



ROCKLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 5276, Station B, Victoria BC, V8R 6N4

Summer 2016 Newsletter

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Please share a copy of the RNA Newsletter with a neighbour.

COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

I understand that there are some folks who cheered when Victoria was globally rated as the #3 luxury housing market. Others cheer as Victoria's housing market is identified as an ideal location for foreign investment. Still others court buyers from Vancouver who wish to flee its overinflated housing market and the mass demolition of its neighbourhoods. Victoria has also been identified as Canada's third most expensive city to rent in.

Is anyone giving thought to the impact these forces will have on the housing stock in Victoria? Housing prices in the city had already soared and we now hear that offers over the asking price – sometimes in the amount of \$300,000 to \$400,000 - have become routine. What will the impact be on housing in a city where the rental vacancy rate hovers near zero and residents have the lowest average wage in the region?

Can we learn from the situation in Vancouver, which has been labeled a crisis, and bring in policies and practices

that might have, at the least, some moderating impact on the real estate market? In Vancouver neighbourhoods are vanishing as more than 1000 homes are demolished every year. Some neighbourhoods are described as ghost towns as long-time residents find themselves surround by empty lots, boarded up houses and unoccupied new homes

A group of residents brought this issue to the attention of City Council at a meeting in May. Concerns have been growing over the number of single- family homes that are being demolished in Victoria. Between 2014 and 2015 the number of single- family homes demolished in Victoria nearly tripled. Interest is growing in examining policies and incentives that would encourage the retention of existing homes. Perhaps consideration should be given to encouraging retention by reducing the size permitted for a replacement structure but allowing the existing building to have an addition. Not only is this desirable from an environmental point of view, as materials generated through demolition comprise the majority of materials filling our landfills, it also preserves neighbourhood character and a degree of market affordability as replacement dwellings are priced much higher than the existing dwelling. Population densification could be addressed through the addition of secondary suites and garden suites.

What has happened in Vancouver has been described by some as being akin to the plot of a dystopian science fiction novel. Some say that this kind of situation could never happen in Victoria. Think again. A recent article in The Globe and Mail encouraged Vancouver residents to relocate to Victoria where housing prices are so much lower. Foreign investment is being courted and international newspapers have reported on the alarming number of houses being shipped away from our region to locations where they are more valued for their character and quality of construction.

On June 9th, as part of the implementation of the Municipal Housing Strategy, Councillors Loveday, Isitt and myself brought a motion to Council requesting that staff report

back on actions that would preserve and improve both the supply of housing in the city and the affordability of housing.

Pamela Madoff,

Councillor, City of Victoria

Liaison to North Jubilee, South Jubilee and Rockland.

RAINWATER REWARDS PROGRAM APPLICATION DEADLINE

The first Stormwater Utility bills will be issued this fall.



Applications for the Rainwater Rewards Program are now being accepted, but the deadline is June 30th to ensure any reductions can be applied to the 2016 bill. If you have an existing project, you can qualify for a 10% ongoing reduction. In addition, new approved projects can tap in to a limited rebate fund on a first-come, first-served basis.

The City of Victoria Stormwater Specialist is available to help as you map out the method that might be suited best to your property and to help guide you through the Rainwater Rewards application process. Please email stormwater@victoria.ca with any questions or call 250.361.0443.

GOOD NEWS Greater Transparency

The City's PlaceSpeak has responded positively to our request for up-to-date information regarding house demolition permits and cutting permits for protected trees on private property. City technicians are currently working on providing access to this set of data.

As a result, we will have a heads-up before the bulldozers and the chain saws arrive.

If our character houses truly do create a "sense of place" in the neighbourhood (Official Community Plan) and significant trees truly have "importance to the community, including importance for heritage or landmark value or as wildlife habitat" (Tree Preservation Bylaw), we should have a chance to voice our objection when there are plans to remove them.

WELCOME TO THE BOARD



We are very happy to welcome Aimée Botje to the board of directors for Rockland! According to our bylaws, "The Directors may, at any time and from time to time, appoint a member as a Director to fill a vacancy in the Directors." She will serve on the board until the AGM in February.

Here's what Aimée has provided, by way of introduction: "Having lived on Rockland Avenue since the day I arrived in Victoria in 1974, I am well-rooted in this neighbourhood. I worked in the Provincial public service for 30+ years, held volunteer positions on the national executive of Amnesty International (10 years) and on the board of the local SPCA (3 years). My hobbies are travel, photography, gardening and bridge. History, architecture and the environment have shaped this place. As a member of the RNA Board and the Land Use Committee, I hope to contribute to preserving and enhancing it."

ROCKLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION'S INAUGURAL MOVIE NIGHT AT CRAIGDARROCH CASTLE

We are delighted to announce that the Rockland Neighbourhood Association (RNA) is hosting and sponsoring a movie event at Craigdarroch Castle in collaboration with Craigdarroch Castle and the Victoria Film Commission.

The movie event will begin at **approximately 9:15 on Saturday, August 13th**. This event will be advertised and is open to the general public. In the past, events of this nature have attracted a very large audience.

The movie, “*Ever After: A Cinderella Story*” is an enchanting movie and tells the “real” story of Cinderella. It is a refreshing take on the classic fairy tale, starring Drew Barrymore and Angelica Houston.

The movie will commence at approximately 9:15 and RNA members and their families can arrive anytime after 7:00 pm on August 13 to set up with your chairs/blankets. Please note: a VIP roped off area will be in place for active RNA Members and guests and volunteers of Craigdarroch Castle.

If you wish to bring snacks and non-alcoholic beverages, you are welcome to do so. However, please note that Craigdarroch Castle has kindly offered to keep their gift shop open the night of the movie event so there will be snacks and beverages available for purchase.

Craigdarroch Castle will also have a volunteer on site to assist with parking needs. Please note: Parking in the area will be very limited; please carpool, walk or arrange drop-offs to/from the event if possible.

Any questions concerning the event can be directed to our Events Coordinator Marc Hunter at dal-hunter1@gmail.com.

Please note: If you are not an active RNA member but would like to become one, we will have a table set up at the event for Rockland members to sign up. The cost for membership for one year to RNA is \$10 pp. The RNA (<http://www.rockland.bc.ca/>) works to promote and protect a unique urban environment in Victoria, British Columbia. **Membership to the RNA is limited to residents of Rockland only.**

Our sincere thanks in particular to John Hughes at Craigdarroch Castle for their hospitality and financial support towards the event and to Kathy Kay at the Victoria Film Commission for their support in setting up the logistics associated with the movie.

This promises to be a fun and magical evening at the Castle for you and your friends and family. We hope you are able to join us!

Marc Hunter

RNA Social Director

THE BLUE RIBBON

WHAT THE DERBY IS to the racing world! What the MARATHON is to the athlete! such is "CRAIGDARROCH" to the man who desires an absolutely perfect site for his residence or the sound investment of his money!! A perfect residential site must possess—Scenic Grandeur—Accessibility—Fertile Soil—Reasonable Privacy—and, above all—Fresh Air, in liberal but not boisterous supply. "CRAIGDARROCH" has these essentials, in perfection. It commands, absolutely, a panorama of scenic grandeur which it would be difficult to equal in any part of the wide world; its accessibility is remarkable, no other residential site possessing the other attributes mentioned, is in such close proximity to a well-equipped capital city and seaport; its soil is highly productive; it has an unlimited, ever-moving supply of the purest and most invigorating atmosphere—the pure air of the Pacific, uncontaminated and undiluted; it was the domain of a merchant prince, who saw to it, that his residence and demesne had the immense advantage of privacy from slatternly side street and shack. ALL these IMMENSE ADVANTAGES make "CRAIGDARROCH" the "Blue Ribbon" of the residential real estate world—furthermore, they represent a gilt-edged and most profitable investment to the man who has the wisdom to select and purchase his lots now; whilst the prices are considerably under their real value, in order to promptly close up this estate. Plans, particulars and prices of lots are now in the hands of all Victoria Real Estate Agents or in the Office on the Estate "Craigdarroch," Fort Street and Rockland Avenue, Victoria, B. C. Phone 1915.

FIGURE OUT

what the

**Scenic
Beauty**

of

"Craigdarroch"

will be worth in a few
years' time

THEN SEE HOW
MODERATE

the

PRICES

are

TODAY

provided you act PROMPTLY!

A Rough Snapshot



Sylvan Driveway in "Craigdarroch."

FIGURE OUT

what the

Accessibility

of

**"Craigdarroch"
Park**

will be worth in a few
years' time

THEN SEE HOW
MODERATE

the

PRICES

are

TODAY

but Remember! Others are BUYING.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TODAY

Take the Oak Bay or Willows car, a few minutes' ride, will land you at the entrance, or, it is within EASY walking distance. THEN

See For Yourself

the tremendous natural advantages possessed by this most —

MAGNIFICENT SUBDIVISION

In the cool of the evening, figure out, what those advantages will be worth in few years' time, then ACT. REMEMBER others are BUYING.

Rather than write about a specific house this issue, I thought it might be fun to compare real estate listings for Rockland properties as seen through advertising. With the hot real estate market now, properties are often selling well over their asking price and recently a firm tried a live auction to sell a property.

Although only one serious bidder came to the auction for the property at 906 Pemberton Road, a potential sale is being negotiated with a local buyer and, according to a recent newspaper article, the price has gone up \$202,000 to \$2.2 million.

A recent description of the property lauds its features: "OPEN HOUSE SAT 2-4 PM. Storied architect Samuel Maclure's Tudor Revival features his signature porte cochere, classic 1/2 timbering & stone finish exterior with English Arts & Crafts gardenscape. At over 7200 sf, the six bed & six bath floor plan is expansive & functional. Complete with 32 ft ballroom, media/billiards room, wet bar, wine cellar & gourmet kitchen with walk-in chef's pantry. Tasteful restorations have married timeless beauty with modern luxury. History pulses with ornate fireplaces, detailed ceilings, leaded stained glass & carved feature staircase. As part of a strata, this heritage house offers refined Victorian living with the comfort of strata amenities." A review of other listings in the Rockland area, reveals phrases like "prestigious," "opulent," "desirable," and often mention the ability to walk to town.

Now, think back to 1909 when the Craigdarroch lands, not far away, were being offered for sale. The full page ad on the previous page of this newsletter was published on June 19th and uses somewhat different words to describe the building lots, but the meaning is the same.

The text shown at the top of the ad is transcribed here for easy reading.

'WHAT THE DERBY IS to the racing world! What the MARATHON is to the athlete, such is "CRAIGDARROCH" to the man who desires an absolutely perfect site for his residence or the sound investment of his money!! A perfect residential site may possess—Scenic Grandeur—Accessibility—Fertile Soil—Reasonable Privacy—and above all—Fresh Air, in liberal but not boisterous supply.

"CRAIGDARROCH" has these essentials, in perfection. It commands, absolutely, a panorama of scenic grandeur which it would be difficult to equal in any part of the wide world: its accessibility is remarkable, no other residential site possessing the other attributes mentioned, is in such close proximity to a well-equipped capital city - and seaport: its soil is highly productive; it has an unlimited, ever-moving supply of the purest and most invigorating atmosphere—the pure air the Pacific. uncontaminated and undiluted. It was the domain of a merchant prince who saw to it that his residence and demesne had the immense advantage of privacy from slatternly side street and shack. ALL these IMMENSE ADVANTAGES make CRAIGDARROCH the "Blue Ribbon" of the residential real estate world—furthermore, they represent a gilt-edged and most profitable investment to the man who has the wisdom to select and purchase his lots now: whilst the prices are considerably under their real value, in order to promptly close up this estate. Plans, particulars and prices of lots are now in the hands of all Victoria Real Estate Agents, or in the Office on the Estate "Craigdarroch, Fort Street and Rockland Avenue, Victoria, B. C. Phone 1915.

FIGURE OUT what the Scenic Beauty of "Craigdarroch" will be worth in a few years' time THEN SEE HOW MODERATE the PRICES are TODAY provided you act PROMPTLY!

FIGURE OUT what the Accessibility of "Craigdarroch " Park will be worth in a few years' time THEN SEE HOW MODERATE the PRICES are TODAY but Remember, Others are BUYING. '

Note the extensive use of capital letters - their use today implies shouting on social media - and the desire to get purchasers lined up now to beat the rush.

One thing that has not changed in all the years, is the mention of access via transit (streetcar then, bus now) or walking. Rockland is still very much a walkable neighbourhood and that is what makes it desirable. While the language may be a bit more flowery and definitely slanted to the male purchaser in 1909, the message is the same. When you walk down Craigdarroch Road and Joan Crescent, think about those wise folks who purchased and built early. Rockland is sill the place to live!

THANK YOU FOR BEING OF EVEN MORE SERVICE!

We are grateful to John Edwards for stepping up to replace Norm Clark as Treasurer. As you know, John is one of the directors on the board. You may not have known that he is also the treasurer of both the Hallmark Heritage Society and the Heritage Building Foundation of the Hallmark Society. John will serve as Treasurer until the AGM in February. Thank you so much, John!

We are also relieved to fill our vacant Vice-President position with someone who served very well in that position in the recent past. Bob June will replace Ian Mayhill as Vice-President until the AGM. Thank you very much, Bob! We really appreciate your willingness to add this responsibility to the work load you already carry as Land-Use chair.

ROCKLAND-WIDE YARD SALES AUGUST 20TH



The fifth annual Rockland-wide Yard Sales event is scheduled for August 20th, 2016. For more information, or to register, send a note to Dave Clark: environment@rockland.bc.ca

You can set up in your own yard, or use the tables that the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria will again set up on their Moss Street lawn.

We will collect the addresses of participants up until the day before the sale at which time we will “publish” the list of participating addresses in the Times-Colonist, on Craig’s List and on Used Victoria.

FOLLOW YOUR ASSOCIATION ON FACEBOOK

Do you want to know what is happening in Rockland on a regular basis? Follow our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Rockland-Neighbourhood-Association-444293285610322/?fref=ts>. The

most recent discussions have been about buildings that are no longer there. It is quite enlightening to see the before and after photos of different sites around the neighbourhood.



RNA BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2015-2016

President: Janet Simpson
Vice President: Bob June
Secretary: Susan Simpson
Treasurer: John Edwards
Directors: Aimée Botje
Lawrence Bortoluzzi
David Clark
Vanessa Dingley
Marc Hunter
David McWalter
Stephen Roughley

RNA Email Server List

Would you like to hear more about events in Rockland? Please join the neighbours list through the RNA website at www.rockland.bc.ca.

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The Rockland Neighbourhood Association Newsletter is published during the year. It is distributed electronically to all members. Submissions from members on issues of interest are always accepted and photographs are particularly welcome. **Deadline for the next newsletter is October 15, 2016.** All submissions should be sent to Newsletter Editor, Helen Edwards at heritagelady@gmail.com

CAN WE HELP YOU?

Is there a building in Rockland that you would like to know more about? Do you have an old photo that needs identification? Let me know at heritagelady@gmail.com and I will see what I can find.