

March 26, 2009



Port Authority responds to Tsu-ma-as Transformation Centre Project

The Port Alberni Port Authority wishes to state its position respecting the proposed Tsu-ma-as Transformation Centre at Clutesi Haven Marina. The Port Authority Board of Directors and Management understand that there is considerable public interest in this re-development proposal.

The Port Alberni Port Authority and its predecessor the Port Alberni Harbour Commission, have leased the land at Clutesi Haven Marina from the City of Port Alberni for many years. The building, consisting of the marina office, the manager's residence, the community meeting room and the retail space, is owned by the City and included in the lease. The launch ramp is included in the lease. The Port Authority owns the marina floats, walkways and fueling equipment.

The current building is nearing the end of its useful life as engineering reports clearly indicate structural deficiencies including foundation settlement. The Port Authority began to develop conceptual plans to replace the building with a new structure that would be ideally located along the face of the marina basin near the gangway. The operator of the retail space in the present building was advised of the building's structural issues and informed that the availability of future commercial space was yet to be determined.

Meanwhile, the Port Authority was aware of the desire by the Hupacasath First Nation to build a cultural centre on City land at Victoria Quay.

Approximately two years ago, the Port Authority was informed that the Hupacasath First Nation wished to locate the cultural centre on the Clutesi Haven site. Subsequent meetings with the Hupacasath First Nation and the City confirmed this strong desire.

The Port Authority suggested consideration of alternate sites for the Centre and outlined concerns with regard to mixed use of the site such as access to the marina, launch ramp, fish cleaning station, the loss of parking, and increased traffic congestion on River Road.

The Hupacasath First Nation and the City heard our concerns. All parties have worked diligently to develop a conceptual layout for the Transformation Centre on the Clutesi Haven site that would continue to provide quality service to the marina clients, maintain the fish cleaning station at the present location, allow for the same access to the launch ramp, set aside specific onsite parking for marina and centre visitors, while ensuring additional off site overflow parking and the relocation of underground fuel tanks to a new above ground location.

Thus, after careful consideration, the Port Authority agreed to surrender a part of the leased property to accommodate the Transformation Centre. In the absence of a sufficient rationale to decline the application being advanced by the Hupacasath, the Port Authority provided in principal support for the project such that funding applications and pre-planning could be advanced as the project rounds into form.

All marina tenants were advised of the opportunity to review the proposed development plans at the open house, and the matter is now in the hands of the City of Port Alberni. The City zoning by law requires amendment to include "Cultural Centre" as a permitted use in the W1 Waterfront Commercial District zone. As part of the rezoning process, a public hearing must be held and we expect that to be scheduled in the weeks ahead.

Respectfully,
PORT ALBERNI PORT AUTHORITY

Bob Kanngiesser, Chairman

For further information contact:

Bob Kanngiesser, 250-724-1272
Brad Madelung, 250-723-5312