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Senanus water bylaw repeal gets two readings

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In an effort to resolve the divide among residents, Central Saanich council gave first and second readings to repeal a bylaw that would have brought water service to Senanus Drive, a block of 22 homes currently unserved by municipal watermains.

Residents in those homes say their wells have become corroded, providing poor and discoloured water.

Gordon Denford, one of the residents, said the area homeowners are currently working on a new plan that they will present, a plan that they hope will appease everyone involved.

“(The debate has) gone on for 16 years, and it has divided the community, when I don’t think such an issue should,” he said. “We are preparing a constructive solution ... as a way to hopefully satisfy all parties.”

Several residents living on Mount Newton X Road oppose the plan that would have seen the pipeline extend down their street, requiring homeowners there to pay an extra \$810 each year for 15 years for the potable water service.

Ron Kubek was the only councillor who didn’t vote to support the bylaw repeal, saying there has been a significant investment made in the project already.

Earlier this year, the Mount Newton Neighbourhood Association — a group of residents opposed to the project — filed in the Supreme Court of B.C. for a judicial review

against a District of Central Saanich decision, asking for the initial bylaw (1625) to be crushed. That has been adjourned to August 31.

Mayor Jack Mar said earlier this week that facilitated meetings are planned to take place between all parties in September and October.

But he cited a new petition that was presented to council last Monday as a possible alternative.

A 49-signatured petition from residents in the northwest quadrant of Central Saanich, north of Mount Newton X Road, requests water service for potable water and firefighting needs.

“Now there’s over 100 people that are asking for water in that whole corner,” said Mar. “A bigger line down Alec Road would accomodate both firefighting and domestic water. These are some of the things we’re looking at.

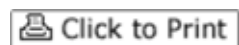
“If we can do it with a bigger line in the northwest corner, with potable water as well as firefighting, it’s a win-win situation.”

Third reading of the repeal will likely take place at a council meeting next month. After that, council must go to the provincial government to request permission to repeal the bylaw.

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