

Sign of progress

The Courtenay Comox Valley Record. Courtenay,
B.C.:Sep 26, 2007. p. A30

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After seven years of seemingly endless hearings, Union Bay will be revitalized by a Kensington Island Properties 845-acre development.

It's good news for the majority of the folk in the small, scenic community who made it clear they're weary of stagnation in the place, which has languished since coal was king many decades ago.

The smaller number of residents who prefer Union Bay just the way it is and fought the good fight to keep it that way will have to adapt or move.

They might take some solace in the knowledge that KIP has been extremely responsible in paying for salmon enhancement in Hart (Washer) Creek.

The company, which has been extraordinarily patient during the long approval process, will also provide sites for a school and train station. KIP will develop water and sewage treatment centres that will service all Union Bay residents, not just ones living on its property.

The development itself will include a golf course,

1,690 single-family, multi-family and condo units, 15,000 square metres of commercial space and a marina -- giving people reason to stop in Union Bay rather than just cruising past on Highway 19A.

In the end, KIP had invested so much and wanted the development badly enough to endure more twists and turns than a John Grisham novel.

KIP hung in through a failed Union Bay incorporation referendum and complex negotiations for a regional water system that might still be bogged down if not for a provincial edict favouring Comox Lake rather than Van West Lakes.

KIP engineers and consultants are already springing into action in what looks like a responsible and positive addition to the face of the Comox Valley.

Time will tell how other large developments fare in Cumberland and Courtenay.

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