



## Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee

Date: Tuesday, January 30, 2024  
Place: Council Chambers  
Richmond City Hall  
Present: Councillor Chak Au, Chair  
Councillor Michael Wolfe  
Councillor Bill McNulty  
Absent: Councillor Laura Gillanders  
Councillor Andy Hobbs  
Also Present: Councillor Carol Day  
Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

### MINUTES

It was moved and seconded

*That the minutes of the meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee held on December 20, 2023, be adopted as circulated.*

**CARRIED**

### DELEGATIONS

1. (1) Chad Wetsch and Yvonne Chow, Vancouver, Coast & Mountains Tourism Region, Destination BC, presented on "Experience the Fraser," a recreational, cultural, and heritage initiative along the Lower Fraser River Corridor, and referred to their PowerPoint presentation (copy on file, City Clerk's Office).

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In reply to queries from Committee, the delegation noted that (i) Destination BC is looking to partner with the City on this initiative, alongside opportunities to work with Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners, (ii) there are multiple resources available to the City for this initiative, and (iii) this initiative would provide positive economic and community impacts while promoting a safe and sustainable way to move around the city.

Discussion ensued regarding the Experience the Fraser presentation and as a result, the following **referral motion** was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

*That the Experience the Fraser presentation by Destination BC, dated January 31, 2024, be referred to staff for analysis.*

**CARRIED**

- (2) Debbie Jiang and Kelvin Higo, provided a summary of the service of Richmond soldiers Private Hikotaro Koyanagi and Private Kazuo Harada to Canada's war effort and expressed that their sacrifice be recognized by adding their names to the Richmond City Cenotaph.

Discussion then ensued regarding other memorials in Canada and the process to add names to the Richmond Cenotaph, and as a result the following **motion** was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the City of Richmond acknowledge Canadian soldiers Private Hikotaro Koyanagi and Private Kazuo Harada and their sacrifice for Canada; and*
- (2) *That their names be appropriately added to the Richmond City Cenotaph in time for the National Civic Ceremony on November 11, 2024.*

**CARRIED**

Discussion then ensued with regard to recognizing other Richmond veterans, and as a result the following **referral motion** was introduced:

*That the City investigate through appropriate bodies, if there are any fallen members of South-East Asian and or including First Nations descent, who resided in Richmond.*

**CARRIED**

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**COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION**

**2. LONDON/STEVESTON DOG OFF-LEASH AREA UPDATE**  
(File Ref. No. 06-2345-20-LSTE1) (REDMS No. 7461802)

In reply to queries from Committee, staff advised that the distance from the off-leash dog park fence to the residential property lines has increased to 15 metres and the increase in budget is for the excavation and drainage work for the new concept plan that contains a 1 metre high berm and additional trees to mitigate noise levels.

Sergei Volpov, Richmond resident, expressed concerns with regard to the proposal and spoke on the (i) proposed off-leash dog park and the concerns about the proximity to the residents, (ii) the potential noise level and (iii) alternate locations for the off-leash dog park within London Steveston park.

Discussion ensued regarding the consultation process and it was suggested that staff continue to engage property owners adjacent to the proposed off-leash area.

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That Option 1, as outlined in the staff report titled “London/Steveston Dog Off-Leash Area Update”, dated December 20, 2023, from the Director, Parks Services, be endorsed; and*
- (2) *That staff write a letter to the residents adjacent to the proposed off-leash area advising of the proposed options outlined in the staff report, before the next Council meeting.*

**CARRIED**

**3. AWARD OF CONTRACT 8239P – DELIVERY OF ADVANCED LIFEGUARDING, LIFESAVING AND FIRST AID INSTRUCTIONAL AND RECERTIFICATION COURSES**  
(File Ref. No. 11-7125-01) (REDMS No. 7431664)

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That Contract 8239P – Delivery of Advanced Lifeguarding, Lifesaving and First Aid Instructional and Recertification Courses be awarded to L.I.T. Aquatics Ltd. for a three-year term for the projected contract value of \$1,449,000 exclusive of taxes, as described in the report titled, “Award of Contract 8239P – Delivery of Advanced Lifeguarding, Lifesaving and First Aid Instructional and Recertification Courses”, dated January 2, 2024, from the Director, Recreation and Sport Services;*

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- (2) *That the Chief Administrative Officer and the General Manager, Community Services, be authorized to extend the initial three-year term, up to the maximum total term of five years, for the maximum total amount of \$2,415,000 exclusive of taxes, as described in the report titled, “Award of Contract 8239P – Delivery of Advanced Lifeguarding, Lifesaving and First Aid Instructional and Recertification Courses”, dated January 2,2024, from the Director, Recreation and Sport Services; and*
- (3) *That the Chief Administrative Officer and General Manager, Community Services, be authorized to execute the contract and all related documentation with L.I.T. Aquatics Ltd.*

**CARRIED**

4. **FIRST NATIONS BUNKHOUSE INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM AND LEVEL OF SERVICE**

(File Ref. No. 11-7141-01) (REDMS No. 7373274)

Staff presented on the First Nations Bunkhouse and noted that (i) the bunkhouse was built in the 1890s, (ii) the proposed reconstruction of the bunkhouse will incorporate as much salvage material as possible, (iii) the exhibits and programs will align with existing programs at Britannia Heritage Shipyards and include interpretative programs of Indigenous peoples, and (v) First Nations will be involved in the Bunkhouse restoration process.

In reply to queries from Committee, staff noted that an assessment of available salvageable materials can be done following deconstruction of the building and once the engagement and design process is complete, construction could begin simultaneously with the Phoenix Seine Loft with an estimated completion in 2027.

Harold Steves and Loren Slye, Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society, referenced their submission (attached to and forming part of these minutes as Schedule 1) and expressed support for the proposal and restoration of the bunkhouse, noting that additional research is required to determine if the building was used as a smokehouse and that careful consideration must be done in order to preserve Indigenous historical elements during the deconstruction process

Discussion ensued regarding the further study of the building’s original purpose and staff noted that these details of interpretation will be provided in the consultation stage. As a result of the discussion, the following **motion** was introduced:

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It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the First Nations Bunkhouse Interpretive Program and Level of Service as detailed in the staff report titled “First Nations Bunkhouse Interpretive Program and Level of Service”, dated January 9, 2024, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services and Director, Facilities and Project Development be approved;*
- (2) *That staff investigate the historical use of the building as a smokehouse;*
- (3) *That a joint committee of Council and Britannia Heritage Society members be formed to oversee the restoration; and*
- (4) *That the National Historical Sites and Monuments Board should be consulted on the restoration process.*

**CARRIED**

5. **MANAGER’S REPORT**

(i) *Steveston Playground Project*

Staff highlighted that the Steveston Playground project design is approaching the procurement stage. Staff consulted the Rick Hansen Foundation, the Richmond Centre of Disability and the Steveston Community Society and incorporated their comments on design functionality and accessibility. The project is on track with construction to begin after this year’s Steveston Salmon Festival with an estimated completion date of June 2025.

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved and seconded

*That the meeting adjourn (5:26 p.m.).*

**CARRIED**

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Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Tuesday, January 30, 2024.

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Councillor Chak Au  
Chair

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Mizuguchi, Andrea  
Legislative Services Associate

To: Mayor and Council

Date: Jan. 30, 2024

From; Harold Steves, Chair Britannia Shipyard NHS Society

Re: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee,  
Item 4: First Nation Bunkhouse Interpretive Program and Level of Service

1. First Nation Smokehouse evidence:

On Sept. 20, 2020, I wrote a report to council requesting “that City records be amended to indicate the building is not a bunkhouse, but likely a smokehouse or longhouse,” and that further “tree ring or other studies be done to determine the age of the building”. I also suggested that staff “investigate....the addition of typical welcoming totems”. This staff report only deals with the latter. The addition of welcoming totems is less important. Determining the age of the structure is crucial before any contracts are let, or decisions are made about deconstruction.

Before he died, Archaeologist Dr. Len Ham gave me his files and had me promise to try to get a proper heritage investigation of the First Nation House and nearby buildings. Present City staff are unaware of reports by Dr. Len Ham indicating the building may be a highly significant smokehouse, and asked me to provide the information. (A smokehouse is not for smoking fish but a longhouse with vents in the roof to let the smoke out primarily from cooking. It is also known as a Rancheria)

In his 1986 BC Archaeological Site Inventory, Dr. Len Ham wrote, “This site requires a detailed site study before any more demolition.”

In a Sept 1988 Heritage Overview for the City Dr. Ham wrote, “It is a very long building with numerous windows. While it shares these features with other native Indian cannery dwellings, this structure is unique in that it is gable rather than shed roofed. It is more similar to the large historic smokehouses which were situated at several Coast Salish Villages during the late 1800’s and early 1900’s..... Air photographs suggest the presence of a single door to this structure located in its southern side.” “It may be a very significant building.”

Heritage Manager Mary Gazetas had a dendochronology study done on both the First Nation House and the Murakami House. Based on tree ring evidence, both buildings were dated at 1885, not 1895 as dated in this report. Subsequent staff reports referred to the building as a longhouse or Rancheria.

On April 29, 1994, Dr. Ham reported to Chief Guerin and Ms Leona Sparrow of the Musqueam Indian Band that the City of Richmond had desecrated land marked as historic midden deposits.

“I have received samples of wood and matrix which Alderman Harold Steves salvaged from the excavation of services trenches at the Britannia Heritage Shipyard (DgRt 6) in Richmond. Also recovered is a very large (c. 2X3’) sandstone and several small brick fragments.” “It appears the excavation went through a historic era Native Indian Canoe equipped with a hearth.” “The location of this find is apparently in the vicinity of an old slough channel, and adjacent to the original location of the former Indian cannery house.”

“In addition it is known that there was a named Musqueam house site cluster and graveyard located up the above mentioned slough”

Years earlier, City of Richmond employee, Percy Norton, reported that he uncovered Indian Burial boxes with his grader, and saw skeletons staring up at him when he originally graded Railway Avenue just north of Moncton Street and immediately north of the smokehouse.

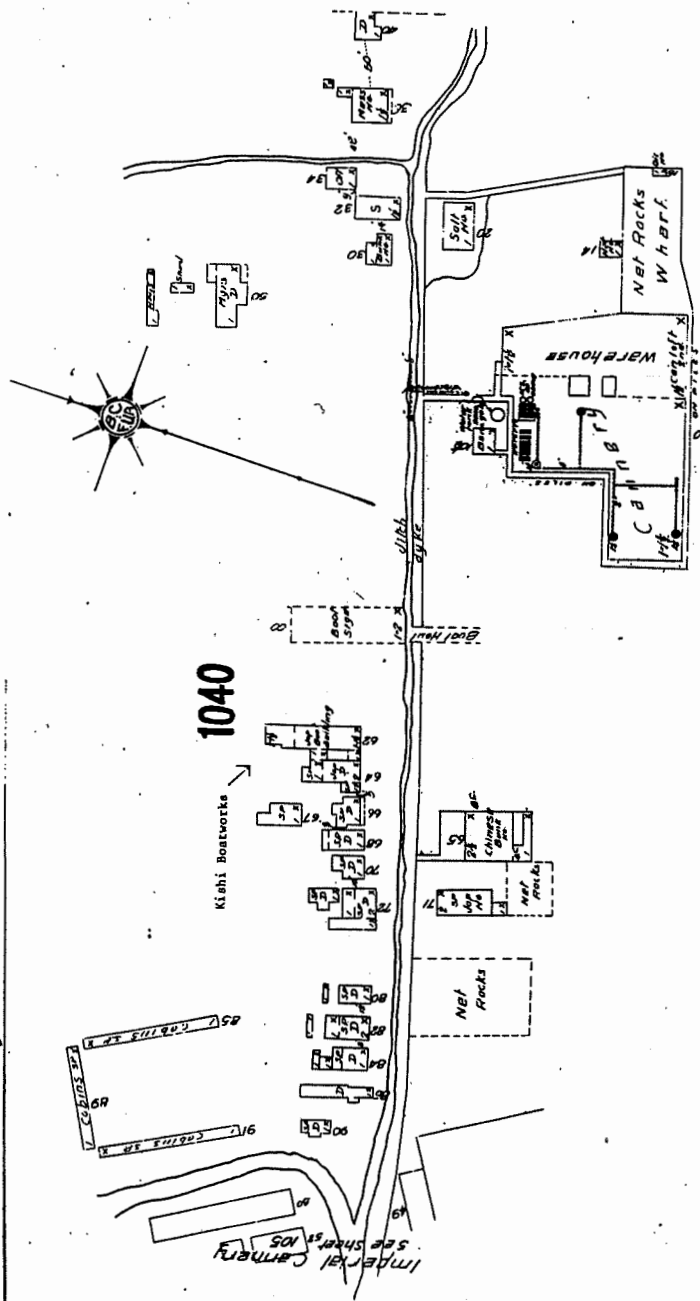
Sometime around 2000 new City staff started referring to the longhouse as a bunkhouse serving the Phoenix Cannery.

Dr. Ham provided City staff with a 1926 plan of the Phoenix Cannery showing the slough going north with a Salt House, used for salting fish, on the west side of the slough and a Mess House on the east side. The 1926 map also shows First Nation huts or cabins west of the Phoenix Cannery, where the Japanese bunkhouse and Chinese Bunkhouse were also located. They would serve the Phoenix Cannery not the Smokehouse.



A 1936 map Dr Ham provided showed the Salt House, building 32, the Mess House, building 36, the Murakami House and Boatworks, building 40, and the First Nation House to the north in its original location.

Inbar bunkhouse



FRASER RIVER  
 Phoenix Cannery  
 Steveston BC.  
 Surveyed Oct. 18 1883  
 PLAN DRAWN UNDERWRITERS  
 BATHURST COLLEGE

WATER SUPPLY PRESSURE FROM FRASER RIVER  
 BY PIPE THROUGH 4 1/2 MILES  
 CONDENSER  
 POWER STEAM  
 RUBBER COG  
 CENTRIFUGAL PUMP  
 BARRAGE ON FOOT



Cannery to the wharf in front of the Murakami House, indicating the occupants were going to the wharf to go fishing and not the Phoenix Cannery which wasn't even there at the time.



Photographs of the building on PRCS-51 and 52 show smokehouse vents at each end of the building near the peak.

When The Murakami House was deconstructed, it was found that the building had been longer, and the north end of the building had been crudely cut off.

I have included an early slide of a cluster of smokehouses along a slough titled Salmon Camp and one of the Salt House or Japanese Duplex.



#### Analysis:

With a Burial Ground to the north, and buried dugout canoe to the south, and vents just below the roof, it would appear that the First Nation “Longhouse” is a Smokehouse. The walkway going east would indicate that the residents were not working in the Phoenix Cannery, but going to their boats at the wharf in front of the Murakami House to go fishing before the Phoenix Cannery was built. The First Nation Longhouse was always assumed to be built ca. 1885 or earlier, similar to the Murakami House and so dated by studying the tree growth rings on the lumber. The Murakami House was a larger building before the coming of the Japanese. It may have been Marshall English’s Fish Camp.

While it is true that canneries built rows of huts with a shed roof for First Nation families, earlier salmon camps and canneries were built where First Nation People already lived. Logically, Marshall English built his 1882 fish camp where there already were First Nation people. It is also logical that as salmon was not shipped to Europe and little salmon was being canned, there would be a Salt House and Mess House.

#### Recommendation;

As I recommended Sept 20, 2020, the building should be referred to, once again, as a smokehouse or longhouse.

A thorough and proper study of the buildings should be done by the Museum of Anthropology or a qualified archaeologist.

## 2. Restoration vs reconstruction.

It is important that the metal roof remain on the building. Historically metal roofs were put on Steveston waterfront buildings to protect them from flying embers from frequent fires. It also protects any evidence of it being a smokehouse. It is important that the ends of the building below the roof remain untouched to show the smokehouse vents at each end of the building. If the roof is kept entirely intact, it is the only way to determine the original use of the building and restoration is still possible. In the past, buildings with rotted out floors were raised by lifting the roof using jacks and squares of timbers to keep the building stable. A concrete foundation can be poured and the building anchored to the foundation with new studs where needed. Damaged siding can be replaced "like for like". The 1991 estimate for restoration was \$160,000

### Recommendation;

A joint committee of council and society members should be formed, similar to the committee chaired by Councillor McNulty when the Phoenix Seine Loft was restored, to oversee the restoration.

The National Historic Sites and Monuments Board should be consulted.