

To: Planning and Land Use Committee  
From: Councillor Bob Turner

File: BM/08-3

Re: **DRAFT Framework for the Consideration of the Snug Cove Task Force Report by Bowen Island Municipal Council**

Date: March 21, 2001

**A. Status of process**

The Snug Cove Task Force was given a mandate by Council to create a vision for Snug Cove through community consultation. The Task Force has presented a final report with detailed implementation recommendations to Council. There is a need for Council to indicate their general support for the content of the report so that planning staff can proceed with development of a plan for the Snug Cove area.

This draft framework seeks to initiate such Council review of the Task Force report. The framework does not attempt to review all recommendations made by the Task Force. Rather it is an attempt to put boundaries on the final plan to ensure environmental and heritage protection, and timely implementation. The framework has not had the benefit of comment by the Snug Cove Task Force and other interested public, and this input is needed.

**B. Outstanding issues**

The Task Force report provides a very valuable outline of options for a future Snug Cove set within a strategy for implementation. Review of the report suggests there is a need for council direction on several important issues that rise out of recommendations of the Task Force report. These include the following:

- 1) relocation of ferry terminal to the south side of cove
- 2) preservation of green space areas within the Snug Cove area
- 3) timely and cost effective implementation of a modified Government Road
- 4) proposed road through Park, north side of Snug Cove
- 5) location of an inn within the Orchard heritage area

**1. Relocation of the ferry terminal to the south side of Snug Cove**

The SCTF recommended that a south side terminal be considered as part of a long term plan for Snug Cove. This area is currently within Crippen Regional Park.

At the February 19, 2001 meeting of Council, David Marshall, Vice President, Engineering and Construction of BC Ferries Corporation stated that BCF had given consideration to a south side terminal and had rejected it as an option based on safety considerations and cost (~\$25 million). He also noted that the amount of rock blasting and visual impact of such a facility would be very significant. He concluded that BCF was not willing to leave the door open for any further discussions on the subject.

A south side terminal would have a very significant visual and environmental impact on the present undeveloped forest and shoreline along the south side of Snug Cove. This wild side of Snug Cove is an essential component of the "village in a park" feeling to the Cove.

Recommendation:

That Council support continued park use of the south side of Snug Cove (south of Davies Creek) and oppose relocation of the ferry terminal or any other structures (e.g. boat ramp) to the south side of the Cove.

**2. Green space and environmentally sensitive area protection**

That the natural forest and seashore borders of Snug Cove are vital ecologic, aesthetic, and spiritual assets to the feeling and function of Snug Cove village and should be protected. The Snug Cove Task Force did not identify specific areas of the Cove that should be protected and there is a need to identify these areas.

Recommendation:

That Council endorse the protection in their natural state of the following:

- 1) the shoreline and forest backdrop of the south side of the Cove;
- 2) a 30 m riparian buffer on both sides of Davies Creek as required under the new provisions of the provincial Streamside Protection Regulation;
- 3) an appropriate buffer zone around the heron nesting area, using advice from the Bowen Conservancy/Nature Club review; and
- 4) The forested area between Government Road and the Lagoon to a point east of the rocky bluff along Government Road.

**1. Government Road**

Government Road allowance is the only significant piece of Municipal Land within the Cove. Bowen Island Municipality has the authority to redesign traffic flow, ferry marshalling, and parking on this land immediately. It is generally accepted that a redesigned and landscaped Government Road would be a major step forward in the revitalization of the Cove. Modification of Government Road can proceed immediately (unlike other options) and is most likely the least expensive alternate traffic flow and marshalling option.

The Task Force recommends creation of 3 to 5 lanes of ferry marshalling adjacent to or incorporated within the Union Steamship Marina lot. A significant concern of such a plan is the negative visual impact of a large paved area at the immediate entrance to the village. If such a marshalling area is considered necessary to augment the marshalling capacity of Government Road, alternate areas adjacent to Government Road outside the lower Cove (e.g. above top of hill) should be considered.

Recommendations:

That Council endorse redesign and landscaping of municipally owned Government Road land for the purpose of traffic flow, ferry marshalling, and parking.

That Council endorse the earliest possible implementation of redesign and landscaping of Government Road because of the direct benefits of such enhancements to revitalization of the Cove.

That Council endorse the need for a review of all possible locations including those outside the lower Cove for “lot-like” marshalling areas if additional marshalling capacity is required.

**2. New Road through Park, north side of Snug Cove**

A single lane, one-way road to accommodate offloading ferry traffic that connects Cardena Road and

Miller Road is proposed by the Task Force. Such a proposed road is intended to allow two lane unloading of the ferry, divert some ferry traffic from Government Road, reduce congestion on Government Road, and decrease the time for ferry unloading. Further, it is hoped that such a road might provide an alternative route for safety vehicles, and provide a beautiful introduction to Bowen Island.

Any consideration of such a road would require careful environmental assessment. There are several expected costs to such a road. The first is the physical and noise intrusion of car traffic into the forest area north of the Cove, diminishing the aesthetic and spiritual values of this well used and well loved area. Such a road would need to avoid the heron nesting buffer area, but none the less would create a third noisy margin to their nesting area. Such a road might be expected to be detrimental to the long term stability of the heron colony. A third cost is financial – such a road would be a significant cost to the Municipality (?\$50-100,000) and divert funds from other projects.

Given these costs, it is important to ask whether the magnitude of the ferry off loading problem justifies the costs of such a remedy. No case has been presented that such costs are justified.

Recommendation:

That Council oppose construction of an alternate road through the park. Consideration of such a proposal awaits a clear argument that the benefits to the community outweigh the considerable costs, and that the benefits sought (e.g. reduced congestion, more rapid unloading) cannot be met by alternative, less damaging solutions.

**3. Inn within Heritage Orchard area**

The Snug Cove Task Force endorses the Heritage Designation of the Orchard area. They also recommend the development of a lodge within the Orchard area with a minimum of thirty beds. These two recommendations appear to be in conflict. The footprint required for such a lodge and expected ancillary uses (parking, road access, waste storage, loading area) would result in significant reduction in the Orchard area, probable loss of some existing orchards, and relocation of some existing cabins.

Such a lodge may be an appropriate use elsewhere in the Snug Cove area. The size of the lodge would need to conform to provisions of the OCP and LUB.

Recommendation:

That Council opposes the location of a lodge within the Orchard Heritage area.

**A. Action Plan/Next Steps**

The implementation of the Snug Cove Plan requires development of planning policies and land use regulations and public works. Clear direction from Council is required prior to proceeding with Plan implementation. The following recommendations are provided for the consideration of Council.

1. It is recommended that Council endorse the following **Principles for Snug Cove**.

i) Council endorses continued park use of the south side of Snug Cove (south of Davies Creek)

and opposes the relocation of the ferry terminal or other structures (e.g. boat ramp) to the south side of the Snug Cove.

- ii) Council endorses the protection in their natural state of the following:
  - the shoreline and forest backdrop of the south side of the Cove;
  - a 30 m riparian buffer on both sides of Davies Creek as required under the new provisions of the provincial Streamside Protection Regulation;
  - an appropriate buffer zone around the heron nesting area, using advice from the Bowen Island Conservancy/Nature Club review; and
  - the forested area between Government Road and the Lagoon to a point east of the rocky bluff along Government Road.
- i) Council endorses redesign and landscaping of municipally owned Government Road land for the purpose of traffic flow, ferry marshalling, and parking.
- ii) Council endorses the earliest possible implementation of redesign and landscaping of Government Road because of the direct benefits to revitalization of the Cove.
- iii) Council endorses the need for a review of all possible locations including those outside the lower Cove for “lot-like” marshalling areas if additional marshalling capacity is required.
- iv) Council opposes construction of an alternate road through Crippen Park. Consideration of such a proposal awaits a clear argument that the benefits to the community outweigh the considerable costs, and that the benefits sought (e.g. reduced congestion, more rapid unloading) cannot be met by alternative, less damaging solutions.
- v) Council opposes the location of a lodge within the Orchard Heritage area.

1. It is recommended that Council consider the following steps for **Snug Cove Plan Implementation**.

i) Establish Municipal resources for Snug Cove Plan implementation in the 2001 budget for the following actions:

- Planning resources for the review and development of Official Community Plan policy for Snug Cove, including planning for green space and environmentally sensitive area protection. *(Note: Planning and Land Use Committee recommended \$35,000 for Snug Cove Planning including economic development in the 2001 budget.)*
- Engineering resources for the redesign of municipally owned Government Road land for the purpose of traffic flow, ferry marshalling and parking.

i) Establish Municipal resources for Snug Cove Plan implementation in the 2002 budget or 5-year budget for the following actions:

- Planning resources for the development of Land Use Regulations for Snug Cove.
- Engineering resources for the implementation of public works to complete redesigned Government Road and associated landscaping.