

Pender Harbor Community Wellness Project

About three years ago, a local concerned taxpayer, mentioned that he had funds available to make town improvements but he only did it on condition that we had a long-term plan for the town—10 or 20 years—of what the community could look like. We're talking a lot of money.

Our now-president of the Chamber of Commerce, Ron Badley, took it upon himself to put together his own vision of what our town might look like. That vision was to have sidewalks and streetlights; public access and a small boat launch at the outlet of Lily Lake; there could be a sewage treatment plant which is necessary for any expansion of the downtown core; we could potentially put apartment housing on top of the Legion or on the vacant property behind the Oak Tree and IGA; move the firehall and paramedic facilities to the site of the old Fisheries building; a new multi use building at the site of the "rock quarry." The concept is for a quaint village look. Maybe all the buildings could have theme like some other areas of BC.

We often talk about doing little things here and there, but we need to have a vision of our town is going to grow and if we're going to have people come here that want to be here, that enjoy this community like all the people attending our Town Hall. While the SCRD provides some services, there are lots of issues that are beyond its mandates, like streetlights, sidewalks, gardens. Those aren't the SCRD tasks. They fall upon people like us. We don't have a town council to get things done. So we as PHARA put this on as a bit of a project to see if we could maybe spur some activity and get something started. It's a big dream, but if we don't dream, nothing will happen.

We need to have a vision to figure out what's missing in our community and to really figure out what you as the people that live here, what do you want to see in this town? Do you want to leave it the way it is? Do

you want to see change? Do you want to get bigger, smaller? Do you want to spread it out?

To all this, we need a town planner. Well, one day when out walking, I (Bill Charlton) ran into a neighbour's daughter, Maggy Spence, who just happened to be completing a Masters degree with UBC on a similar field as town planning. She agreed to help with a vision and she has been working on this for six or nine months now to develop a Pender Harbor Community Wellness Project. Community well-being can be defined as the social, economic, environmental, and cultural considerations as defined by community that brings the community together and allows it to thrive. And this grassroots strategy was defined by the community. Maggy's report is too detailed to include here, but the full study is posted on the phara.ca website.