

----- Original Message -----

Subject:Re: Public Inquiries - Infrastructure Grant Application

Date:Tue, 03 Jun 2008 23:53:46 -0700

From:Lori Waters <lori@watersbiomedical.com>

Reply-To:lori@watersbiomedical.com

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To:Central Saanich Council <council@csaanich.ca>, Gary Nason
<GNason@csaanich.ca>, Sara Ribeiro <Sara.Ribeiro@csaanich.ca>

Dear Mayor Mar, and Members of Council, Mr. Nason, and Miss Ribiero,

Thank you for following up, and I appreciate the offer for Engineering Staff to meet with me next week - Monday or Tuesday would work well for me, and I hope my laryngitis will be gone by then, because I do have many questions.

My initial questions are as follows:

- **Who prepared the grant application and decided which reports were to be included as supporting documentation?**
It seems curious that the District would have included reports with the infrastructure grant application that it had paid specifically to debunk. These include the first Bradbury Report and the Giles report (commissioned by the waterline proponents), found by the District to be factually and methodologically flawed on a number of levels.
- **Is there a specific reason why reports were included that the District had paid to have debunked, and that reports containing corrections were *not* included? For example, why was the Districts corrective response (July) to the first Bradbury Report not included?**
As you may be aware, this later report was supervised by CRD health officers, Senanus residents, and District staff and Water Advisory Task Force members, and was deemed by all parties to be correct, yet it was not included as supporting information for the grant, while the incorrect reports were included.
- **Was it perhaps simply an oversight that the District did not provide current factual information to the granting agency?**
(i.e. the most current, corrected reports listed above).
- **Why is no environmental impact assessment is being done?**
The installation process for the proposed waterline will have environmental impacts on the protected Garry Oaks along Mount Newton, as is noted in several District memoranda, and according to a professional arborist. It will directly cross named riparian zones containing fish or leading to waters containing fish, as protected by development permits as noted in the OCP. The application itself specifically notes in one section that fish inhabit these zones, yet it answers "No" to all questions pertaining to the need for environmental impact assessments, including the question regarding whether fish are found within the area where work will be completed. Why is this?

It is also interesting to me that two versions of the Canada-BC Municipal

Infrastructure Grant Application Press Release are available online. Both are numbered the same and have the same date, but in one, the third paragraph reads: *"The funds will help to pay for the extension of the community drinking water system by installing two new water mains, and 64 new residential water meters. This project is conditionally approved pending completion of an environmental assessment."* Strangely, the other version of the press release is more readily available online, but it has the environmental impact assessment requirement statement entirely removed. Any idea why this is? I am attaching both versions for your interest.

- **Why is no environmental impact assessment being done to assess the long-term implications of provision of municipal water to a sensitive area where waste disposal could potentially harm the foreshore environment?**
The hydrogeological aspects of the area are known, and reports have detailed that at least a portion of any purported water difficulties are due to over-use and the lack of conservation measures. The nature of the geology of the area is such that overpumping may result in saltwater intrusion. (See Piteau Report, Oct 27, 2001). Furthermore, the rock is largely impervious, meaning that dramatic increases in supply to the area as facilitated by municipal water supply in the absence of "soft path" conservation and management measures may result in problematic sewerage discharge onto the Senanus foreshore, potentially necessitating future installation of sewer lines.

Please correct me if I'm mistaken, but I have not seen any long-term environmental impact study - nor, in fact, *any* environmental impact study with respect to the proposed solution, and undertaking an endeavor of this magnitude apparently without having adequately studied potential longer term environmental impacts could be considered ill-conceived or non-existent planning. It is well known and very well documented in most water management literature that the largest water users are single-family dwellings (52%), and the larger the dwelling, the larger the water demands - particularly when there are pools and spas involved, as in the case of the large residences on Senanus.

Conversely, the large roof catchments provided by these enormous homes also represent some of the largest rainwater harvesting opportunities available in this District, and much work is being done in the area of aquifer recharging using rainwater systems. The District has already received positive correspondence on this workable solution in the past, from a credible expert. It should be noted that I had an incensed ex-Senanus woman contact me, stating that "one Councillor suggested we collect rainwater!" My immediate response was that whichever Councillor this was, is to be heartily commended - so Thank you whoever suggested this. Rainwater is soft water, neutral Ph, abundant in our area, is a natural sustainable solution to the problem, particularly for agricultural uses, and would readily address the hard water problems. Management practices can also be used to direct the rainwater as an aquifer recharge, permitting natural filtration. I would be happy to provide additional information on this solution, and can put Council in touch with a leading expert in its implementation.

There is a great deal of extremely good work being done today with respect to water issues, and we are fortunate to have voluminous expertise at our doorstep. I believe that statements made in the past - that the Senanus Community could be a model of how water issues can and should be handled - is a true statement. Once the first green Municipal Infrastructure Grant the District applied for was directly opposed by CSWVA

and rescinded by the Municipality (a grant that would have directly addressed the water issues) the 50 gallon per minute springs on Municipal land at the corner of Senanus and Mount Newton do not ever seem to have been mentioned again. Why is this? We have a multitude of cost-effective, practical solutions right here, right now. So why are we proposing to waste millions on a solution to serve eleven homes, at the expense of so many others?

I would like to see some demonstrated good-faith efforts towards softer path demand management initiatives as described in the grant guidelines, current literature, the latest CRD water management guidelines, and today's provincial announcement regarding increased efficiency in water usage: <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/british-columbia/story/2008/06/03/bc-water-effeciency-plan.html>. I do not believe that it is necessary any longer to continue to rely on old-school supply management initiatives that pay little heed to sustainability or environmental or social concerns. Now is the time to be looking at grey water recycling, rain water catchment, storm and surface water management, aquifer recharging, xeriscaping, and other practical environmentally friendly solutions that do not rely on outdated unsustainable modes of thought.

There is some excellent literature available on all of these subjects. I have attached the Brandes and Brookes article for your interest. Just for interest, I would be delighted to give a tour of the xeriscaping and water catchment practices on our property, which includes a 3000 gallon fire-fighting system with backup pump. We seldom water our yard in summer, we don't own a lawn-mower, and our front yard is nearly entirely edible. Even if only a few "model" solutions were implemented on Senanus using a softer path model, the area could be sustainable in the long term, with no environmental damage, and no reliance on municipal resources requiring upkeep unto eternity. I am certain that the District is increasingly aware that contemporary thinking in water management moved away from the supply management model many years ago, and that practical solutions revolve around sustainable models centered on conservation and innovative water allocation use and re-use practices.

To be honest, there are several solutions I would like to see with respect to this issue. It has been very troublesome to me to read some of the statements made in the grant application, particularly when the grant guidelines are so clearly framed around sustainable practices I mention above, and when this proposal is so obviously in direct conflict with the intent of the program.

I would like to see the District provide truthful information to Provincial and Federal Granting Agencies with respect to funding applications. If this is not possible, then perhaps the application needs to be rescinded until such a time as an application can go in where the solution has full demonstrated community support, (rather than a second, sticky Petition process), and where the solution clearly matches the recommendations that have been made to the District time and again. Any grant application should be able to be adequately documented and stand on its own, without the apparent need to provide biased information in order to meet grant criteria, should it not? There are lots of other excellent grant opportunities available that will enable implementation of sustainable solutions that I am certain would garner community support. I've attached a TC ad for just one of many alternative grants available that would enable the District to look at viable alternative solutions.

The reason why I am asking these questions is because I am quite appalled at the level

of spending this proposed project represents, when economical solutions are so obviously on our doorstep, and when they have been recommended to the District time and again. In my view, this project represents a gross and irresponsible use of millions of dollars of public funds where need has never been adequately demonstrated. The grant application itself states that 25% of the total number of homes require this solution. 64 homes x 25% = 16 homes. Reports I have read (Piteau, Bradbury, etc.) state that only 11 homes have complained of issues. Several past staff memos make it clear that the only reason this grant would be allocated is if there were sufficiently demonstrated health needs, yet no health issues have ever been proven.

Does the District honestly believe that this is a responsible use of Provincial and Federal taxpayer dollars? Can Council truthfully answer that this solution will "generate greater public benefits" as is outlined in the *legal agreement* for the grant application? Does serving 16 households in a community of 6235 (2006 Census data) homes represent "greater public benefits" to this District? The math works out to 0.25% of the number of households, which looks remarkably like 0% to me. If one looks at the press releases on the Canada-BC Infrastructure Grant website, it becomes clear that the expectation is that *thousands*, if not *hundreds of thousands* of people are to benefit and be served by these grant monies spent... not 16 households. Examples of other public facility projects that received grants? Skytrain; New Community hall; New Wastewater Station; Road Improvements; Recreational Facilities. To be brutally honest with you, I think that if the grant application had been fully documented and accurately filled out, it would have failed.

Thanks for the time, and I appreciate very much the time that Staff is dedicating to answering these questions for me. In addition to the meeting, I am looking forward to a written response to my questions above as this may be helpful for the District at the public meeting.

I'm attaching the press releases, water management documents, and alternative grant suggestion for your review.

Many thanks again for your follow-up, Sara.

All the best, all,
Lori Waters

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Sara Ribeiro wrote:

Good afternoon, Ms. Waters:

Further to inquiries raised during the Council Meeting last evening, would you kindly forward to me a copy of the questions raised during the Public Inquiries and Answers Thereto.

After receipt of your questions, Engineering Staff will contact you to arrange a Staff meeting (with Engineering & Administration to be in attendance) to respond to questions raised. It is anticipated this meeting would be scheduled for next week.

Thank you,

Sara C. Ribeiro
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Attachments:

Province of BC Press Release with Environmental statement
Province of BC Press Release, no Environmental statement
CRD H2O conservation report 2008
POLIS Project Soft Path in a nutshell
POLIS project at the watershed
TC Ad – alternative Grant