



August/September 2008 Newsletter

Board of Directors

Valerie Nicol, Chair
Mark Buchanan, Vice-Chair
Veronica Scott, Secretary
Debbie Williams, Treasurer

Directors:

Pam Alcorn
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Anne Murray
Gifty Serbeh-Dunn
Candace Spilsbury
Joanna Winter

Strategic Plan Goals 2008/2009

- Affordable Housing
- Child Care Strategy
- Status of the Community Update
- Implications of Regional Growth
- Cross Cultural Relationships

Message from the Chair

On behalf of the Board of Social Planning Cowichan, I would like to thank Candace Spilsbury for her outstanding contribution to our organization. In light of her decision to pursue a position as a school trustee, Candace is stepping down as board chair to become a board member.

Candace was a founding member of Social Planning Cowichan and a committed presence in the organization since its inception five years ago. She has always been concerned that we have board representation and has been consistent in her efforts to recruit board members from all over the Cowichan region.

Candace has also been successful securing funding for numerous initiatives such as the Status of the Community reports, the report on Childcare and the Affordable Housing study. She spearheaded the move to build the new housing resource centre, Warmland House. Candace has publicly championed these issues by chairing sub-committees, speaking to various provincial Ministries and by maintaining regular contact with the media.

Candace's warm, respectful style and inclusive, collaborative approach to issues are what we have come to value most about her. While we are sorry to have lost Candace as chair, we are delighted that she is continuing her community involvement as an SPC board member and school trustee.

Valerie Nicol
Chair Social Planning Cowichan

Social Planning Cowichan's Annual General Board Meeting

Social Planning Cowichan is pleased to announce the addition of two new members to our Board of Directors, Pam Alcorn and Veronica Scott. In addition the Board is pleased to announce the new structure of our Executive: Valerie Nicol - New Board Chair, Mark Buchanan – New Vice Chair, Veronica Scott – Secretary, Debbie Williams - Treasurer

Regional Affordable Housing Directorate Update

The Regional Affordable Housing Directorate met last on September 18th, 2008. The group reviewed research prepared for the summer by research assistant, Kim Farris and talked about next steps.

In addition, a definition of affordable housing was adopted by the group as follows:

Affordable housing is safe, secure, stable, accessible living environment that allows a person to live within their income level, and maintain a healthy quality of life.

Affordable housing adequately suits the needs of low and moderate income households at costs below those generally found in the local Cowichan Valley market. It may take a number of forms that exist along a continuum – from emergency shelters, to transitional housing, to non-market rental (also known as social or subsidized housing), to formal and informal rental, and ending with affordable home ownership.

For housing to be affordable a household should not spend more than 30 percent of gross income on shelter costs. The highest priority for affordable housing is for the homeless, marginally housed and “core needs households” that spend more than 50 percent of their income on shelter costs.

In December, the Directorate will hear from guest speaker John Horn, Social Planner for Nanaimo. John will give a history of affordable housing issues in Nanaimo and an update on the situation in Nanaimo, as it exists presently.

Regional Child Care Task Force Update

After taking a break for the summer, the Regional Child Care Task Force met on September 15th. The group discussed issues around staff training and staff recruitment for Early Childhood Educators.

The group welcomed guest Jamie Covey, Instructor, ECE Vancouver Island University’s Duncan Campus. Jamie spoke to the Task Force about the current situation of training in Early Childhood Education at the university

A response was received from Minister Linda Reid to a letter sent by Social Planning Cowichan in regards to Early Childhood Education issues. This response was passed to the Regional Child Care Task Force and the group is planning to review at their next meeting on November 10th, 2008.

This newsletter is produced by-monthly by Social Planning Cowichan. For more information contact Michelle Nowzek at info@socialplanningcowichan.org or 250-746-1004 ext.250

Implications of Regional Growth

This summer, with the help from funding through Service Canada, Social Planning Cowichan was able to complete the research required to publish Implications of Regional Growth in Cowichan: Part One. The report is the first in a planned series around Implications of Regional Growth.

This first report contains information on population projections prepared by Social Planning Cowichan for the Cowichan Region to the year 2036. Based on the growth of Seniors aged 75+, this first report centered around Seniors complex residential health care and quality of life in these settings.

Future reports in the series are expected to take a look at services and supports for Seniors in the Cowichan Region and the impact these are having in our communities.

Cross Cultural Relationships

Social Planning Cowichan has been chosen as the agency to continue with the NAIG Social Legacy Visioning process. Social Planning Cowichan has set cultural relationships as a goal for our work plan in 2008/2009.

It is Social Planning Cowichan’s intention with this initiative to work with the many organizations that are involved in building and strengthening cross-cultural relationships in our community to carry on the social legacy of the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG).

A sub-committee of Social Planning Cowichan Board members is meeting October 28th, 2008 to discuss this initiative.