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News Release

PRIME LAND ACQUISITION SUPPORTS NEW LIBRARY VISION

[Sooke, BC] The District of Sooke has taken a major step forward to establishing a new community library with the purchase of a 5.26 acre parcel of land in the community core. Speaking at Sooke Elementary School, Acting Mayor Kerrie Reay said “the District of Sooke and the Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) can now take the next steps toward building a new library for Sooke”.

“This critical stage for a new library facility has been many years coming,” Reay said. “I applaud the effort of District staff who have worked over the past two months to secure this transaction.”

“This land meets most of the criteria required by the VIRL board in order to fulfil our commitment to build a new library for Sooke,” said a *VIRL board spokesperson*.

The undeveloped piece of land is bordered by Evergreen Mall on the south and the newly-constructed Wadams Way on the north. Sooke historian, Elida Peers, noted an historical connection between the site and the world of books and learning.

“The property was purchased in the 1940s by Porter Gibson, whose two sons, Bob and Milt, were well established fixtures in our community. Milt was a teacher at Sooke Elementary School and part of his duties was school librarian. He also went on to establish the first evening classes at Edward Milne highschool,” Peers said.

The purchase price of the property was \$1.42 million, paid for initially from District reserve funds. The reserve funds will be replenished following the District’s 2016/17 budget and five-year financial plan discussions.

The land is currently zoned residential and designated as Town Centre in the Official Community Plan. The purchase of the land aligns with the District of Sooke’s Strategic Plan goals of fiscal sustainability, community planning, and enhancing community livability.

“I see this as a great fit for a new library, and the learning and community gathering opportunities that come with it. I estimate that about 80% of the property will be available for other uses. There are many great things we can do with the remainder of this property, and this land acquisition will be held for future partnerships,” Reay said.

Attachment: map

See over...

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Attachment: Site Map

