

March 30, 2006

EDITORIAL

Time to start building NNC

Yet another announcement was made regarding the New Nanaimo Centre this week, but it wasn't the one we want to hear – the one that says ground has broken on the beleaguered project.

Instead, the announcement that Millennium Development of Vancouver is taking over day-to-day management of the project has only brought up questions – questions such as why is Triarc/Suro bringing on a partner at this late stage?

Why, when Triarc was given the green light almost two years ago, aren't the designs further along?

LET'S HOPE

Millennium is catalyst for action.

The configurations for the conference centre and hotel were agreed upon last spring, and yet

the exterior designs aren't finished and the interior designs are only just begun. Why?

Why don't we know the full cost of the project yet? Oh, right, the designs aren't finished yet ...

Contractor Intertech hasn't yet given the city its guaranteed maximum price on the project, and even when it does, cash allowances will be provided for in the price. That means the cost of the project could rise yet again.

And if that happens, the city will have to start picking away at the project itself, because there is no more money available from the taxpayers. And if they have to start deleting pieces, then it will no longer be the project we voted for in the November 2004 referendum.

Was Triarc even planning to build the NNC at all? Does Monday's announcement mean the writing is on the wall for the NNC?

Not necessarily.

Despite reservations on the timing of the announcement, one cannot look past the good reputation Millennium Development has in B.C. building projects such as civic and commercial centres, residential towers and an Olympic village.

Ground is supposed to break on the NNC in June. Let's hope Millennium will get the job done.

◆ News Bulletin editorial board
editor@nanaimobulletin.com