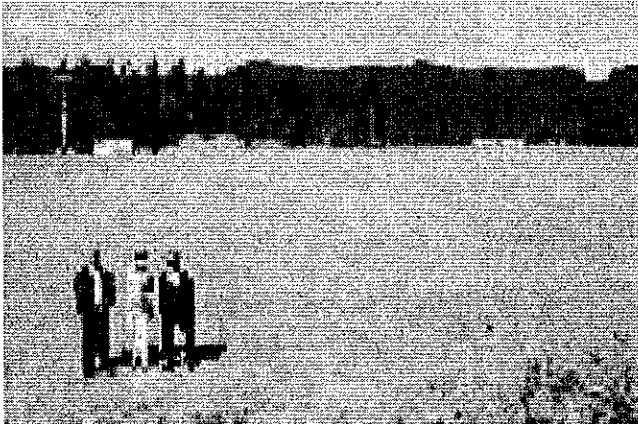


Massive space for business

By Jim Sinclair - Sooke News Mirror - April 16, 2008



Developers, from left, Shayne Fedosenko, Joanna Bates and Tony Zarsadias on site at the new Sooke Business Park.

Jim Sinclair photo

Longtime local residents may know about the 47-acre parcel of land in Otter Point – a former TimberWest log sort which has gone underutilized for well over 10 years. Newcomers would likely be struck by the huge, flat, paved area sitting empty but for a small portion serving as parking space for out-of-service buses.

The area off of Otter Point Road at Ramsden Road has apparently been considered for use as an airstrip. It would have made an ideal go-kart raceway or a place to learn how to ride a motorcycle, but some ambitious developers are guiding it toward a future as a light industrial centre – the Sooke Business Park.

Joanna Bates is the project manager for Three Point Properties which is part of a partnership developing, promoting and selling the park. Realtors Shayne Fedosenko of Pemberton Holmes and Tony Zarsadias of Burr Properties are involved as well.

What is planned is a site to accommodate 70 enterprises.

“The project was actually brought to us (in late 2006) by Michael Volk of Island View Construction,” said Bates on April 11 in advance of a two-day open house on the property.

“The site was already zoned and that was attractive for us because the industrial marketplace now in Greater Victoria now is really, really tight. So it presented an opportunity right off the bat.”

“Really what we’re trying to get is to drum up some interest in the industrial market,” said Bates, “and hopefully some investors who want to come in and scoop up some industrial lots at a great, introductory price.”

The project manager explained how the development group has carefully gone about the steps involved in making the park a reality, including meeting with citizens’ groups and various levels of government.

The Otter Point and Shirley Residents and Ratepayers Association (OPSRRA), according to Arnie Campbell, has been working with the developers for about a year-and-a-half.

“They approached us and said they were interested in connecting with the local community to explain what they might be trying to do with the old log sort property,” said Campbell on Sunday.

Campbell expressed appreciation for the communication from the developers.

“It involves planning,” said Campbell. “It might not be what everybody wants to see, but at least it’s been a consultative process.”

“Like every project it’s got its challenges,” said Bates. “We recognize we’re working in a sensitive environment there. To put an industrial park in we’ve been really aware of the concerns surrounding the watersheds, so we’ve been mindful of that with all the pending applications that we have. Those are the things that are taking time, making sure we get things right.

“There’s a lot of new residential development going on in the area,” she concluded, “so we’re hoping we can be somewhat of a complementary neighbour. If we can contribute to that growing tax base then we’d love to be a part of that.”

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