

## **Bamberton resurrected**

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Development: Lengthy official process launched that could see homes in 2009

The Cowichan Valley Regional District will hold an unprecedented number of public meetings in a process to allow Bamberton developers to go ahead with an ambitious residential project.

However, it could be as long as two years before the area is rezoned and a single house is built on the property.

“We will be holding four separate public information meetings,” said CVRD director Mike Walker.

“We want to hear any concerns the public may have and the meetings will allow us to keep focused on the four main issues,” he said.

Those issues are land use and housing; servicing and infrastructure, transportation infrastructure, and parks and environment.

So far, said Walker, there has been no public outcry about the proposed community.

“I think the general public will wait and see what the proposal is and then we'll go from there.”

Three Point Properties wants to create a seaside village and build more than 3,000 new homes over about 20 years on about 1,400 acres just off the Malahat at the derelict Bamberton site.

The site was home to a cement plant for 70 years until it shut down in 1982.

The developer has already spent about \$10 million to clean the area, said Three Point spokeswoman, Michelle Mahovlich.

“Since May, we have moved about 100,000 dump trucks of soil into an approved, engineered soil-storage facility,” she said, noting the land had three landfill sites contaminated with inorganic metals that had to be looked after.

Mahovlich said her company is looking forward to the upcoming public meetings.

“We’re excited to showcase what we can do for the community,” she said.

The first public meeting will be held March 13, however it’s a first step in a long process and, because of the scope of the project and the procedures that have to be followed, Walker said the earliest he could see houses erected on the land would be in 2009.

The land is currently zoned for industry and forestry, but the developers are asking it to be changed for residential and commercial interests.

Three Point’s plan is to create a publicly accessible waterfront village with affordable housing as a gateway to the Cowichan Valley.

The plan also includes donating 17-acres in the north zone to expand Bamberton Provincial Park and housing.

The middle zone would have industrial architecture-flavoured stores, office space and housing, with numerous residential areas and a new ferry terminal for the Brentwood route.

The development proposal also includes a boardwalk along the Saanich Inlet waterfront and possibly a stage in the old quarry site to give ferry traffic a place to stop, similar to Horseshoe Bay.

The south zone would create 22-kilometres of parkland down to McCurdy Point with between 100 and 200 executive-style homes.

Upon completion a developed Bamberton would house about 3,200 homes.

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