Cortes Island (Area I) Regional Director's Report

This spring seems colder and wetter than we've grown accustomed to in the past few years. Like most I look forward to some warmer, drier weather. Days that meet my expectations of spring have been few and far between and when they occur I revel in the sun and appreciate the hint of more to follow. But I must admit a warm evening while we walk the dog would be a welcome change. However, regardless the unseasonable cool weather spring is everywhere. New growth fills the empty spaces, grass needs mowing, blackberry and salmon berry vines have burst forth, herbs and asparagus are harvestable, and the magnolia has been in full bloom for several weeks. It's always important to appreciate the little things that lift our hearts.

OCP Review Public Meeting

On May 1, approximately 60 people gathered at Manson's Hall to partake in the kick-off of the Official Community Plan (OCP) Review. A pretty good turn out given we were competing with a hockey game! Of those present 75% had read the entire OCP bylaw. Carlos Felip, Manager of Community Services and Lisa Gallo, Planner, facilitated the meeting. Lisa presented a power point slide presentation explaining what an OCP is and an overview of the review process.

A lot of time was spent discussing how Steering Committees should be formed—whether they should be based on geographical location, current OCP policies or individual areas of interest. It was determined that these committees will be based around the three population areas: Manson's Landing (Manson's Lagoon, Hague Lake, through to the South Tip of Cortes), East Cortes (including Cortes Bay, Seaford, and Squirrel Cove), and Whaletown (from Thunder Road to Coulter Bay). This structure will help alleviate folks driving back and forth across the island. Maps showing these areas are available in the special Cortes OCP section found on the Regional District website: www.rdcs..bc.ca. If you weren't able to attend the meeting but would like your name added to one of the committees please contact Lisa Gallo at 1-800-331-6007 (email: lgallo@rdcs.bc.ca)

The work these Steering Committees will undertake also received significant discussion. The committees will decide where and how often to meet and choose people to fill necessary functionary positions (chair, recording secretary, and RD contact person.) They will gather information for baseline studies and review the current OCP to determine what's good and if anything needs to be added, deleted or changed. Each committee will focus on the entire island and document. The committee findings will be presented to the island in an open public meeting when summer has ended. ***These committees will not be drafting any policy.*** Regional District staff will supply the committees with the material and information the RD has and offer technical assistance as needed.

Please remember, this process is to review and update the OCP. It is a time for everyone to familiarize or refresh himself/herself with the document. The OCP bylaw states in **A Time for Reflection** as found in the Plan Objectives on page 2-5, that we are "to encourage local residents to express their comments on the Island's land use planning matters and the OCP's implementation" and we are "to review the plan periodically so that it may be adapted to changing social, economic, and environmental conditions." If

you have not yet read the OCP, please do. Each and every one of us should know what exactly the OCP says—don't rely on someone else's understanding of it. ***Community involvement is essential throughout the entire process. PLEASE GET INVOLVED!***

Feel free to contact me about this or any other concern at 935-6488 Monday through Friday 9:00 am to 4 pm. (No early morning, late night or weekend calls, please.) If you get the answering machine try my cell phone -- 202-6488. You can also email me at brijen@oberon.ark.com anytime.

Respectfully Submitted by Jenny Hiebert—Regional Director