

Recycling Committee Report - October 2011 HIRRA Meeting

Presented by Jan Kennedy, Committee Chair

Background on the new Recycling Building:

Back in AUG/2006 – the old recycling building was reviewed by the CV Regional District Safety Advisor. His report expressed concerns regarding liability. In NOV/2006 – HIRRA received a letter listing 21 points of concern regarding potential safety risks to public and staff, and asking how these concerns would be addressed.

Between MAY/2007 and DEC/2008, much studying was done by Regional District of Hornby Island's Community needs. A master facility plan was initiated. This time began with Regional District representatives being very unsympathetic to our needs and wishes. These people were eventually replaced by Drew Hatfield in JAN/2009. He was a breath of fresh air, very helpful, with a collaborative prospective. We were very sad to see him leave the CVRD for another job in April, 2010.

In DEC/2008, during the big windstorm, and with the heavy wet snow-load following, a number of damages were sustained to the Depot roof. The main support beam cracked, the roof shifted, several smaller roofs collapsed and a skylight cracked. The Regional District was notified and they sent out a structural engineer. That person determined that the building needed to be replaced for the following reasons:

- a shifting damaged roof
- rotting posts holding up the shifting roof
- non-compliance with BC Building Code, putting their insurance for the building in jeopardy

MARCH/2009 - Chatwin Engineering, a small company and our choice, was awarded the Regional District contract to prepare an Operational Review and Conceptual Design Study for the upgrade to the HI Recycling Depot.

APRIL/2009 – Drew Hatfield from CVRD, Chatwin Engineering, HIRRA, and the Recycling Committee met on HI to begin the design process.

At that time, the Recycling Committee made clear that we wanted:

- to maintain and improve social values
- to improve working conditions for staff and volunteers
- that our standard of Re-use (not an urban standard), be a priority, with public access to material prior to material going into bins.
- That the "Free Store" be open 24 hours.
- Provision for a lockable Office area.
- Provision for lockable Dangerous goods areas - only open when Depot open.

When this process was shared with the Depot Staff, they requested an enclosed building for shelter and warmth.

JUNE/ 2009 – Chatwin Engineering produced a very satisfactory overall plan for complete revamping of the HI Recycling Depot, with a preliminary cost estimate of \$690,000. They had listened closely and observed the Depot in action and had come up with a phased plan that included all that we had asked for in a very user-friendly manner. This plan included a Free Store, and allowed for continuous operation of the Depot facility throughout construction.

NOV/2009 – Economics had changed at CVRD, and we were told that only \$150,000 was now available for the Depot upgrade.

APRIL/ 2010 – Drew Hatfield left CVRD for a position in Campbell River, some time passed with not much interaction with Regional District. Jon Isfield eventually took over Drew Hatfield's position, and we have found him to be very supportive of our Re-use position, responsive and helpful, but needing to work within the Regional District guidelines, particularly concerning liability and insurance.

SEPT/2010 – Andrew Gower of Wedler Engineering was hired by the Regional District as Project Manager for the HI Recycling Depot upgrade. When he met with the Recycling Committee to discuss site development and design, we were told:

- that the budget for the new building was now \$250,000.
- that the project would be a "DESIGN/BUILD" project, meaning that the successful bidder would design the building with input from the public and the Recycling Committee, as well as building it.

We maintained that the building should retain a "Hornby" character and that the facility be able to remain open throughout the construction period of several months.

SEPT/2010 – A tender was published for the new Depot building, closing October 1, 2010. Although copies of the RFP, were personally passed out to a number of Hornby Island contractors and builders by the Depot Manager, no one applied.

OCT/2010 – HIRRA sent a letter to Regional District saying that:

"We are fine with pulling the free-store out of the current budget - but only on the condition that the RD agrees on the concept of a 3-year plan to complete the other priority items that will not be covered by the \$250,000 - including modernizing the free-store facility."

OCT/2010 - A second tender was published, closing on October 19, 2010. The successful bidder was AFC Construction (a local company owned by Alan Fletcher) and they were awarded the Design/Build contract for the new Recycling Building.

NOV/ 2010 – Conceptual design meeting was held with the Recycling Committee, AFC, Wedler Engineering and CVRD representatives. We discussed operational issues and concerns with the new structure. The building was sited in the current spot in order to allow the Depot to function normally throughout the construction phase.

NOV 19/2010 AFC'S preliminary plans were received by the Recycling Depot, shown to the staff and volunteers and posted for the public in the Depot Office.

DEC.12, 2010 – AFC held a Public Open House in the Hall to gather public input for their design. This was advertised island wide by an insert in the Grapevine. Alan Fletcher also arranged to be up at the Depot throughout an open day to hear what staff and public had to say about their needs at the Depot.

JAN/2011 – JUNE/ 2011 – Construction of the new Recycling building.

Long Range plans for the HI Recycling Depot (3-5 Year Plan):

We wish to continue with the initiative begun by Regional District to complete an overall upgrade to our Recycling Depot. We are in agreement with them as to the importance of RE-USE and the need to divert as much goods as possible from the landfill. Their need for diversion from the landfill now puts us into a more harmonious partnership with the Regional District. We are no longer “those odd folks over on Hornby Island”, but are now one of many facilities working to facilitate Re-use and Recycling, with the support of the Regional District.

A primary example of this change in policy is the inclusion of the Free Store in the planning done by the Regional District over the last 3-4 years. Prior to this, the Free Store had always been a “Hornby thing”, a separate entity, staffed and maintained by HI volunteers, not supported, or encouraged by Regional District. They have now allocated money for a Free Store upgrade.

We intend to request that the Regional District continue with it’s planned upgrade by building a new Free Store Building, adjacent to our new Recycling Building within the next 2-3 years. The two buildings will then be unified again. In the meantime, the old Free Store building requires some strengthening to maintain it’s safe operation. Money has been promised by Regional District and they have already been here this month with a structural engineer to ascertain what improvements are required.

The following is our list of items and areas to be addressed in our long range plan by the Regional District:

Hazardous Waste Area – Regional District has applied for the Product Care Plus status for HI Recycling Depot and we expect to receive this certification by the end of this year. This certification and program will allow us to receive a wide range of potentially hazardous waste products and will PAY for their regular transportation off-island for approved disposal. We will require secure fenced area to receive and hold these items. As people continue to quietly drop-off hazardous waste items at the Depot, we will also need to maintain an additional Budget item to deal with very dangerous items not covered by the Product Care Plus program, and possibly employ a monitor to assist people to “do the right thing” at the dumpsters. For a list of what will and will not be accepted under the Product Care Plus program, see us after the meeting, or check out www.productcare.org.

Dry storage of “Recyclables” (pop,wine, liquor and beer bottles), and possibly room to store milk cartons during the busy summer months when quantities outstrip our ability to move them off-island. A shipping container or small building located close to the new Recycling Building will work well for this.

Noise deadening Insulation to be installed in the new Recycling building, to reduce the reverberation of sound in the new building.

Water Treatment System – Filtration system with UV disinfection that will meet VIHA standards. Water connection to the outhouse, the office and an emergency shower.

Emergency Shower Facility – for staff safety.

Dry Storage for Drywall, important to keep this material out of the landfill and available for Re-use.

Roadwork and Parking Areas – Levelling and Resurfacing of a Ring Road and Parking Areas, Levelling for a new Free Store building, and Excavation of the bank behind the new Recycling building in order to widen an access road for Backhoe use.

Current plans for the HI Recycling Depot:

Although it has been a bumpy start, we plan to continue the process of incorporating our new building into the flow of Reuse and Recycling on HI.

We appreciate the support of the Regional District for Reuse and Recycling, and are grateful for the maintenance of local jobs through this support. We intend to make use of the concept of an overall plan for upgrading the Depot to continue to fill in the missing parts. Change itself is challenging, but we feel certain that we can work together as a community to make this new facility work well for us.

Over the short term, we intend to work on:

Systems:

- Currently, large wooden bins on wheels are being built to facilitate the flow of material from the receiving counter in the new building to the compactors and then to the backhoe for removal. Special Forks for the Backhoe bucket are needed to handle the large bins. They are in transit and will be arriving soon.
- The huge difference in seasonal requirements at the Depot is being looked at and more stream-lining will occur through the winter season. Following a winter season in the new Building, we will look again at the product stream handling for the summer season and determine if more changes need to be made to accommodate the summer influx.
- Until noise reduction insulation is in place, we are requesting that staff wear ear-protection for their own safety, just when the machines are being run, 1-3 times per day.

- We consider the principle of Reuse very important and this principal is being incorporated in our use of the new building and the Depot grounds. As before, the staff sets aside items that the public may want to Re-use, i.e. glass jars, plastic bins and pails, newspaper. Please ask the staff for items that you need. The new Scrap Metal area has been established just past the dumpsters. There is also a table for first collection and perusal of small metal objects at the front of the old recycling area.
- Small appliances and electronics will continue to be available to the public for Re-use.
- Our Depot manager will be conducting formal staff meetings and staff evaluations to promote a more collaborative working relationship with our much appreciated staff.

We intend to add a glass roof to the trellised area in front of the new building. We have found some tempered glass panels, and NEED MORE. Please let us know if you have glass to donate. We feel this will help to recreate precious “social” area at our Recycling Area, giving us another sheltered place to meet during our rainy months!.

A clean-up of the larger Depot area was accomplished this past weekend with the much appreciated volunteer help of young people from the Otesha Project.

We continue to look at parking and how best to facilitate movement thru the stations of Reuse, Recycling and Discarding that occur at our Depot.

Eva Vass has completed a wonderful new set of signs for the Depot areas. We have brought a couple for you to see. We hope that her beautiful work will provide good direction, as well as color, beauty and artfulness.

Jon Isfield is currently looking into increased ventilation for the building as well as a fix for the sound reverberation. He will be getting back to us shortly on these concerns.

A large quantity of our stockpiled glass was used under the foundation of the new building, and a local contractor has recently taken another significant quantity for a building project. We are hoping that this trend will continue, providing us with a “market” for our island’s surplus glass.

Short-term upgrade to the Free Store - With money allocated by Regional District, and dependent on what their structural engineer’s report indicates, we are looking at:

- Completing the Structural reinforcement of the Free Store building and roof required by the CVRD.
- Enclosing the former glass and tin can recycling area to provide for a dry receiving and storage area for couches, working appliances and electronics.
- Providing a better entrance and door on the south side of the Free Store building to facilitate movement between the Free Store building and the new Recycling Building.

- Installing better doors at all the entrances to the Free Store building, in order to continue the work of making the Free Store building a warmer, cleaner place for volunteers and the public.
- Painting the floor of the Free Store area.

We will be requesting Capital Cost Monies in the 2012 Budget for the purchase of:

- Shredder Attachment for the Backhoe. We could then shred wood waste before shipping to reduce hauling costs. It cost \$1000 for each bin that is removed from Hornby and tipped at the Landfill.
- Expanded Polystyrene (Styrofoam) Compactor. We could then reduce hauling costs and also produce a saleable product. This would move us another step closer to ZERO waste. Although the machine is expensive and would take some time to pay for itself; the impact of removing Styrofoam from the our waste stream is very important. This piece of equipment is designed to operate outside, does not need a protective roof.
- Self-Dump Hopper for the efficient collection of paper.

We are grateful to all the community members who have come forward with ideas and suggestions. Please continue to contact the Recycling Committee with any comments, suggestions and offers of assistance. I welcome your phone calls and emails, and will act as the contact person for the Recycling Committee. 335-2714, janscafe@telus.net.