

People like their initial Bamberton glimpse

By Aaron Bichard - The Pictorial
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Whisper the words Bamberton and development within earshot of a certain group of people and you'd better be prepared to listen. Through teeth clenched in frustration and anger fueled by memories of the proposed development of the '90s, concerns of traffic, water, sewage and sight lines bubble to the surface.

Folks aren't apt to easily forget.

Jack Julseth and his crew at Three Point Properties say they've heard the concerns, and want to be an integral part of creating a vision for the future. They say they want to be part of the community, and stewards of the land.



Aaron Bichard

Pam Barrett looks over the proposed plans for Bamberton at Brentwood College Tuesday.

Since acquiring the 1,500-acre property in March 2005, the developers have poured more than \$10 million into remediation of the old cement plant site.

"If we don't get approval for this project now, we'll wait," Julseth said, "We're not in this for the short term. This is a generational thing. This is a spectacular piece of property that we want to protect for the future."

The company threw open the doors at Brentwood College for six hours Tuesday to give neighbours, residents and curious looky-loos a peek into plans for the next 25 years at Bamberton.

From the 350 people who stopped by the open house, the developer received 45 questionnaires, all but one being supportive of the 3,200-home and waterfront village proposal, development manager Michelle Mahovlich said.

"We had one that had concerns but that person was opposed to every aspect of the proposal," she said.

Suggestions to improve the proposal included adding an ice rink, pool and tennis

courts, which the developer is willing to consider.

For Mill Bay resident Pam Barrett, however, the main concern is traffic.

"I'd think 3,200 homes would mean somewhere around 6,400 vehicles," Barrett said. "The Malahat can't handle that. Where are these cars going to go?"

Barrett said the proposal to move the Brentwood ferry from Mill Bay to Bamberton would make sense, but believes a rail system needs to be examined.

The developers plan to apply to the Cowichan Valley Regional District for rezoning this month, and said the public would continue to be informed.

"When we got the property we knew the history," Julseth said, "We want to do this right and in a way that we can build something that will benefit the area."

Anne Bomford, one of the most vocal opponents of the original Bamberton plan attended the open house, but declined comment on the new plan.

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