



## **North Park Neighbourhood Association, monthly public meeting**

Thursday, February 20, 2020

7-9pm

Community Room at Save on Foods Memorial Arena

Approx. 30 participants (including 5 NPNA board members)

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### **Question 1: Complete Urban Villages - North Park Village**

#### **What do you love most about North Park Village today?**

- Love the light up crosswalks at Balmoral and North Park
- Love the diversity, friendliness, and affordability
- Love the small, unique businesses
  - Recognize that these are only there because of affordability of the neighbourhood
  - Would be a shame to lose small, unique businesses due to affordability
  - Chain stores would change the feel of North Park
- What happens to the businesses in North Park will be critical to neighbourhood feel
- Love the wide range of services
  - ie. Castle in the neighbourhood means NP residents don't need to drive to do small home repairs
  - Ie. Sands - not quite in North Park Village, but still fantastic community member, very generous with free space rentals
- Love the variety of fantastic employers in North Park
- Love public art
- Love compact feeling of village
- Love diverse businesses
- Love human scale - no highrises
- Love the variety of housing styles surrounding the village
- Love the 2 crosswalks!

#### **What would you like to see improved in North Park Village in the future?**

- Fewer empty storefronts
- What bylaws could address landlords that don't add to the community benefit?
- Would like to see more public art
- NP/Fernwood boundaries - half of our village isn't in North Park
- The pedestrian experience needs to be improved
  - Everything is walkable, but NP village needs traffic calming at corners (bulbing at corners, shorter distances to walk)

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- Another light up crosswalk at Cook and Mason is needed
  - NP Village needs more trees!
    - Value trees and maintain health of existing trees
    - Work with urban forest management staff to leaf out NP village
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## **Question 2: Connections and Mobility**

**Where do you love to walk or wheel in your neighbourhood? Why?**

- Like Vancouver Street for walking
- Like Central Park for walking

**Are there specific places in your neighbourhood where you find it difficult or uncomfortable to walk/wheel? Why?**

- On Pembroke, parking is only allowed on the South side, which leaves park users to unload their kids on the opposite side of the road from the park. Then they run into the road. Can this be switched?
- Can Playground Zone Speed Limits be imposed City wide? 30km/h
- Caledonia & Vancouver - drivers do not respect the stop sign. This is an awkward crossing.
- To make using a walker easier, there need to be consistent slopes on the sidewalks
- Hydro poles limit space on sidewalks (Quadra especially)
- It does not feel safe walking in front of Logan's when it is open (smoke, reduced sidewalk space, loud, generally feels unsafe)
- Quadra - a lot of people ride bicycles on the sidewalk, makes pedestrians feel unsafe
  - There is a lot of screaming, swearing, erratic behaviour that makes pedestrians feel unsafe at times
- Pembroke & Vancouver - unmarked crosswalk, high speed traffic, makes pedestrian crossing difficult
- Princess & Cook - this crosswalk needs to be a flashing one. Drivers are good during the day, but at night it is very unsafe to cross here.
- Queen & Cook - this intersection needs a zebra or flashing crosswalk
- Mason & Cook - flashing crosswalk needed
- Mason & Vancouver - flashing, and/or zebra crossing needed
- Cut through traffic on Mason has been increasing in speed and frequency
  - Also a high incidence of cars going in the wrong direction on Mason when they come off of Vancouver

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**Are there destinations you would like to access by foot, bike or another mobility device that are difficult to access? Why?**

- Cook Street does not feel safe walking down at night - would feel more safe with increased lighting
  - Better access is required from North NP to Galloping Goose
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### **Question 3: Public Spaces**

**What do you love about the public spaces in your community today?**

- Food Truck court beside Wellburns with beautiful murals!

**What are some things you'd like to be able to do in a park or public space that you can't do now?**

- Make use of Royal Athletic Park for free
  - RAP near Cook Street would be the ideal location for outdoor physical literacy location
  - Open up RAP! X 2
  - RAP is a public space that no one can access, that is also losing money.
  - Crystal Pool at RAP?
- Can there be more parklet spaces like the one at Cook & Mason?
- We need somewhere for dogs - a dog run, off leash area.

**Do you have ideas for enhancing existing or creating new public spaces, (including smaller scale community-led or 'quick win' ideas and larger scale City-led projects)?**

- More seating in Franklin Green Park!
- Water Park
- Better drainage in Central Park - perhaps a swale could be put in?
- Daylighting
- All neighbourhoods should have access to a well
- Seniors playground or play spaces - in addition the exercise equipment at Central Park
  - Seniors playgrounds have intergenerational play opportunities
- Bus stops - bus shelters could include public art by local artists
- To reduce litter, there need to be more garbages and cigarette butt disposals at all bus stops and intersections.

#### **\*BONUS RESPONSES\***

- Excessive noise due to fireworks and Coho Foghorn sound at Royal Athletic Park
  - Sound pollution

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## Question 4: The Big Picture

What is the one thing you love most about this area that you'd like to see enhanced in the future?

What are your top two big ideas to improve this area in the future?

- Affordable housing
  - The City needs to start a dialogue with aging homeowners, where the City can enter into a covenant with aging homeowners to sell their house to the City.
    - I.e. Bill sells his house to the City for an initial \$100,000 and then the City makes payments for the remainder of the sale price to Bill over a set number of years. Once Bill decides to leave the house, payments are complete, or Bill passes on, the house belongs to the City to use as affordable housing.
    - tax wavers on covenanted properties that rent suites for 30% of tenant's income
    - expedited process and grants for those building suites in their homes
- Mason Street Farm - concern about the future of the farm. How do we value this space?
  - How can the City start thinking about it's value to the neighbourhood?
- Can North Park establish a Heritage Revitalization Program/Heritage Protection Program
  - to protect the commercial and residential heritage building stock
  - Oak Bay is already doing this
- Business Revitalization Program for North Park Village (different from a business improvement area)
  - Incentivize businesses adding to community benefit
  - Without some incentives, not sure what will happen when long term businesses end
  - Taxes reflect what *could* be in a location, results in increasing building values and in higher taxes
    - Can the tax structure be changed so buildings are not taxed on potential value
    - If taxes are reasonable to maintain then long term, community oriented businesses are more likely to be located in North Park

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- City needs to start looking at the proportion of local vs. regional amenities and asking what is the burden and the benefit to the community?
  - Local: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Regional: Royal Athletic Park, Crystal Pool, Save on Foods Arena
- Protect our urban forest - forest canopy keeps us cool
  - Don't replace 100 ft. trees with 10 ft. trees
  - Incentivize turning lawns into food producing and pollinator gardens
- Cook (East side) - needs to be made more pedestrian friendly
- Walkability - any new development on Cook should:
  - increase pedestrian space on sidewalks
  - Add trees
  - Add gathering spaces
- Banner program - pairing with local adult and child artists
- Desire to not lose the character of North Park
  - DCAP covers a large portion of North Park
  - Policies to preserve uniqueness, incorporate smaller lots, infill housing.

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