

SD61 to review role of school liaison officers

Shalu Mehta
News Staff

The Greater Victoria School Board will review the role police liaison officers play in schools.

An approved motion put forward at the June 26 board meeting will see a committee take on discussions with school community members about the liaison officer program and develop recommendations on potential changes.

The discussions would be with people including, but not limited to, racialized, Indigenous and LGBTQ staff, parents and students. The motion passed with the amendment that a separate committee undertake the task of reviewing the program and report back to the board.

A motion to curb the police liaison program while the review is underway was voted down during the June 26 meeting, but the review will still go ahead.

Two community members spoke in support of the program at a committee meeting June 22.

Jennifer Chambers is a Greater Victoria Teachers' Association (GVTA) member who has been a teacher for more than 20 years at SD61. She has seen first hand that officers approach issues with training other officers don't receive. "They commit to the long-term work of building relationships and trust," Chambers said.

The other supporter was Mia

Golden, who is part of the Mobile Youth Services Team (MYST) which is comprised of two counselors and one police officer. The team supports youth and families at risk of gang involvement and sex trafficking. Golden said she has seen the risk to students rise over the past five years with increasing social media and phone use. Building a trusting relationship with police officers is vital for youth at risk, Golden said.

In 2018, the Victoria Police Department pulled school liaison officers so they could be transferred to frontline work after VicPD's budget request for six more officers was denied. The 2020 VicPD budget shows plans to possibly reinstate liaison officers in schools.

Both Golden and Chambers said not having school liaison officers has been detrimental to students, overwhelming MYST with calls and not providing the best quality responses to situations with students. Without trained liaison officers, front line officers with different training are called in more frequently, leading to a reactive rather than proactive response, Chambers said.

"We need to continue to work with community partners in creating wraparound interdisciplinary supports for vulnerable populations," Chambers said. "And school liaison officers are important."

GVTA president Winona Waldron said the association encourages SD61 to review the role of liaison

officers in schools and seek input from staff and Black, Indigenous and people of colour students.

"Recent events have shone a light on institutional racism and in particular, in policing. We need to acknowledge it's

not just in policing and that it's seen in health care and our own structures in education."



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

NOTICE OF WAIVED PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Council of the Township of Esquimalt has waived the holding of a public hearing for Zoning Bylaw, 1992, No. 2050, Amendment Bylaw No. 2994, in accordance with Section 464(2) and 467 of the *Local Government Act*. The *Local Government Act* does not require the holding of a public hearing when zoning bylaw amendments are consistent with the municipality's Official Community Plan.

The Municipal Council will consider reading Amendment Bylaw No. 2994 a third time at the Regular Meeting of Council commencing at 7 p.m., Monday, July 6, 2020 in the Council Chambers, Esquimalt Municipal Hall, 1229 Esquimalt Road, Esquimalt B.C.

Zoning Bylaw, 1992, No. 2050, Amendment Bylaw No. 2994 provides for a change in the zoning designation of 1048 Tillicum Road (legal description below) from Two Family Residential [RD-1] to Comprehensive Development District No. 132 [CD No. 132].

The general purpose of this change in zoning is to allow five new strata townhouse residences, to be constructed in two buildings on the subject property. The comprehensive development zone is written with specific permitted uses, density, lot coverage, setbacks, parking, and height regulations for this proposal.

Site Location:



Description of Land:

1048 Tillicum Road: Legal Description: Lot D Section 10, Esquimalt District, Plan 11683 [PID 005-010-390]

AND FURTHERMORE TAKE NOTICE that copies of the proposed bylaws and relevant background documents may be inspected, and other information related to this application may be reviewed from June 22, 2020 until July 6, 2020:

- online, by visiting the municipal website at www.esquimalt.ca/PublicHearing; or
- upon request, at Municipal Hall, 1229 Esquimalt Road, Esquimalt, B.C., by booking an appointment either by emailing Trevor Parkes, Senior Planner at trevor.parkes@esquimalt.ca or contacting Development Services staff via phone at 250-414-7103.

RACHEL DUMAS
CORPORATE OFFICER

Suspect sought in downtown hate crime

Victoria police are looking for a suspect after a hate crime in downtown Victoria.

Police were called to the 1300-block of Douglas Street around 1 a.m. on June 24 for a report of an assault with a weapon. When they arrived, officers found a man with non-life-threatening injuries. He was transported to hospital for treatment.

Witnesses said a man unknown to the victim had assaulted him and hit him over the head with a bottle

while reportedly yelling derogatory terms about the victim's sexual orientation.

The suspect fled the area with a small group and police were unable to locate him despite searching the area. The suspect is described as a Caucasian man with blonde hair. He was wearing a black baseball hat, grey hoodie and black pants. He was captured on surveillance video.

Anyone with information on the suspect or incident is asked to call VicPD at 250-995-7654, ext. 1.



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