elevations - Detail (Page 2 of 2) SBR open pit design)
- **The Staff Report is incomplete and biased:**

The Staff Report evades informing the Board of the public consultation implications from the Public Information Meeting (PIM) held May 16, 2018 regarding rezoning which had approximately 175 members of the public attend with 93 written submissions received in relation to the PIM. Only two out of 175 attendees supported the amendment (Dick Stubbs 6920 W Island Hwy - Bowser Water District & Wayne Pritchard 2505 Gainsburg Road Bowser). Of the 93 written submissions no one supported the amendment! **That about 99% opposed to the zoning amendment. We hope you are listening!**

The Staff Report is biased since it recommends That “Regional District of Nanaimo Land Use and Subdivision Amendment Bylaw No. 500.420, 2018”, be introduced and read two times despite overwhelming public opposition. The Staff Report states that “The proposed wastewater treatment facility will help support the 2016 – 2020 Board Strategic Plans focus to provide service and organizational excellence and economic health by funding infrastructure in support of RDN core services and fostering economic development”. This rationale ignores the PIM

outcome and abandons environmental and human health protection for economic imperatives.

The Staff Report may be incomplete since financial implications related to the Board 2018-2022 Financial Plan of extending the proposed marine disposal pipeline and outfall (part of the proposed Bowser Village Sewer Service) out a further 400 meters has not been discussed nor provided for RDN Board consideration.

- **During the PIM** Kari – Bowser – asked the Chair how he thought the people felt about the outfall. The Chair answered the people in attendance at this meeting were opposed. We remain puzzled why our Director seems to not be communicating Area H residents opposition to the Board.
- **Better treatment with on land disposal is feasible:** During the PIM “An unidentified speaker – asked if there was suitable land or if it had to do with expense? Expressed that didn’t want outfall and that septic are sufficient. Sean De Pol answered that there is suitable land, but it is not big enough for the long term plans of the Village Centre”. This is apparently not the full story.

We note that in the Chatwin Engineering Bowser Sewage feasibility Study (Appendix 1 Bowser Village – Ground Discharge Reconnaissance Memo Trax Development Ltd February 01, 2011, page 18 of 27) a phase 3 ground infiltration system (4000 cubic meters / day) would require 4 Ha of land (8 Ha with a reserve basin). Accordingly we urge the board to have a third party complete the feasibility work on areas 3 to 5 identified in the Trax Report and to look for other areas that would accommodate long term sustainable development. The cost estimates provided in that report suggest that it is likely a ground disposal option could be deployed within budget and perhaps without long term Bowser user loans.

Given the high levels of microplastics pollution in the Comox area in Baynes Sound and Lambert channel between Hornby and Denman Island (May 2018, Ecotoxicology Research Group, SFU <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0196005>); the inability of SBR treatment plants to filter all toxic chemicals and micro-particles and destroy, at proposed UV disinfection levels toxigenic pathogens; we urge the RDN Board to consider up-to-date land-based disposal. Further pollution of the Strait of Georgia is not an ethical option and flies in the face of the RDN's oceans plastic initiative...why not make a change - because you can?

Someday soon this project in its current form will be looked back on with bewilderment and the question will be asked “what were they thinking?”.

“What were they thinking” since we had a chance to do something different that could help to protect the environment and our ocean ecology but our local government did not value those things enough. Bowser could be on the map as a truly green and sustainable community where we could all be proud of living in an environmentally responsible way. Instead it will be just another RDN sewage hub.

Sincerely yours,

Bryan Holyk *Executive Director, AHRPRA*
<http://sosbowser.ca>