

To: JdF LUC Committee,
for April 17, 2018

From: [REDACTED]

April 13, 2018

Re: Proposed East Sooke OCP, CRD Bylaw 400

A lot of time, money, and effort have gone into the East Sooke OCP draft, Bylaw 4000. The next step is to see if the proposals in the document are consistent with the RGS. There are a lot of unquantified words in both documents. I think reconciling the OCP with the RGS is going to take a little more of our resources.

The RGS expresses the “aspirations” of the CRD for development in the regional district. Where the East Sooke OCP states that its metrics are consistent, there is very little evidence that the RGS concept of keeping rural areas rural matches the East Sooke citizens’ “aspiration” to reduce parcel size and increase residential density. The RGS is supposed to limit growth in rural areas, not to accelerate it. It provides Tables with recent census data and projections for population and the number of dwellings desired in the JdF EA in 2038. There is a great difference in the number of new dwellings proposed.

People on the citizens’ committees in Otter Point and East Sooke have agreed that all Rural A parcels should be considered for redevelopment as one hectare fee simple parcels.

Otter Point’s new 2014 OCP has provisions for the Settlement Area really similar to those suggested in Bylaw 4000. However, the overall configuration of several different designated areas resulted in a **reduction** of the number of potential parcels for development.

The Settlement Area in East Sooke is approximately 1300 ha. with 793 parcels proposed. Compare that to the Settlement Area of Otter Point which is approximately 3545 ha. and proposes 767 parcels.

East Sooke’s proposed configuration in Bylaw 4000 results in **310 additional** parcels over the number that would be permitted under Bylaw 3718. Bylaw 4000 states that only 42 new dwellings will be required to meet the residential needs in East Sooke to the year 2024, projecting on the present rate of growth.

As discussed in the OCPs, there are many aspects to land use planning. However, managing the number and location of residences is the key to balancing all the other considerations.

For East Sooke, I recommend keeping the description of the Settlement Area designation pretty much as it is in CRD Bylaw 3718. This allows undeveloped Rural A parcels to go down to 2 ha. parcels. Some procedure to allow existing stratas to dissolve to fee simple parcels might also be considered.

Instead of a desired parcel size “greater than two hectares” the OCP could specify “a parcel of two hectares or greater” to match the current RR-3 zoning. Also, where there are existing residences on a Rural A property subdivided as a strata, some provision could be made for owners to go to fee simple parcels if the strata is dissolved.

Heather Phillips

Note: I have questions about some of the metrics.

1. The Statistics Canada Census Profile for the CRD in 2016 shows the average family size for the whole of the CRD, for Langford, and for Sooke at 2.5. For the JdF EA, the figure is 2.3. Bylaw 4000 suggests the average family in East Sooke is 2.7 people. This seems to be based on the 2011 census figure for the whole of the CRD.

If each of the 660 houses shown for 2016 on Table 6 (page 51) of Bylaw 4000 matched an average family of 2.3 people, the population of East Sooke in 2016 would have been 1518 people. If the families were 2.7 people, there would have been 1782 people.

Table 5 (page 49) Bylaw 4000 suggests a projected population of 1470 in 2014. Elsewhere, data extracted from the 2016 census suggests a population of 1410. That would suggest an average of 1.7 people in each house.

2. In Bylaw 3718, Table 4 (page 30) shows the Settlement Area as 1364.1 ha. (This includes the Settlement Containment Area of 529.2 ha., where parcels in the one hectare range are contemplated.)

In Bylaw 4000, Table 7 (page 55) shows the Settlement Area at 1332.12 ha. The difference is 32 ha. If these hectares have really been overlooked in the calculations, the number of new parcels within the proposed Settlement Area LUD would be 342 rather than 310.

3. The description of provision for multiple dwellings on a single parcel in the Rural A zone on page 52 that says five dwelling units are permitted in a “four on ten” strata development does not seem accurate. The zone allows four dwelling units. I believe the intention for number of dwelling units has been misunderstood or misstated elsewhere in planning documents.

Also, most of the one hectare parcels proposed would be permitted two dwelling units. Although building suites is not a present trend in East Sooke, it remains a future possibility.

4. CRD Bylaw 3718 describes the desired parcel size in the Settlement Area as “greater than” 2 ha. I think there was no desire for dedication of land or cash at time of subdivision and the wording was deliberate. However, the Rural Residential 3 zone allows minimum parcel size for subdivision of two hectares.

Instead of a desired parcel size “greater than two hectares” the OCP could specify “a parcel of two hectares or greater” to match the current RR-3 zoning.

Some of the discrepancies I have commented on may be attributed to the extended period over which the document was developed and the changes to available information over that period.