Saving Place:

Municipal Government and Heritage Conservation

The Case of the Mount Newton Valley
District of Central Saanich, British Columbia

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF CITY PLANNING

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A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree

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Abstract

The thesis comprises an exploration of the linkages between heritage conservation, planning and placemaking. Using a case study approach, the project examines why and how the Mount Newton Valley, in the District of Central Saanich, British Columbia was considered for heritage designation by the District, and why the process failed. The investigation focuses on i) how effective locally driven heritage landscape conservation may be best achieved; ii) how placemaking theory can better inform and strengthen the public process used in local heritage designations; iii) and how placemaking might frame the municipal planning and management process regarding proposed heritage landscapes.

The theory of heritage conservation and placemaking is examined for similarities and differences. This literature forms the basis of analysis of interviews conducted with local government and community members regarding the failed heritage designation. During the research, it was discovered that the designation proposal failed as a result of a lack of communication, the misreading of the audience, insufficient public involvement, and the legacy of previous public processes in the area. The introspection of the research participants indicated that a different approach to the public process was needed. Two other heritage conservation projects in other cities are examined as examples of "best practice" scenarios, and are compared to the process used in Central Saanich.

The research participants acknowledge that a different process would have been more appropriate, and placemaking theory is used to provide a possible alternative. It is concluded that placemaking does provide an improved alternative, but that because it is still not widely understood or used in the Canadian context, that it may need further promotion and experimentation. A number of recommendations are presented. During the course of the research it was discovered that heritage conservation initiatives must achieve broad-based support prior to public presentation and that dialogue between stakeholder groups is essential. It is also suggested that mutual learning between stakeholder groups is a critical component of this dialogue. Finally, "placesaving" is theorized as an integration of placemaking and heritage conservation theory, where a focus on community-building and public process is explored as a means of creating a new praxis.

This thesis is dedicated to Howard and Allison Chase

best known as Dad and Mom

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Chapter 1—Introduction

"Planning is the means of conservation; it is also the means of total destruction"[1]
(Pershore Civic Society, Worcestershire, 1972)

1.1 Problem Statement

This study investigates how local governments are involved in heritage conservation. This is achieved through an application of current placemaking theory to a case study of the Mount Newton Valley in the District of Central Saanich, British Columbia. The project examines why the Mount Newton Valley was originally considered for heritage designation, and why the process effectively failed. I investigate: i) how effective locally driven heritage landscape conservation may be best achieved; ii) how placemaking theory can better inform and strengthen the public process used in local designations; iii) and how placemaking can frame the planning and management process regarding proposed heritage landscapes. The Mount Newton Valley case in Central Saanich is used as the vehicle for exploring these questions, and for testing possible responses to the questioning developed during the course of the research. The research allows the establishment of a more systematic process useful for the identification and designation of heritage landscapes within local contexts. It also assists conservationists as "placesavers" to draw upon a broader body of knowledge, thereby increasing their effectiveness and scope. The research is designed to support proactive local governments that may be undertaking conservation activities by harnessing the benefits of linking of the two activities, heritage conservation and planning as placemaking.

[1] Planning within the heritage conservation context is difficult at best. The current system may appear to many as being extremely regulatory, and very crude at times. However, it is the system that we work within, and as such there is a need to better understand its processes and how planners can use these processes to achieve the best possible outcomes.

1.2 Statement of Position

This project developed from my position as an intern with the District of Central Saanich in 1998. During my tenure there, I was involved in the Official Community Plan Update, and was involved in the writing of the Heritage section of this document. I was interested to note that after I returned to university, the municipal Heritage Advisory Commission proceeded with a bid to designate the Mount Newton Valley as a Heritage Conservation Area. Through sporadic communication with my summer supervisor, I learned that a letter had been sent to the Valley residents, and that a public meeting was planned for May of 1999. I was not able to participate in any of these activities, and learned of them second hand through documents provided by the Municipality and through conversations with my external advisor. When I returned to Vancouver Island at the end of the semester, I learned that Council had stopped the proposed heritage conservation designation. The process had failed to gather the necessary community support. In fact, the idea of heritage conservation had garnered a strong negative response from the residents of the Mount Newton Valley and the Mount Newton Slopes. Although I support the concept of a Heritage Conservation Area within the Mount Newton Valley, it is obvious that there are many issues that need to be resolved. I support the local government's decision not to proceed with the designation at this time and hope to provide some insight into the failure of the process associated with the 1999 initiative.

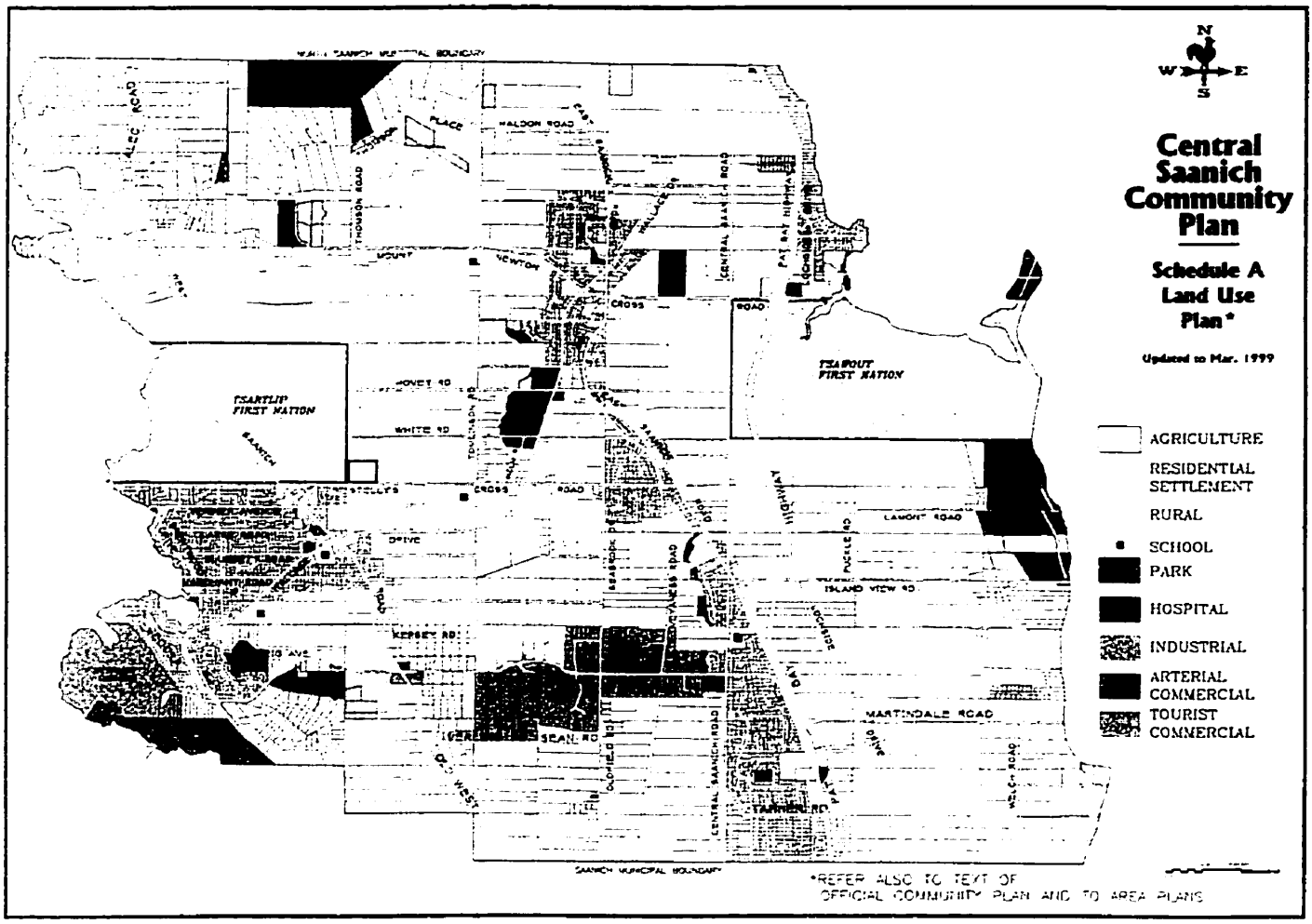
1.3 The Context

The District of Central Saanich is one of 13 municipalities within the Capital Regional District surrounding Victoria, the capital of the province of British Columbia. The District is 42.6 square kilometres in area, and is bounded by the Saanich Inlet on the west and

Haro Strait on the east. To the north lies the District of North Saanich, and to the south is the District of Saanich. There are two major residential villages—Brentwood Bay and Saanichton/Keating Ridge. Each of these communities is largely self-sufficient with retail and commercial uses alongside a varied housing stock. The population of Central Saanich was approximately 14,600 in 1996 and is growing at a current rate of around 1.4% per annum (District of Central Saanich, 1999).

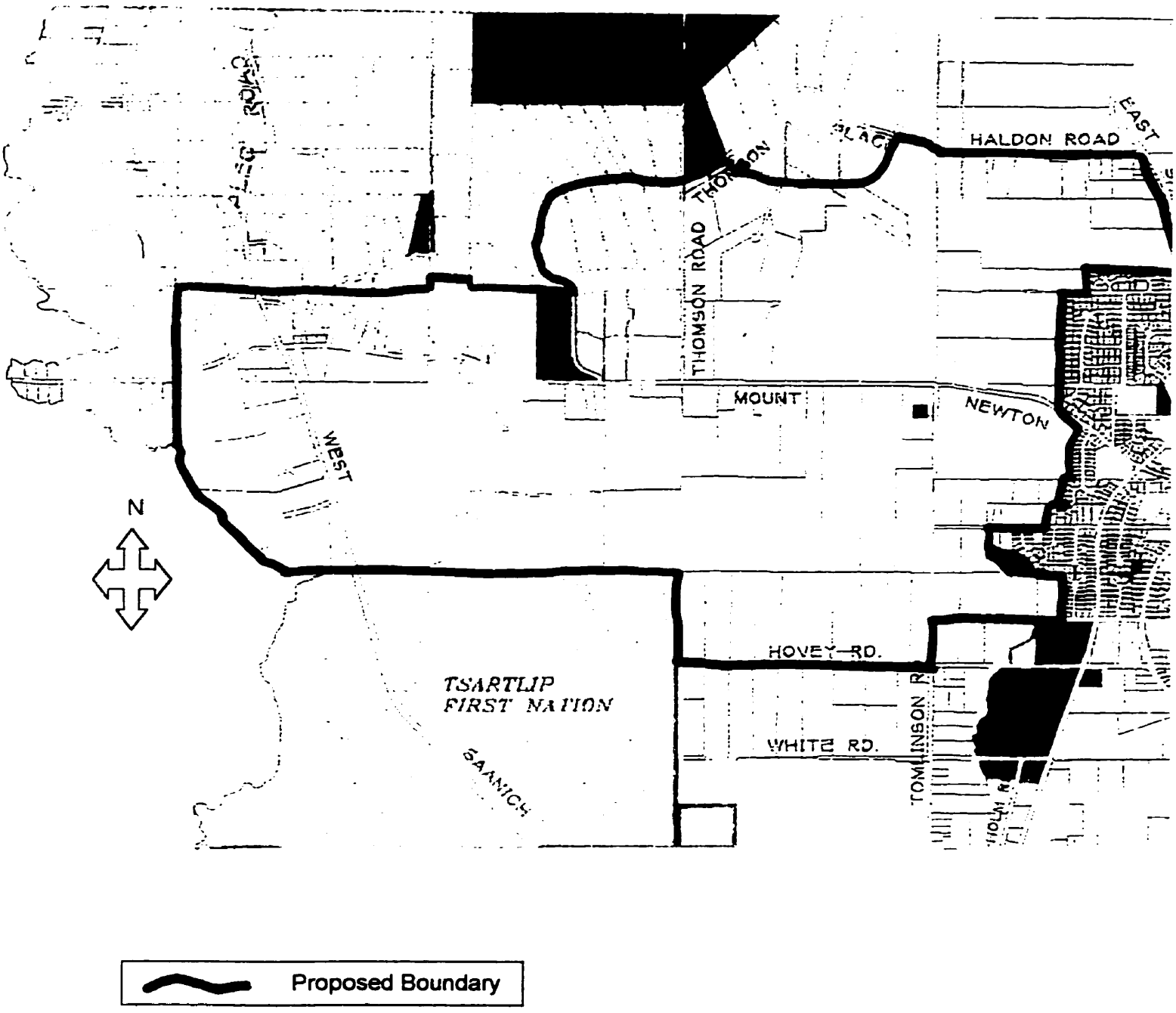
The Mount Newton Valley lies in the northwest quadrant of the municipality. Potential boundaries for the Heritage Conservation Area were proposed by the Heritage Advisory Commission at a meeting in April 1999. The proposed conservation area is illustrated on page 11.

There are several pieces of legislation that govern activities within the Mount Newton Valley. The municipal legislation is the Official Community Plan (OCP), which indicates that the area is agricultural, and shall remain so for the indefinite future. Because the area is primarily agricultural, it is also protected by the provincial Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), which inhibits most development, and helps retain the land as farmland except under exceptional circumstances. This legislation is further supported by the *Farm Practices Protection Act* or *The Right to Farm Act*. The area is not currently subject to a Local Area Plan. A Land Use Bylaw sets out zoning regulations, which support the policies of the OCP and the ALR.



Map 1: District of Central Saanich Land Use Plan

From the District of Central Saanich Official Community Plan, 1999, Schedule A.



Map 2: Proposed Boundary of Mount Newton Conservation Area
From the District of Central Saanich Heritage Advisory Commission, 1999

The Tsartlip First Nation has indicated that the Mount Newton Valley and Mount Newton are part of the Tsartlip traditional territory and has special spiritual significance for them. Although the Tsartlip First Nation was invited to participate in the public process, they did not send any representatives. It is not clear if the area is subject to a land claim, or if the Tsartlip First Nation is aware of some of development pressures currently facing the area.

In December 1998, a letter was sent to all homeowners within the Valley. It indicated that the area was being considered for Heritage Designation, and solicited their participation in a Town Hall Meeting. This meeting occurred in April of 1999, and while it was supposed to be an information session, many residents were already vehemently opposed to the designation. At the meeting, a survey instrument that had been prepared by staff and a consultant was distributed. Many were returned at the end of the meeting, and more were dropped off at the Municipal Hall. Based on responses gathered from the survey, and from the comments made at the information meeting, it was decided that the Heritage Conservation Area proposal would not be pursued in the immediate future.

As of February 2000, a motion has been accepted by the District Council that further inquiries into the Designation of the Mount Newton Valley as a Heritage Conservation Area be halted.

However, it remains a policy within the Official Community Plan to pursue this idea. The next update of the OCP is not expected to occur for at least 5 years, and there have been no motions to have this policy struck from the current Plan. There are some residents within the Valley who still support the designation, and who have made a commitment to working towards this goal.

Photo 1: St. Stephen's Church-Est. 1862.
The oldest continually used church in British Columbia

Photo 2: Bannockburn-Built 1869
Built by William Thomson. It is the oldest surviving house on the Saanich Peninsula

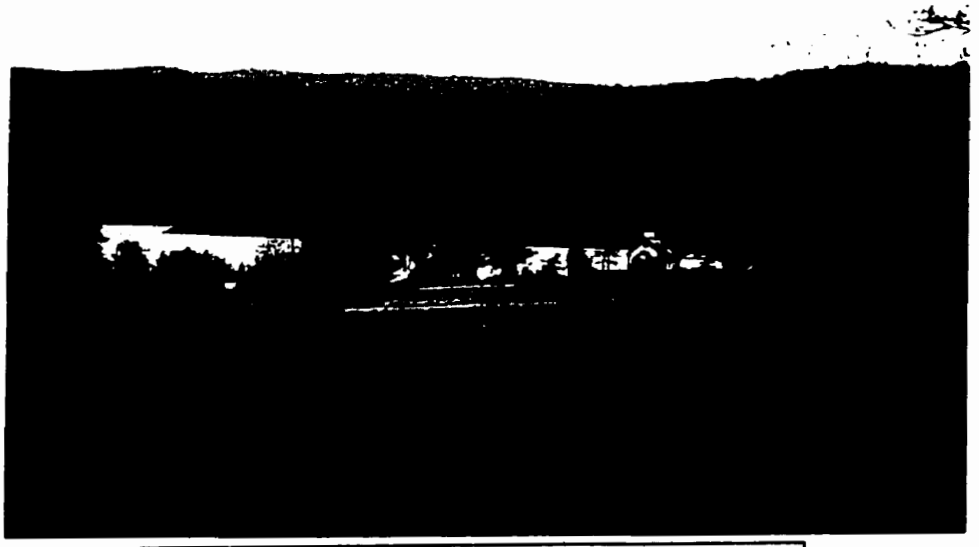


Photo 3: St. Mary's Church-Est. 1890
Early Catholic Church on the Saanich Peninsula

Photos of the Valley
February 2000

Photo 4: Gravesite of Duncan and Helen Lidgate at St. Stephen's. Lidgate was one of the early pioneers in the area.

Photo 5: The original Lidgate homestead in the Mount Newton Valley is commemorated by this marker. The house in the background is not the original.

Photo 6: Thomson Barn-Built 1887 and later. This barn was originally part of the Bannockburn estate and has been added to over the years.

Photos of the Valley
February 2000

Aerial Photo from the West
Photo Courtesy of Andrew Richardson

1.4 Purpose of Thesis

Through this project, I demonstrate the need for a new body of knowledge dealing with how local governments might go about the process of "saving" or conserving heritage places. The development of postmodern planning practice, as a reaction to modernist preoccupations with the "new", created a broad shift in theory surrounding the older "places" in planning settings. This shift has been expressed in multiple ways. One of the most visible outcomes of this focus has been the creation of new places, and the restoration of the old. The resulting field of study--"placemaking"--embraces multiple branches of practice. The best known at present is often referred to as New Urbanism, which is often critiqued for reflecting a societal obsession with the new and the unique, while representing placemaking as a nostalgic movement. While we are in the midst of creating something new, we have overlooked the still extant valuable old places that we use as models. The result of this omission is frequently the mismanagement and erosion or destruction of the very places we are attempting to emulate. It appears that this occurs because there is a perception that new development is easier to undertake than heritage conservation (Larkham, 1996). The end result is that heritage conservation or "saving place" is low on the list of priorities for many municipal governments.

One dimension of placemaking deals with the process used to reclaim old, or create new places. This aspect of placemaking and its associated community-building activities frames the analysis of this thesis. In it, placemaking represents a complex system where a dialogic space is created in which stakeholders engage in conversation and negotiation (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995). Placemaking involves a long-term project, which enables communities to develop internal strengths and ties. It often takes an issue and uses it as a catalyst to further community development by providing a focus around which people can rally. Schneekloth and Shibley characterise placemaking as "the

human art and practice of building community" (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995). Will this branch of knowledge be useful if it is incorporated into the heritage designation process? What needs to occur within a community before it can be used? This line of questioning allows greater insight into why local governments might undertake heritage conservation activities, and suggests how to improve future community building activities while actively pursuing a conservation agenda.

I suspect that local governments are hesitant to use the existing legislation because of public pre-conceptions about heritage conservation, and the possibility of severe political repercussions. As a result, many municipalities are unaware of the potential benefits of conservation activities. Moreover, because of a narrow focus on built heritage rather than whole landscapes, the overall sense of place of many communities is being degraded. The criteria used to determine heritage merit are narrow, in that they generally refer to the architectural merit of a building's style, the famous persons associated with a property, or an event that took place on site. The legislation itself is very proactive. Due to its complexity, however, it is difficult for municipalities to apply. There is also very little funding for heritage activities from the provincial government, which leaves many municipalities with inadequate funding for the public process associated with any large-scale heritage projects. The process that many municipalities end up using does not encourage ongoing community participation in heritage activities because the process itself is a closed cycle. By this I mean that there is a clear beginning, a few steps in the middle, and a clear end when a site is designated. In light of this process, I am questioning the current motives behind conservation. I posit that less mentioned motives relating to sense of place, community-building and the collective memory surrounding certain locales are being ignored in favour of conservation of a single narrative of history. The result is that local government heritage conservation

initiatives struggle to deal with the unidentified "placesaving" aspects of conservation. The idea of placesaving is that the focus for future community development is tied to understanding and preserving the best aspects of the past. This includes the creation of a space for community dialogue and ongoing community participation in the planning process. In the case of the Mount Newton Valley, heritage landscape conservation could be used to focus and energise the practice of placemaking.

This study poses a number of questions. What are the links between placemaking and heritage conservation literature, that can be applied to the situation in Central Saanich? How might effective heritage landscape conservation be best achieved in a municipal context? How can the community-building process underlying placemaking be adapted for harnessing by heritage conservationists? And finally, how can placemaking frame the processes of planning and managing cultural landscapes that have been identified for conservation by local governments?

1.5 Scope of Thesis

The study has been designed to explore heritage conservation issues at a rather small-scale local landscape level. Through the reflections of the informants and information provided by the District of Central Saanich, a better understanding can be developed of how heritage conservation activities might best be realised. To better understand the dynamics of the public process involved in heritage conservation, municipal officials from two other regional localities with successful heritage projects are compared to the process in Central Saanich, to illustrate selected aspects of professional placemaking and heritage conservation. While the findings of the thesis may not be directly applicable to other municipalities, nevertheless, there are--potentially--a number of lessons that can be learned.

Chapter 2—Heritage Conservation

When heritage sites are designated, we generally think of areas that have national or international significance. The trend in historic conservation has been to designate structures and monuments associated with famous events and people. Buildings that exemplified specific styles, periods and technical innovations were designated with enthusiasm. We defined heritage by age rather than other merits with the result that in North America almost anything older than 50 years may be considered for heritage designation. This sense of heritage as being related to age is in many ways unique to conservation in the North American context. This has been addressed recently by national and international bodies such as ICOMOS[2] who have developed terminology specific to heritage conservation.

2.1 What Does it all Mean?

The idea of a cultural landscape is relatively new for conservation activists, but British Columbia heritage legislation is loosely based on international protocols dealing with the same issues. As a result, a common language surrounding the conservation of cultural landscapes is evolving (Parks Canada, 1994; Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, 1995a and b; Denhez, 1996). To clarify some of the terminology that is used in this thesis, the following paragraphs define and clarify several terms that are used consistently for reference.

[2] ICOMOS refers to the International Commission on Monuments and Sites.

Until recently, conservation activities were conducted within a set of narrow guidelines. These guidelines focused almost exclusively on buildings and places associated with famous historical events and people. More recently at the international and national levels, UNESCO and Parks Canada have determined that there are many other worthy sites that did not fall under the older guidelines of heritage conservation. As a result, new criteria have been developed. Many other categories of objects and monuments are included, of which cultural landscapes are one. A cultural landscape may be considered for conservation if it meets the following definitions, and is subject to approval by Parks Canada.

> A **Cultural Resource** is: A human work or place which gives evidence of human activity or has spiritual or cultural meaning, and which has been determined to have historic value"
>
> and a **Cultural Landscape** is "any geographical area that has been modified, influenced, or given special cultural meaning by people" (Parks Canada, 1994, p. 119).

These definitions are subject to the site having **historic value**, "refer(ing) to having importance in, or influence on, history" as opposed to **historical value** "refer(ing) more broadly to what is concerned with history (Parks Canada, 1994, p. 120). For the purpose of this thesis, Heritage Landscape and Cultural Landscape will be used interchangeably.

The difference between **Preservation** and **Conservation** is still being refined. In planning terms, **Preservation** generally means that a building or area is preserved or restored to a specific point in time and is legislated to remain this way. This definition does not imply continuing use of a site, and generally does not allow for the site to

involve in the future. [3]It is suspected that many people equate heritage conservation with this definition of preservation, which may explain the reluctance of many property owners to designate their properties. **Conservation** means that an area is protected from demolition by law, but that certain changes and alterations are permissible. Conservation also allows for the layers of the past to be exposed, and implies that new layers will be incorporated into the original fabric of the site. In this definition, the continuing use of a site is important and new uses are often incorporated alongside the old (Birnbaum, 1996; Tschudi-Madsen, 1985). In this study, conservation will be used to describe heritage activities, as it was not the intention of the proponents in Central Saanich to freeze the landscape in the Mount Newton Valley in a particular time period.

There are several other terms that need to be clarified. For the purposes of this document, **culture** is best defined as "a shifting semantic field...a field of symbolic production and material practice empowered in complex ways. In this semantic space human beings construct and represent themselves and others, and hence their societies and histories.... Thus 'culture' represents historically situated, contestable (and often contested) ensembles of material and symbolic signifiers" (Cooper and Rodman, p. 125). Within the context of heritage conservation, culture is located geographically and temporally. It is also important to note that cultures co-exist in the same location and may be perceived as different layers inscribed on the same landscape.

Within British Columbia, the **Heritage Character** of a site is a determining factor in its conservation. It is defined as "the overall effect produced by traits or features which give

[3] Examples of preservation include a variety of "theme" heritage parks such as Barkerville in British Columbia, a mining ghost town, and Heritage Park in Calgary, which is a collection of turn-of-the century buildings assembled from other sites in the province.

the property or area a distinctive quality or appearance" (Heritage Branch, Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, 1995b). In addition to heritage character, the **Heritage Value** is also important. Value is defined as "the historical, cultural, aesthetic, scientific or educational worth or usefulness of a property or area" (Heritage Branch, Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, 1995b). A **Heritage Property** is a property that "a) in the opinion of a body or person authorised to exercise a power under the *Municipal Act* in relation to the property, has sufficient heritage value or heritage character to justify its conservation or; b) is protected heritage property" (Heritage Branch, Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, 1995b).

Finally, all municipalities in BC must have an **Official Community Plan** or **OCP.** An OCP is "a long term plan adopted by bylaw which is a general statement of objectives, policies, and land uses for a community" (Heritage Branch, Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, 1995b). The District of Central Saanich has recently updated their OCP, and a new awareness of heritage in the community is reflected in that document.

Using these definitions and their associated legislation, several Canadian sites have been designated as cultural landscapes at the national level. These include such notable areas as the Bar U Ranch in Alberta, the Rideau Hall Complex in Ottawa, and Motherwell in Saskatchewan. All of these sites are administered under the federal jurisdiction of Parks Canada. It is surmised that there are numerous cultural landscapes that are not recognised because they do not have national significance compared to the above mentioned areas. However, such landscapes can be critical to the identity and sense of place of the local areas which hosts them.

It is important to note that the following sections represent a brief historical timeline of heritage conservation. The language that is used is specific to the country under discussion and to the time period. The language surrounding heritage conservation shifts even as the practice of conservation evolves.

2.2 What is Heritage Conservation?

Our concept of heritage relies heavily on the experiences of Britain and the United States. To better understand the Canadian context, a brief history of heritage conservation can be traced, starting with the history of the heritage conservation movement in Britain.

The methods and philosophy used to identify sites of significance have changed considerably since the origins of what has become the conservation movement in Britain[4]. The National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty was incorporated in 1895 with the goal of preserving the "pre-industrial landscape [in Britain] from the forces of industrialisation" (Barthel, 1996). This goal later changed to include the preservation of a variety of sites and structures from numerous time periods. The conservation movement in Britain has traditionally been driven by artistic and intellectual thought, and was generally the domain of the elite, through non-governmental organisations, with the financial support of individuals and government (Barthel, 1996).

[4] The difference between preservation and conservation is explored in section 2.1. The term preservation may be used to denote older literature (pre 1990), while conservation will be referenced to new ideas in the field.

The main thrust of the organisation was the conservation of numerous buildings and sites across Britain, especially country homes, churches, and the remaining commons and pastoral areas.

Conservation in Europe and Britain was dominated by the early work of individuals such as Viollet-le-Duc whose definition of restoration was that "to restore a building is to re-establish it to a completed state which may never have existed at any particular time"(Tschudi-Madsen, 1985, 13). He also may be credited with the idea of preserving sites to specific periods. The British restoration period was also influenced by the idea of *l'unite de style*, or the conformity of the monument. This *unite* was achieved without respect for various periods and the influence of their styles. By the end of the 19th century restoration had fallen out of favour and preservation was being practised (Tschudi-Madsen, 1985).

While Britain and Europe placed an emphasis on conservation of the built environment, North America brought the conservation of nature to the fore (Tschudi-Madsen, 1985). In the United States, the conservation movement was driven by the need to express patriotism and cultural diversity. The creation of a national parks system was part of an ideal that the parks would be "for the benefit and enjoyment of the people" (Tschudi-Madsen, 16, 1985). Before the 1930's, conservation activities were undertaken by two government agencies. The war department had responsibility for the maintenance of battlefields and monuments. The National Parks service maintained America's system of parks. After the 1930s, the National Parks Service was awarded responsibility for preservation and conservation of buildings "by winning support for the Historic American Buildings Survey"(Barthel, 1996, 21).

During World War II, funding for conservation was cut. Many professionals realised the need for a conservation organisation independent of the federal government. The National Trust for Historic Preservation was founded in 1949 as a non-profit group. Due to the late start of this organisation, it has far fewer properties than its British counterpart. As a result, "much of the American organisation's emphasis is on encouraging local groups, offering technical advice, and lobbying for preservationist causes in state and national government" (Barthel, 1996, p.22). The main difference between the two movements is the method used for conservation. In Britain, it is achieved through a private, non-profit organisation, whereas in the United States conservation is achieved at the local or county level, through various levels of government.

The early Canadian preservation movement was closely modelled after the American experience and has repeatedly attempted to forge a national identity for Canada through its activities. The federal government and Parks Canada guided the early process of heritage conservation with initial emphasis on the protection of areas of outstanding natural beauty. Because of this aim, Banff National Park was created in 1885. This park and many others were often associated with a Canadian identity of pioneer settlers and rugged individuals. The heritage conservation movement focused on natural resources until 1952-53 when the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* was passed. This new legislation allowed the federal government to dedicate sites of national significance, which were generally associated with famous Canadians or were examples of meritorious architectural styles. However, this legislation was very weak due to constitutional law which gives the provinces jurisdiction over matters pertaining to property (Prusina, 1995).

Canada's participation in the International Commission on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) spurred provincial interest in conservation. ICOMOS published several charters detailing the principles of conservation and the criteria to be used in designating sites (BC Heritage Trust, 1989). In addition to these international resources, the Ontario and British Columbia provincial governments published guidelines indicating the varying levels of intervention involved in conservation. The level of intervention assigned to a site was dependent on the amount of respect shown to the original fabric of the site. The maximum respect for historic sites involves the minimalist intervention of preservation, stabilisation, consolidation, restoration and rehabilitation. Moderate respect for historic fabric is shown on sites where interventions including reassembly, replication, reconstruction, moving or fragmentation have occurred. Limited respect for heritage fabric is demonstrated on sites where renovation and modernisation have taken place (BC Heritage Trust, 1989). It is very rare that sites where massive intervention such as this are formally designated, as very little of the original integrity of the site or artefact remains. Although preservation has been viewed as best practice in the literature, there has been a recent shift in language to use the term conservation, as preservation negatively implies freezing a site in a particular time period.

The provinces eventually began to actively pursue heritage activities to encourage tourism. By the 1980s, most provinces had legislation dealing with heritage issues and the conservation of heritage resources. Due to the economic pressures of tourism and prevalent practice in the 1980s, the emphasis of preservation was restoration of sites to specific time periods (Buggey, 1998). The 1990s have seen a new awareness of culture within conservation practice. Postmodern theory regarding the acknowledgement of difference has in part led to the conservation and rehabilitation of culturally unique sites

such as the Chinatowns in Victoria and Vancouver, and Mennonite settlements in Manitoba, which allow new layers to be incorporated into the landscape. These examples provide interesting examples of how heritage is incorporated into a modern working landscape.

It is interesting to note that the conservation of rural areas has not been given great attention within the literature. Rural areas are only now beginning to receive attention, and there are still many obstacles to overcome. When comparing rural and urban areas Tomlan notes:

> By contrast, preservationists have had less success with rural problems...Rural agrarian buildings are more difficult to save than the structures in our cities and on our streets. The political constituency of rural areas is more scattered. In addition, our society has little contact with the decreasing number of people who turn the soil or raise livestock. And the average American who drives through or flies over rural landscapes has only a vague idea of the activities that were carried on in them (Tomlan, 1992, p. 76).

Although this illustrates the American context, it is equally applicable within Canada, as the problems encountered by the District of Central Saanich and the Mount Newton Valley amply demonstrate.

2.3 Heritage Legislation within British Columbia

The British Columbia experience of heritage conservation is different from other provinces.[5] Municipalities and districts have the power to enact heritage legislation. This is achieved through the *Municipal Act* and the *Heritage Statutes Amendment Act 1994,* which give local governments the power to designate heritage structures and areas, with

[5] The provincial legislation dealing with conservation In British Columbia is viewed as very proactive. It gives local government more power and flexibility in conservation than in other provinces.

or without the consent of the property owner. Although this appears to give municipalities sweeping power, they generally choose not to exercise this power without the consent of property owners to avoid claims for compensation. This has left many historic buildings and landscapes vulnerable to development pressures, and has resulted in radical changes to the character and "sense of place" of many neighbourhoods.

The enabling legislation in BC is very flexible. It is supplemented with numerous advisory documents detailing specific avenues of exploration for community conservation. Heritage Conservation: A Community Guide is a booklet published for local government explaining the new legislation and giving terms of reference for conservation in BC. In addition, new planning and support tools are introduced, new legal protections for property are explained, and BC's principles of heritage conservation are highlighted. The emphasis of conservation is on good planning practice with strong community input and support. The legislation also views conservation activities as a long-term community project with three distinct phases: legal protection of the resource; physical maintenance or upgrading of a resource; and presentation and commemoration of a resource or the education component of a project (Province of British Columbia, 1995). A critique of this approach to heritage conservation is that once a site is duly designated and recognised, there is no requirement for ongoing community consultation and participation in its management. In addition, at the municipal level, few local governments have funding available for interpretation and upgrading. This leaves many heritage property owners with the perception that a property cannot be changed once it is designated, and that heritage conservation is financially punitive in terms of the cost of restoration.

As mentioned above, the legislation that British Columbia uses is extremely flexible. Under the legislation, it is possible to designate as little as a single tree or building, or as

much as an entire district. With the exception of a few municipally-driven efforts, the process of designation used by most municipalities is a negotiated one where a property owner initiates the process. Generally, local governments are able to offer property owners certain incentives if they voluntarily designate a property, but if a property owner will not voluntarily designate a property, a municipality may arbitrarily do so. However, in this case, a property owner may apply to the municipality for compensation if the property value decreases as a result of designation (Province of British Columbia, 1995). This one aspect of the conservation legislation makes heritage conservation a risky proposition for local government. It may also have the effect of discouraging conservation of important community resources due to budgetary restraints and perceived political risks.

Because conservation may be perceived as a negative activity by some people, such as property owners, local governments are loath to undertake conservation without a clear mandate from the community. It is always difficult to make decisions in the face of organised opposition. How can local governments be convinced of the need to undertake conservation, over the objections of special interest groups? What information can local governments use to illustrate the need for, and benefits accrued from, conservation to the affected community?

It is very ambitious for the District of Central Saanich to consider designating an entire Valley with multiple property owners as a Heritage Conservation Area. Although the latest process has been stopped, there is still interest in the area. During the Official Community Plan Update in 1998 community members identified the Mount Newton Valley as an area with potential for heritage designation. The local Heritage Advisory Commission, appointed by the municipality, undertook an investigation and

recommended a proposal to be presented to the residents of the area. A letter was sent to all landowners and occupants in the Valley inviting them to a "town hall" meeting in April, 1999. There was to be a discussion of heritage issues and of the possibility of creating a Heritage Conservation Area within the Valley, with the goal to preserve it as heritage landscape. The feedback from the meeting, and correspondence received by the municipality was very negative. Many residents perceived that the heritage designation would severely infringe on their ability to subdivide their land, and also might make current farming practice difficult to undertake. As a result, a motion was passed at the July 1999 council meeting indicating that the municipality would not be proceeding with the conservation area application at the present time. Although this attempt to use the legislation in an innovative way failed, there are many opportunities that remain. The present study seeks to clarify some of the issues surrounding heritage landscape conservation at the local level, through a case study approach to the Mount Newton Valley initiative.

2.4 What Motivates Conservation?

The heritage conservation literature discussed so far deals largely with the criteria of heritage conservation. Planning professionals do not seem to consider the underlying reasons or motives that people have to "save" or conserve a building or a landscape, except inasmuch as a site fits the definition or criteria of the law. In considering conservation activity, it is equally important to analyse why we undertake the projects we do, what goals we hope to achieve by conservation, and the frameworks we might use to achieve our goals. The following paragraphs clarify some of the current literature dealing with these questions.

Conservation is an activity based on the management of change. In particular, it manifests itself in urban areas where it is often a reaction to our fear of new things (Larkham, 1996). As an approach to dealing with and managing change, conservation is about defining community and personal values and making judgements about what is "worth" preserving. Those not in favour of conservation will argue that "urban areas must change, or they will stagnate"(Larkham, 1996, p. 3). A conservationist would argue that the future is visible in the past, and that we need these past signposts and markers to better find our way in the present and future (Larkham, 1996).

The tension between these two views is present within the planning system, where planners are asked to help decide what is worth preserving, and what can be torn down and re-developed. More frequently, the planner mediates among the developer, the conservationist, and the local government and the systems in which these actors operate. The development process is entrenched in the capitalist system as a means of generating wealth (Larkham, 1996). Conservation is based on:

> Environmental, aesthetic, non-quantitative criteria...So there is a clash of values: land and property exploitation for capital gain versus consideration of art, aesthetic and historical appreciation. There is also in aesthetic terms, an essential tension between the old and the new, the familiar and the unfamiliar (Larkham, 1996, 3).

As a result, many planning professionals believe in the need for progress and innovation, but remain uncomfortable with rapid change, while the larger community may object to the sense of displacement that often accompanies this change.

The sense of displacement and unfamiliarity with human-altered landscapes creates a desire for comfort, and a need for a shared sense of the past. This is often achieved by groups organising to "save" selected buildings and landscapes. They research the

history and people associated with a site, and if they are persistent and fortunate, it will be designated and protected by heritage legislation. Through this process, a strong collective visual memory of a site is developed. New symbolic and real qualities are incorporated into its existing meaning for a community, and links to the past are re-forged (Hayden, 1995). However, what happens after designation, and what tools are in place to ensure the long-term success of conservation? Hayden argues that this sense of local shared history and the multiple narratives that are present in the landscape need to be identified. This identification by both social historians and by conservation planners will ultimately result in community power being derived from a strong sense of place (Hayden, 1995). This aspect of conservation intertwines with the fields of environmental psychology and community empowerment (Hayden, 1995; Hough, 1990). It is only one of the many reasons people want to conserve buildings and places.

The 'why' of conservation is as varied as the communities and people involved. Larkham (1996) has identified several generic motives for conservation within Britain that may be applicable to Canada: economic; social; cultural; psychological; didactic; and fashionable. There is a realisation in many communities that aspects of conservation are very profitable. For example, the Town of Chemainus on Vancouver Island has become a successful example in this respect. When the logging industry abandoned the area, the town developed murals and an eco-museum that depicted the heritage of the region and the town. The history of the region shaped the town and its inhabitants, and results in a very particular sense of place and identity. Today, the town is often used as a model of innovative economic development practice because of its capitalisation on available community resources. Other economic benefits of conservation include the arrest of neighbourhood decay, increases in property values, and the attraction of business to an area (Larkham, 1996). Another economic concept that is gaining

currency is that of "embodied energy." This is the idea that the energy cost of converting an existing structure is far less than the energy cost required to build a new structure (Larkham, 1996). The conversion, modification, and adaptation of old buildings is redefining our concept of recycling and, when one uses full-cost accounting, can be less of an "natural" capital burden than new construction.[6]

The financial aspects of conservation are difficult to overlook. As mentioned previously, the legislation in British Columbia requires that municipalities compensate owners whose property values have decreased as a direct result of arbitrary designation. However, in many situations, the value of the property increases as a result of designation or inclusion in a conservation area. The British experience indicates that property values may increase by as much as 10% when a property is listed as a historic site (Larkham, 1996). Conservation is also profitable for communities where their conserved building stock and townscape may attract tourists (and their money). Frequent objections by property owners indicate that there is still the perception that older buildings are subject to additional repair costs compared to new construction. Secondly, it is suggested that the requirement for local government consent for modifications of a designated site is a financial and bureaucratic imposition. This perception may be offset by the enhanced prestige of the site, the appreciation in value, and the potential for subdivision of the property (Larkham, 1996). The critical considerations of conservation cannot always be measured monetarily. The social value of heritage areas is not easily qualified. It could be measured by revitalisation of decaying areas, by the number of people involved in community activities that support heritage groups, or by the development of a sense of place and shared goals.

[6] Recycling in this sense is defined by the 3 R's—reduce, reuse, recycle.

Larkham also suggests that conservation is an activity that experiences periods of popularity due to political agendas (Larkham, 1996). The new-urbanist movement perhaps best illustrates a fad for pastiche and historicist design. Specific design elements are incorporated into these new communities from a variety of vernacular sources. A design language has been created where specific elements that individuals are supposed to identify with are consistently recreated. The end effect of such developments remains to be seen, as the intent to create self sustaining communities has not yet been fully realised. They may mimic the patterns of early suburbs yet they lack the sense of place of these communities. The political agenda surrounding this movement has involved much discussion of community values, the family, and safety through design. It remains to be seen if the historic elements that have been incorporated into these areas can create a lasting expression of these sentiments.

According to Larkham, we also conserve heritage resources for didactic reasons: teaching and learning. There is an argument that "we have a moral duty to preserve and conserve our historic heritage, to remember and pass on the accomplishments of our ancestors...[T]he physical artefacts of history teach observers about landscapes, people, events and values of the past, giving substance to 'cultural memory'"(Larkham, 1996, 7). Hayden also gives credence to the idea that the physical remains of history are valuable community teaching and learning tools, especially among immigrant and marginalized groups. The layers of the past are continually being re-interpreted as we learn more about people and events in the past (Hayden, 1995). By destroying these layers encapsulated by built form, we are diminishing the power of this teaching and learning tool, and eventually we may lose the cultural memories associated with place.

Old buildings and landscapes provide a tangible link to the past that allows us a better understanding of the events and forces that shaped the current landscape. We are primarily a visual society, and the symbolic qualities of places allow us a greater understanding of our collective past (Hayden, 1995). This aspect of Heritage Landscape Conservation may be referred to as 'place memory', which "encapsulates the human ability to connect with both the built and natural environments that are entwined in the cultural landscape" (Hayden 1995, 46). Embedded in this is the idea that urban history is a story that needs to be told by all groups of people, not just the elite, and that this history is present in the buildings and landscapes of our surroundings. Hayden demonstrates this through several urban history and conservation projects exclusive to visible minorities in the United States.

The conservation of these places is interesting to note in the context of the placemaking activities that are simultaneously occurring in many communities. The notion that a "sense of place" is critical to the long-term success of a designed or planned space has been noted in geographical, landscape architecture and planning literature since the 1960s and 70s (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). This idea has also recently emerged in heritage conservation literature. A strong and distinct "sense of place" is recognised as a quality that should be present in sites that are under consideration for designation. However, it is difficult to define a sense of place, and more difficult to preserve it, without altering or even destroying it.

2.5 Why should we conserve a "sense of place"?

While some may argue that a sense of place is merely an expression of the vernacular differences between regions, it appears more likely that it has a deeper meaning. Many authors recognise that empirical measurement is inadequate to quantify place, which at

its most basic level involves experience (Dovey, 1985; Hough 1990; Jackson, 1984). Three major elements of place have been identified. "Locale, the settings in which social relations are constituted; locations, the geographical area encompassing the setting for social interaction as defined by social and economic processes operating at a wider scale; and a sense of place, the local 'structure of feeling'" (Duncan, 1994). A sense of place is defined in two ways, "the character intrinsic to a place itself, [and] the attachments that people themselves have to a place" (Cosgrove, 1994). It is this second idea that is important to this discussion. The attachment that people have to place develops through experience and memory (Cosgrove, 1994). The idea of an area having a sense of place helps to define the postmodern movement, since the modernist construct considered only space, not place, as important. The failure of modernism to achieve popular support may be directly attributable to the sense of placelessness that accompanied so many developments from that period.

An important aspect of 'sense of place' is the ability to read a landscape as text and understand what has gone before: "Our human landscape is our unwitting autobiography, and all our cultural warts and blemishes, our ordinary day-to-day qualities, are there for anybody who knows how to look for them" (Holdsworth, 1997, p.50). Hayden suggests that:

> People make attachments to places that are critical to their well being or distress. An individual's sense of place is both a biological response to the surrounding physical environment and a cultural creation (Hayden, 1997, p. 112).

This cultural creation for example allows humans to wayfind from an early age, and also leads us to grieve for places that no longer exist (Hayden, 1997). A 'sense of place' may also convey political and social meanings that are visible only to specific groups. The

meanings and associations that people assign to various configurations of land and buildings all contribute of a sense of place.

In the field of "place" study, there has traditionally been an emphasis on landscapes that have escaped human attention, or on landscape such as a vista or scenery (Jackson, 1984). More recently, there has been an acknowledgement that rural and "settled" landscapes have been greatly overlooked.[7] Robert Melnick observes "there are places in this country that we look at every day, but that we never really see. They are landscapes of heritage, places that seem so natural that they often go unrecognised, misunderstood, unprotected, and mismanaged" (Melnick, Sponn and Saxe, 1984, 1). There are many that would argue that the Mount Newton Valley represents such a landscape.

[7] Melnick is not clear on the term "settled" landscapes. I assume that he is referring to rural landscapes, although he may also be generalizing about any landscape where housing is present.

Chapter 3—Placemaking

3.1 Placemaking--A New Context for Planning?

The literature that deals with realising a "sense of place" is often generalised under the moniker of "placemaking." This concept of placemaking actually involves a complex set of values, meanings and processes that planning professionals are still struggling to define. Placemaking literature seeks to explain and understand the complex web of relations between, and within, people and places. It attempts to influence action and characterise human intervention in a place, but it does not provide a direct process to achieve this. Nevertheless, this body of knowledge has been expanding (Dovey, 1985; Downton, 1985; Schneekloth and Shibley, 1993, 1995; Winikoff, 1995), and it is becoming apparent that it is somehow tied in part to the future of heritage conservation planning. Therefore, it is necessary to examine its history and its current usage in order to explore how the body of knowledge surrounding heritage conservation might be synthesised with the human art and practice that is placemaking.

Placemaking may be defined as "the continual process of making, transforming, and owning the world" (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, 122). More importantly, it also:

> Allows a form of inclusive and enabling practice which can establish a way to sustain place over time with the full co-operation of occupants, facility managers, institutional leadership, community groups, and others affected by place according to their aspirations and requirements. In addition, it allows us to use buildings and their landscape setting as opportunities for organisational development, thus adding value to institutional investments in place (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, 120).

This definition of placemaking appears to recognise the stakeholders' importance in the process, and also recognises that placemaking involves a long-term process, which may eventually become part of the community history. Unlike the activities of new-urbanists,

where 'instant' places are built and then sold, this definition views placemaking as a dynamic activity that is also a negotiated process.

The meaning of the city changed with the shifting theory of the postmodern period. The city became a landscape with a layered narrative that could be read as a text (Boyer, 1996; Hayden, 1995). This idea of layering is critical to both the heritage conservationist, the people-in-place, and the placemaker, and it resulted in a different approach to both activities. Rather than preserving or creating a site as a static display idealising one period in time, places were exposed layer by layer, and were illustrative of the different forces that acted on them over time. This plurality of uses and users was acknowledged and celebrated. The meaning of the city changed to the point where it was no longer merely a backdrop for the activities of human life, but an actor in the daily affairs of humans. It has become imbued with a variety of meanings, and its landscape inscribed with a history of community. More importantly, it is generally acknowledged that individual landscapes within cities and the areas surrounding them have developed a sense of place (Boyer, 1996; Hough, 1990).

The "place" within the process of placemaking is implicitly made via an attempt to enhance the community's experience of it. Because placemaking is strongly tied to an understanding of the spatial and temporal aspects of place (Dovey, 1985), the heritage aspects of a place become important. Like the heritage conservation process, placemaking is tied to the use of participatory design. In this context, the recognition of linkages between setting and user, designer and user, and past and present become critical. The use of local narratives and the richness that it adds to the planning process give rise to the notion that placemaking theory can help facilitate heritage conservation by "situating and translating the knowledge of all participants within the dialogic space"

(Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, 1999). This idea implies a shift in thinking where planners and heritage conservationists are no longer the sole "experts" but share in the practice of placemaking with the people-in-place who do the making: "As a shared practice, all engage in transforming the material world through making places and, we will argue, by creating knowledge about places and their development" (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, 193).

3.2 Landscape conservation

Recent work in conservation is tied to the awareness of intangibles such as a "sense of place." This is partially a result of our expanding definition of heritage to include not only buildings, but designed landscapes, vernacular landscapes, and other places with specific cultural associations (Mitchell and Diamant, 1998). While early conservation activities focused exclusively on nature, human activities and settlements began to draw attention, and a new field of inquiry emerged which examined human impact on nature and the landscape. The intertwined histories of natural conservation and heritage conservation have led to a new perspective on conservation in both fields. A landscape perspective "recognises the continuity between the past and with people living and working on the land today. It explores how sense of place, cultural identity, and connections to the past can become touchstones for deepening and broadening the impact and relevance of conservation in American society" (Mitchell and Diamant, 1998, 44).

Place and its ability to connect people and things is critical to the philosophies of most conservationists; however, place may be a fleeting, intangible experience. Peter Downton illustrates the idea that place develops through a series of evolutions. He contends that places develop through a series of stages. The initial phase is when a

place is imagined. The second involves the planning stages to realise the imagined place. The third stage is the recognition that some settings have the potential to become a "place." The fourth stage is when we transcend our boundary of self and reach out to form an attachment to a setting. The demarcation of boundaries is another stage in place creation. This act "engenders and supports strong feelings about and toward it" (Downton, 1985, 118). The stage where we remember places is strongly linked to heritage conservation. Many places no longer exist in the tangible world, yet they remain alive within our memories. These remembered places shape our interpretation of new places, and are continually used as the yardstick against which we measure the environment which we find ourselves in. The final stage of placemaking involves the death of a place. Not all places will survive indefinitely, and it is important for both the placemaker and the conservationist to be able to let a place die in a dignified manner (Downton, 1985). This implies that total redevelopment of a site might occur at some point, and that within a conservation context a site should not be conserved because it is old. At some point it may become a remembered place, with no tangible remains.

Much of our past is being homogenised as a result of the industrial and technological revolutions, which have compressed time and space in many ways. The imposition of culture upon a landscape, and the subsequent modification of a landscape has been negated—one region is very similar to another (Hough, 1990). Technology and the near universal availability of materials has obscured the influences that "at one time gave uniqueness to place—the response of built form to climate, local building materials and craftsmanship" (Hough. 1990, 2). Hough goes on to detail how planners might become better acquainted with the uniqueness of place by indicating what we should be looking for when we are attempting to gain a better understanding of the sense of a particular place. This idea is also critical for placemaking, where stakeholder communities need to

be able to affirm the characteristics of place that make regions unique and special. The celebration of difference cannot be ignored, but it is cautioned that this celebration of difference should not be exclusionary. This notion becomes especially important when trying to decide why action should be taken to conserve one area over another.

One of the interesting ideas that Hough (1990) has recognised is that "place" is an experience. The senses are used to experience a place, and while sight may be the most often used sense, it is supplemented by sound, smell, taste and touch. We remember the sound of the church bells pealing across the fields, or perhaps the taste of local produce from a roadside stand. What happens to us in a specific place is what we remember, for good or ill. The possibility also exists that as landscapes are homogenised, we may experience a sense of placelessness. Disneyland's hybrid, sanitised landscape perhaps best illustrates this placelessness. Although it may be remembered by many, it is in fact a fantasy landscape that would be impossible to find anywhere in the "real" world. What communities may strive to do however, is to develop their own sense of place and historical identity with more personal and collective meaning through conservation as placemaking activity.

Tony Hiss has written about the experience of place and suggests that we unconsciously use simultaneous perception which "seems calmer, more like a clear, deep, reflective lake" (Hiss, 1990, 3). This type of perception is opposed to our normal use of stream-of-consciousness perception of our surroundings. It is simultaneous perception that allows us to maintain a connection to our surroundings be it at a local or perhaps even a regional level (Hiss, 1990). Hiss also suggests that many of our conservation and planning activities are concerned with our perceptions of a place. A

site that is being considered for heritage conservation is often spoken of in terms of the feelings it evokes:

> The people involved in this work speak, often, not just of architectural beauty but of the character of a place, or its essential spirit, or the quality of life there, or of its liveability, genius, flavour, feeling, ambience, essence, resonance, presence, aura, harmony, grace, charm, or seemliness ...The language of the laws that set up landmark preservation agencies sometimes makes it clear that such experiential considerations are at work (Hiss, 1990, 15).

Is the Mount Newton Valley such a place?

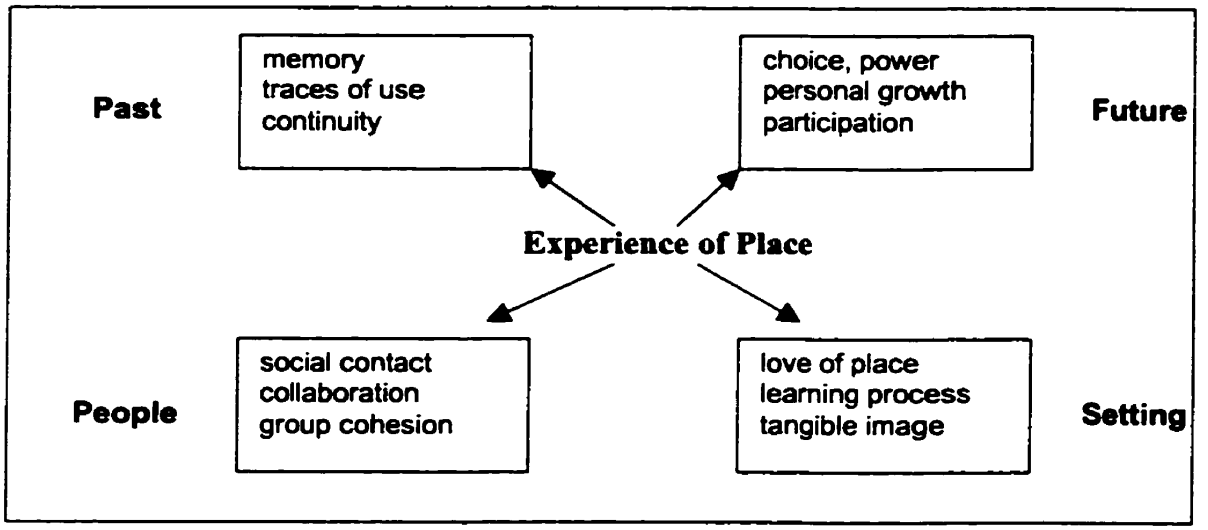
3.3 How do Conservation and Placemaking Connect?

Kim Dovey suggests that placemaking might follow a model that he terms an 'ecology of place.' He connects placemaking with heritage conservation by explaining that:

> Healthy places connect us to the past through their role as a repository for meanings and memories. They lend our lives a sense of continuity, order and stability. Healthy places become symbols of the experiences and achievements engendered within and through time. A corollary here is that places which are rapidly transformed may have its (sic) meanings eradicated and die (Dovey, 1985, 104).

Dovey goes on to indicate that healthy places also connect us to the future. They "connect people to the future as vehicles for their dreams and hopes by providing opportunities for their active and creative participation. Healthy places provide scope for the exercise of choice, power and control, whether personal or collective" (Dovey, 1985, 105). The connection between the past and the future is what heritage conservation is attempting to make. Placemaking provides a process or vehicle which would enable this connection to be made. The "ecology of place" suggested by Dovey is modelled below. This model provides many opportunities for conservationists as placemakers to work, not only to assist in the creation of better places, but also to save the ones to which we have a strong connection. This "experience of place" is created through the past, the present, the people involved and the setting. The planner as placemaker needs to

incorporate these four elements on both the theoretical and practical levels in order to acquire a well-rounded "experience." The following diagram in part recognises the essential ingredients of placemaking and the main entrée:



From Kim Dovey, "An Ecology of Place and Placemaking: Structures, Processes, Knots of Meaning", 1985. Page 105.

Figure 1. The Ecology of Place

Schneekloth and Shibley indicate that a practitioner in a placemaking mode undertakes certain critical activities. They are responsible for the design of the dialogic space, and the confirmation, interrogation activities within this space, and the framing of action within and for places. These three activities as described by Schneekloth and Shibley are strikingly similar to the activities of an effective heritage conservationist:

> *Confirmation* is the act which looks at the context of work with an appreciative attitude in order to understand what is and what has been historically taking place. It involves focusing on the concrete experience of place as it has been made and taken (experienced) over time by the various inhabitants. It is equally important to *interrogate* that context by asking questions, by problematizing the place through a disciplined and critical perspective. The on-going, iterative and dialectic actions of confirmation and interrogation sets the *frame for the action*. Framing action involves the processes of shaping attention, of deciding what and who to include and exclude in placemaking. (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1993, 136)

The process involved in designating a heritage site calls for the general confirmation that the site is indeed historical in nature. It also requires that the site be studied in order to understand the forces that shaped it. The arguments presented in favour of conservation must stand up to interrogation (i.e. questioning) by various stakeholders. During the interrogation, a landscape is critically evaluated, and its worth as a heritage site is determined. Finally, a course of action is framed, and a site will be considered by various interest groups and by local governments. The legislated public process may begin or end at this point.

Schneekloth and Shibley argue that interrogation, confirmation and framing the action constitute an essential role of the practitioner in collaboration with the people-in-place. Their Australian counterparts also indicate that this aspect of placemaking should be collaborative. The Australians argue that the placemaking practitioner acts more as a co-ordinator and project manager, allowing the community to actually direct the process and determine what needs to be done (Guppy, 1995; Ryan, 1995;Winikoff, 1995; Yencken, 1995). Schneekloth and Shibley counter this by suggesting that for collaboration to take place the "professional" needs to deal in "messy" human relationships and multiple knowledges. They question the privileged use of professional knowledge as being concerned with maintaining power and control rather than being used to empower the community (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995).

The authors of Places Not Spaces have worked extensively within the Australian context on a variety of placemaking projects. Their experiences with public participatory design processes have given them insight into the elements of a successful placemaking project. It is suggested that a successful project is comprised of several elements including collaboration, a good management plan with clear structures for public

involvement, widespread community participation, and the creative involvement of professionals (Winikoff, 1995).

Much of the recent work in the field of "place" has dealt with how new places might be imbued with the sense of place that is attached to old places. Placemaking is a relatively new theoretical field, yet it is concerned with many of the same things that heritage conservation views as its domain. Its essence is that people need liveable places in order to flourish, and that people have the ability to define the type of environment they want to inhabit. Ryan suggests that:

> Placemaking aims to turn public spaces into places; places which engage those who inhabit them, places through which people do not merely pass, but have reason to 'stop and become involved'; places which offer people a 'sense of belonging'; places in short, which have meaning, which evoke pleasure or contemplation. Or reflection and, most importantly, an appreciation of cultural and environmental diversity (Ryan, 1995, p. 7).

While Ryan is writing primarily of urban areas and the sense of placelessness that has accompanied much of the development of urban areas, his ideas are equally applicable to rural areas and landscapes. This is especially true considering that many rural areas are greatly threatened by exurban development and agri-business. Most importantly, Ryan also mentions the "community participation and collaborative process" that is necessary to see these ideas come to fruition (Ryan, 1995).

Beneath some apparent differences, there are many elements that make placemaking and heritage conservation compatible. They are similar in that both are concerned with the continuing use of a place, and that a place is used and claimed by diverse user groups. Both are used as a means of community development. Heritage conservation often acts as a mobilising force for community organisation. Placemaking allows people to create or adapt their environments to better serve community goals and also gives the

community greater control over their immediate environment (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995). Conservation as placemaking recognises that the development of a postmodern epistemology was essential to the development of this new body of theory. Without the inclusion of multiple histories and points of view, placemaking would not be able to provide a meaningful frame for heritage conservation activities. Placemaking and heritage conservation use a common terminology that includes words like legibility, sense of place, community resource, boundaries, diversity, territoriality, comfort, linkage, environment, safety and more which leads one to believe that they may be built upon a common theoretical base (Alexander, 1977; Bray, 1993; McClelland, 1990). With regards to their common theoretical base, both disciplines draw from a postmodern epistemology. This common foundation enables the use of a common language among practitioners, and also facilitates the transfer of knowledge.

While there are many apparent similarities between the two bodies of knowledge, there has been little research into how stronger ties might be forged in order to build upon each other's successes. Placemaking is primarily concerned with providing a different ethical context for planning, and does not explicitly recognise the value of intact heritage resources. Heritage conservation uses sense of place as a major criteria for designating heritage sites, but until recently, it has not allowed the adaptation and re-use of old ones or even different socio-economic histories to be explored (Jamieson, 1990). The difficulty with relying on sense of place as a measurement of heritage is that it will "mean different things to different individuals and groups depending on their social status, cultural background, age, whether they are residents or tourists and other factors" (Jamieson, 1990, 222). Using a placemaking approach to heritage conservation, whereby multiple groups are encouraged to participate and a more collaborative approach is used, could

offset much of this. This would ultimately enable communities to determine what aspects of their past are worth saving, and what can be used to build the future.

There are numerous opportunities for placemakers as conservationists to work together. An awareness of placemaking in creating the space for dialogue, and the confirmation, interrogation and framing of a considered site affords planners a greater understanding of the dynamics of a place and of the people who feel passionately about it. Recognition of heritage conservation as part of the human art and practice of placemaking should permit a more proactive approach to conservation and should more firmly entrench placemaking as a collective praxis of planners as community builders.

Chapter 4 Research Methods

4.1 The Case Study

At its heart, a case study is designed to understand and explain a particular phenomenon. There are two main types of case study. The first, an intrinsic study, uses a case not to create theory or to generalise beyond the specific case, but to study an interesting phenomenon or place because it has a story to tell. The second, an instrumental case study, is used to provide "insight into an issue or refinement of theory" (Stake, 1994, 237). To this end, the Mount Newton Valley is being used in the second sense, as a case to provide insight into the phenomenon of local government involvement in heritage conservation. The case will explore why and how local governments might proactively undertake conservation activities as part of their community development agenda.

Although case studies are better known as a teaching tool, they are a well-respected research strategy within the social sciences. With any study, it is essential to ensure quality for the research by subjecting it to four types of tests: construct validity; internal validity; external validity; and reliability (Yin, 1994). To ensure the construct validity, multiple methods of inquiry are used to illuminate the research questions. The first method is the literature review. The second is the analysis of archival documents supplied by the municipality pertaining to the heritage landscape conservation process and the feedback from Valley residents. This source includes the Official Community Plan, and correspondence aimed at the community. The third body of research data is drawn from my experience as a participant observer during the interviews and as a summer intern in the Planning Department of the District of Central Saanich in the

summer of 1998. The research proposal for this project was submitted to my supervisor at the end of my tenure there, and the research was conducted after I returned to the University of Manitoba. My summer supervisor, John Winsor, also agreed to be the external committee member for this thesis. The participant-observer experience has provided greater access to municipal documents and also permitted a longer and more detailed chain of information. The fourth method of inquiry is through interviews with individuals involved in heritage conservation in the Mount Newton Valley. Interviews were also conducted with planners from surrounding municipalities, and with individuals involved in conservation at the provincial level.

Internal validity is ensured during the data analysis phase by indicating the ways in which the data have been analysed. For this case study, the data are reviewed to explore any patterns and themes that consistently emerged from the interviews. Content analysis of the interviews explore the patterns, themes, and congruencies, contradictions and tensions that exist in the relationships between local government and conservation interests. Other themes also emerge to provide a comparative analysis of local government involvement in conservation issues.

The application of placemaking theory also informs and frames the analysis in this study. Due to the generally substantive nature of heritage conservation theory and the generally procedural nature of placemaking theory, similarities and symmetries between the two will also provide a means of analysis in Chapters 5 and 6.

External validity is established through the researcher realising that the results of the case study may only be generalised to a limited extent. This limit on theory building will apply to the District of Central Saanich and to other similar semi-rural municipalities

within the Capital Region District of British Columbia. Some of the research findings may be generalised to the rest of British Columbia, as the legislation dealing with conservation and local government being analysed is specific to this province.

Reliability is achieved through the demonstration that if data collection procedures were repeated, the same results and conclusions would be drawn. This is ensured through systematic documentation of the data gathering methods and the careful documentation of the responses.

4.2 The Sample

In order to gather the best possible data for this study, specific groups were identified based on their involvement in heritage conservation activities in the District of Central Saanich and in other municipalities. Fourteen participants were initially identified, and eleven were eventually interviewed. Two potential participants declined interviews and the third could not be contacted. The participants who agreed to be interviewed represent various groups. These include local government officials, provincial government representatives, heritage planners, and community members. The participants represent both women's and men's viewpoints, and most viewed heritage conservation as a positive activity. There is also a balance of professional and layperson opinions on heritage conservation. The data acquired from the interviews is referred to as the Mount Newton data, and the individuals involved are referred to as the research participants.

4.3 Data Gathering

There are numerous authors who elaborate on the art of interviewing (e.g. Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Yin, 1994; Zeisel, 1981). They generally recommend the use of an interview guide to direct the flow of conversation and to ensure that each participant covers all of the major points. However, there are contradictions within this literature that indicate a more conversational style may also be appropriate. Therefore, a combination of interviewing approaches is used. At the start of each interview, the participants were told the purpose of the study, and were advised that their identities would remain confidential. Permission to tape-record the interviews was also obtained. A brief introduction to the major themes that were to be covered followed, and then questions regarding their experiences in heritage conservation were posed. The general line of questioning is included in Appendix 1. A series of specific questions were asked of each participant, and the remainder of the interview was spent exploring and probing the participant's responses for greater detail as well as their opinions, impressions, and feelings about the how local conservation efforts could best be achieved and directed. The interview focused on the public process used by the local government and its committees during heritage conservation applications and initiatives.

4.4 Data Analysis

The data collected from interviews were analysed after transcription using the method suggested by Neuman (1997). Neuman indicates that the data are analysed by straining the transcribed interviews through three different coding processes: open coding; axial coding; and selective coding.

The interviews are initially compared to each other to look for similarities and differences. This first phase is known as open coding. In this initial step, "the researcher locates themes and assigns initial codes or labels in a first attempt to condense the mass of data into categories " (Neuman, 1997, p. 422). The major themes uncovered during the open coding step on the Mount Newton data are the process used by the Heritage Advisory Commission, why the Valley was being considered for heritage designation, the obstacles involved in the process, and the lessons learned about the importance of public participation.

Axial coding is the second step in the data analysis. After the preliminary themes and ideas are extracted from open coding, they are used as the basis of this step. Here, the "researcher asks about causes and consequences, conditions and interactions, strategies and processes, and looks for categories or concepts that cluster together" (Neuman, 1997, p. 423). This stage of data analysis indicated that the initial themes and categories were valid, and that there were numerous subcategories that could be added. These include the perceived attitude of farmers, the effect of previous unrelated public processes, the mis-reading of the intended audience, the lack of collaboration and community involvement, and the means of communicating information to the community.

The final step in the interview analysis is selective coding. This requires "scanning the data and previous codes. Researchers look selectively for cases that illustrate themes and make comparisons and contrasts...He or she reorganises specific themes identified in earlier coding and elaborates more on specific themes" (Neuman, 1997, p. 424). This final analysis has been divided into two sections. The first explores the themes that influenced the failure of the public process in the Mount Newton Valley. The second

section focuses on the reflections of participants and examines how the process could be improved for future public processes.

As the coding is completed, a series of analytic memos is also created. These memos record the thoughts and ideas of the researcher during the process of coding (Neuman, 1997). The purpose of the memo is to "forge a link between the concrete data or raw evidence and more abstract, theoretical thinking" (Neuman, 1997, p. 425). These memos form the basis of analysis for Chapter 5.

4.5 Limitations of the Study

There are limitations within any study. Some of the known limitations of this study include the conflicting legislation within British Columbia dealing with rural heritage landscapes and the Agricultural Land Reserve. The existing legislation indicates the legal steps that a municipal government must take to designate a property, but, in so doing, seems to set local government and property owners in adversarial roles. In addition, from my review of the literature on heritage conservation, there seems to be a focus on the end results of conservation as opposed to the processes used to designate. The lack of literature on community processes in heritage conservation seems to indicate that most conservationists assume people are altruistic and are able to readily see the benefits of heritage designation.

Other difficulties amounting to a possible limitation include the information gathered from the participants. Because this topic is politically sensitive, they may not have been as candid as one might wish. There were no requests to turn off the tape recorder, or to make certain comments off-the-record, but it was sensed from body language and other

comments that a few of the participants were uncomfortable with the topics discussed. In addition, because the information is site-specific, it will be difficult to apply what is learned to other situations. Finally, there are also the biases of the researcher, who is in favour of heritage conservation at the local level, and who also had contact as a planning intern with some of the people involved in the Mount Newton Valley Project. This earlier contact may have affected some of the participants' comments. My relationship with the research participants was not personal in nature, and was based on a project I completed during my tenure at Central Saanich. I did not maintain contact with these individuals after returning to school.

Chapter 5 Analysis

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have developed the theoretical framework which underpins the inquiry into how effective locally-driven heritage conservation may be best achieved, and how placemaking theory can better inform and strengthen the public process used in local designations. This chapter presents the empirical research into this problem using the experiences of the District of Central Saanich and the attempted designation of the Mount Newton Valley as a Heritage Conservation Area. Most informants were asked to reflect on the design of the community process used for designation, and were asked what they would do differently. These comments provide an avenue to explore the potential of placemaking theory and practice in the local heritage conservation field. While the majority of the research focuses on the reflections of the informants, examples of successful projects from other areas are also used to illustrate certain ideas.

Chapter 5 is divided into 2 sections. Part 1 examines the nature of the public process that was employed by the District of Central Saanich while attempting to gain support to designate the Mount Newton Valley as a Heritage Conservation Area. Under this broad umbrella, themes emerged regarding why the process failed. These themes include the means of communicating with the community, a mis-reading of the intended constituency, the lack of collaboration, and previous community processes within the valley.

Part 2 of the analysis is concerned with the reflections of the participants. In this section the lessons learned by the participants are explored. The underlying themes guiding this

section include changes to the process, community involvement, examples from other communities, and possible approaches for future heritage projects.

Through the development of this case study, a series of themes emerged, reflecting on the public process used at the municipal level. Analysis of these themes forms the basis of the recommendations presented in Chapter 6.

Part 1: The Public Process

This section documents the public process that the District of Central Saanich began in December of 1998 with a letter addressed to the residents of the Mount Newton Valley from the Mayor and the Heritage Commission. It presents the participants' interpretations of the events leading up to the public meeting in April of 1999 and also documents some of their reflections on what went wrong. All of the participants were in some capacity directly involved with the public process. The idea of designating the Mount Newton Valley arose from the Official Community Plan review that occurred in 1998. The Official Community Plan review encompassed a public process of approximately a year and a half, during which the community was invited to share their thoughts and ideas to shape the future of Central Saanich. The Official Community Plan "("the plan") does two important things--it--presents a long-term vision for Central Saanich and, at the same time, it sets out carefully worded policies, priorities and regulations that guide the land use, community development and municipal spending decisions" (District of Central Saanich, 1999, p. 4). For the first time, the Official Community Plan included a chapter about the heritage resources in the District. This chapter included the objective that "The District will investigate the potential to establish a Mount Newton Valley Heritage Conservation Area following consultation with area

residents, property owners, First Nations, and the community at large" (District of Central Saanich, 1999, P. 49).

The seven members of the Heritage Advisory Commission are residents of the District of Central Saanich. Council appoints them to the Commission for a two-year term. The positions are all voluntary and are attained by applying for positions as they become available. The Heritage Advisory Commission consulted the Official Community Plan to develop a list of priorities. The Mount Newton Valley Conservation Area was at the top of the list, and it was decided, with the approval of Council, to move forward into the consultation phase. In the fall of 1998 the Commission drafted a letter to the valley residents outlining the proposal and suggesting a community meeting be held in the Spring of 1999. The valley residents received the letter in December of 1999. At this point, the analysis of the proposal begins by examining the communication that was sent to the property owners, the lack of collaboration between the involved parties, the mis-reading of the intended constituency, and the impact of previous public processes on the heritage designation proposal.

5.2.1 Communications with the Community

The major mode of communication with the residents of the Mount Newton Valley and surrounding area was a letter and attachments sent from the Chair of the Heritage Advisory Commission and the Mayor of Central Saanich in December of 1998. The entire letter and the attachment are included in Appendix 2. The letter indicated that the idea of conserving the Mount Newton Valley was something the Central Saanich Heritage Commission had been working on for two years, and invited residents to a town-hall meeting in April of 1999 to discuss the proposal. This was to be an information

session only. Attached to the letter was an excerpt from Heritage Conservation: A Community Guide for Local Government. The letter was written to introduce the community to the idea:

> This letter is the first step in the communication with Valley residents. The District believes that the Mount Newton Valley area is one of the unique and historically significant areas in British Columbia which has to date been largely spared unsympathetic development. A conservation area designation would help to ensure those features such as hedgerows, right-of-way trees, rural roadways, and rural land uses continue to be a part of the landscape. In addition there are many heritage buildings, trees, gardens, viewscapes, and other features in the Valley which could be voluntarily scheduled as part of the conservation area if the property owners desired this (The District of Central Saanich, 1998).

The letter went on to detail the process used for heritage designations. It said in part:

> The process of creating a Heritage Conservation Area usually takes some time to accomplish. The provisions can be very strict or rather loose depending on the consensus of the people affected. It takes much planning, research and, most importantly, consultation with residents. Other areas of BC such as West Vancouver and Delta have used this heritage legislation very successfully. With these successful examples in mind, the District and the Heritage Commission would like to plan a community meeting as the next step in the process so that residents can learn more about heritage conservation areas, how one might be applied in the locality, what features might be included, and what boundaries might be set. At this meeting, we would have individuals such as heritage professionals, historians, botanists, Commission members, members of Council, and representatives of valley organisations to provide different perspectives on the valley's resources, to answer your questions, and to hear your ideas and concerns (District of Central Saanich, 1998).

The précis from the heritage community guide was attached to the letter. It indicated the maximum amount of control and regulation that a Heritage Conservation Area could achieve. It also presented an example of an urban Heritage Conservation Area.

Interviews indicated that local government officials realised later that the letter and the accompanying précis might have inadvertently caused many recipients to react negatively to the proposal. Regarding the letter, a local government official commented:

> There was the famous letter that went out in December. And in hindsight it was a mistake to attach that abstract from the provincial heritage guide. It frightened people enormously because of its emphasis on additional regulation. Everyone now agrees that was a bad thing to do. But at the time everybody who was consulted, and there was a lot of people who were consulted including the heritage commission, the mayor and members of council who thought it was a good idea. Nobody had foresight or clairvoyance to see what the impact of that would be.

A consultant dealing with public involvement processes also echoed this statement saying:

> The playing field was tilted before Christmas when the public received notification from the Conservation Committee of Central Saanich, outlining their idea of this being a designation for the Mount Newton Valley Area. Because, and you probably know this, as part of the package, they decided to add a page that gave illustrations from, as to what the act could do. And I suppose whoever originally wrote these, these illustrations were to show that this legislation actually had some teeth, you could actually do something, it wasn't just a layer. It was functional. But by adding things, by adding these examples, that said things like "homeowners will be restricted from developing a second residence on their property" this notice, not the main notice, this addition to the notice absolutely incensed the people who received it. And they've been burning about it since before Christmas. So when we went into that meeting we didn't meet a group of people willing to talk about this, we met 120 plus people who were fired up to toss this and the people who suggested this out of court.

The recipients didn't necessarily read the information provided in the letter, which indicated that this was an opportunity for community discussion and consensus building. Rather, they looked at the attachment and assumed that this proposed designation would infringe on their ability to make a living from their farms. It was assumed that this proposed designation was a measure to further restrict land-owners. Another local government official commented:

> And once the attachment went out, people automatically assumed this was a plan on the part of Council to impose strict regulations on their property so that they would never be able to alter it in any way. That's the impression that some people got, and paranoia spreads quite easily.

A local resident indicated that the farming community objected to the land control that was given as an example. This participant also recognised that because of the restrictions already in place from the Agricultural Land Commission, many farmers were especially fearful of any further restrictions:

> as soon as people opened that letter, the heritage conservation area idea was dead. That was immediate. I didn't talk to a single person who supported it ...[*Names omitted*] put an explanation of what a HCA was from the legislation guide. And all of the examples were urban. But whatever was in there sort of provided a sense of control over the Mount Newton Valley, and that in part was what inflamed people. So you had the lack of public process beforehand and what in effect was an inflammatory brochure that went in with the letter.

The same respondent also mentioned that the residents were aware of the discussions the Heritage Advisory Commission (The H.A.C.) was having regarding the proposed Heritage Conservation Area, and that there were various rumours circulating in the area prior to the letter being sent:

> When you go out to work on something that is potentially controversial, you go out and you get people involved. It's a bit like Costco in the same way. It was started in the Council building and it never left the building, but there was all this stuff going on in the background, and people had the sense of something happening. But they never involved people. What they did, was just sort of lay it on top of them one day and the letter. And that guarantees the controversy and the issue is dead. If you don't have the popular support, the idea is dead and you're wasting your time. Clearly that's a component of it and I don't understand why they didn't go public. There is sort of the general paranoia about heritage in terms of control, and I don't think that's unique to this area.[8]

In all, the major modes of communication with the valley residents were through the introductory letter, a second letter reminding residents of the meeting, and a town hall type meeting, and a questionnaire distributed at the meeting. One hundred and twenty

[8] Costco was a big box wholesale development that was considered by Council. It was eventually rejected. However, the community was uncertain that it would be rejected, and felt that Council did not provide adequate information to the community or an opportunity for their concerns to be heard.

people attended this meeting, which was seen as an enormous turnout for Central Saanich. It was slightly before this meeting that the organisers realised that there might be a great deal of opposition to the proposal and their fears were realised as the residents of the Mount Newton Valley demanded that the proposal be struck down, thus effectively ending the attempt to designate the area.

It is nearly universally acknowledged among the research participants that the initial communication, specifically the inclusion of the community guide extract, was not a good choice. Although the letter and its attachment may be viewed as the root cause of the failure of the process, there are other factors that directly contributed. The first was an apparent resentment of further regulation. The majority of land is already within the Agricultural Land Reserve, and, as such, most people think it cannot be altered. This working landscape is already subject to many rules and regulations governing land use and farming practices. Another contributing factor to the rejection of the proposal is that there were many issues such as greenhouses and the potential for subdivision that were not addressed at the meeting, even though they seemed to figure prominently in several of the research participants' interviews. By glossing over, or ignoring, these issues a great deal of suspicion was generated about the "real" reasons for conserving the valley.

For example, one of the local government officials indicated that one of the major issues facing the valley is the development of greenhouses. Within the Agricultural Land Reserve greenhouses are permitted uses, and because the Mount Newton Valley is primarily within the Land Reserve, a significant portion of the Valley floor could be thus utilised. At present, greenhouses are not viable due to water supply limitations but the issue was not addressed as this was not in the jurisdiction of the Heritage Advisory

Commission.[9] In part, the paranoia suggested by another participant was related to the suspicion of residents that the Heritage Conservation Area would limit the potential uses of agricultural land:

> One of the big issues that was out there straight and front, and wasn't discussed a lot, was people's fear of greenhouses filling the valley. It wasn't discussed because no one really wanted to get into that one. The thing that I really believe is that when that gets to be the discussion point then you'll have a war in your community. It's not just going to be a little discussion. Because I think that greenhouses are agriculturally viable, but I think that greenhouses can ruin an area and basically is an industrial practice and not necessarily just an agricultural practice but I don't have a lot of agreement from the Agricultural Land Commission with that statement. I think that was one of the things that everybody was really concerned about.

For the property owners excluded from the Agricultural Land Reserve, there were other concerns. Planning documents from the 1970s indicated that more than a thousand units of housing were planned for the area known as the Mount Newton Slopes. Many owners purchased property at that time, with the aim to subdivide at a later date:

> Some of the opposition to the Heritage Conservation Area comes back to the simple fact that back in the 1970's there was a plan that one day the slopes of the Mount Newton would be developed into residential subdivisions Some still have the hope that they will be able to get some subdivision out of their 2 acre lots or 1 acre lots or something. But those residents were naturally opposed to any sort of Heritage Conservation Area thinking that would restrict their future development plans more greatly than the Official Community Plan and other municipal bylaws already do.

These underlying issues were not addressed, and the valley residents assumed that the underlying motive for the Heritage Conservation Area was to limit these options.

It is clear from most responses that although greenhouses are considered to be a threat, the majority of people genuinely believed that the valley should be conserved for

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[9] Discussions on establishing water lines along the Mount Newton X Road to Senanus Drive were taking place at the same time as discussions about the Heritage Conservation area. The establishment of a Water Advisory Task Force may have been a significant background issue for some people.

aesthetic reasons. Although many residents still hope that they might be able to subdivide their lots in the future, this appears very unlikely. The plans for subdivision were rescinded about 10 years ago, and the current Official Community Plan indicates that the area will remain as large lot residential estates.

When the respondents were asked to articulate why they wanted to see the Valley conserved, there was a range of answers. Most of these dealt with the extreme beauty of the area, and the heritage features that exist there:

> The valley is a beautiful place, probably one of the most beautiful places in BC. In the summer and fall it's sort of golden with the fields. I could give a description of what the valley looks like—there's a road that runs not quite through the middle, but more towards the mountainside, and there's hills on one side and smaller arching of a little hill on the other side, with Mount Newton being the larger hill and that's covered in forest, so it's a rich green and very few houses are visible on the hill, with one or two noticeable exceptions. The valley is quite pastoral. Just looking out, it would be hard to pin what year it was. You get a sense of timelessness. At a glance you could think anywhere from the 40's to the present. There's nothing that ages it or specifies its time. I suppose that there's not much left of that kind of feel in the CRD, perhaps more on the Peninsula, because that's been a goal of the communities to preserve that area and areas like it for future generations.

Another research participant indicated that the motives for conserving the Valley were aesthetic and indicated that the image of the valley was unique to the area and to British Columbia:

> The Mount Newton Valley is a special place...well what does that mean? That's what I was trying to do. It is some combination of the way the road winds, the trees along the road, the hedgerows, and the vistas, mostly from the road. Something to do with the older homes its something to do with the fact that these are active farms. It's some combination of all of these things. Bucolic is a word that has to be in there. It's something to do with that. And if the Mt Newton road was straightened, if it was made into 4 lanes, if [*Name omitted*] develops massive greenhouses on his property such as you see on Central Saanich road. If people started building big square box residences or barns, painting them bright pink, having lights on them all night. Any of these things, all of these impact this image....Its some fabulous mix of old and contemporary, working and rural, you can't really put a finger on it I don't think.

The same person also acknowledged that even without the threat of greenhouses the area was still at risk:

> I realised that in the past few decades there has been a creeping lack of quality to the area. When you look down the Mount Newton Road everyone says oh this is the most beautiful thing, but they're looking out there. When you look at the wooden poles and power lines down both sides of the road, you have the power line out to his place [pointing on a map]. The El Rancho place that's the closest to the fire hall, they've got one, and somebody else down the road they've got one too. I think that a lot of things have changed over the last decade or two that are incremental. These are incremental changes to the whole Valley but because they've come in bit by bit by bit people aren't seeing them. But with my camera I was really aware, I could hardly take a photograph from the road that wasn't mushed by power lines and cable lines.

It is not apparent that this reasoning for conservation was adequately communicated to the residents of Mount Newton. Based on the feedback that was received at the meeting from the residents it is also doubtful that there were clearly perceived avenues of communication from the residents to the Heritage Commission and the local government. One participant mentioned that although a phone number and address were included with the letter, few phone calls objecting to the proposal were received.

Of the thirty-one responses to the questionnaire distributed at the public meeting in April, the majority indicated that although people were in favour of conserving specific features within the Mount Newton Valley, they did not favour conservation by regulation. This may link back to the idea that motives for conservation on the part of the Heritage Commission were not clear to the community. Therefore, the community perceived a greater threat than may actually have been the case.

5.2.2 The Lack of Collaboration

The difficulties in designing a dialogic space were not the only problems encountered by Central Saanich while engaging in heritage conservation activities. The difficulties encountered while attempting to communicate why and how the valley might be conserved were indicative of greater problems within the process, specifically the lack of collaboration between the Heritage Commission and Central Saanich as a whole.

All of the participants were asked for suggestions to improve the process. Some respondents focused on the short amount of time, others focused on the letter, and many pointed out that the education, background work, information-gathering and goal setting had not been completed by the entire community.

In hindsight, greenhouses, and the implications of the Agricultural Land Reserve are not fully understood by many people within the Valley. In part this is due to the lack of communication between groups, and in part it is because some of the detailed background work was not completed prior to the meeting. Many people within the Valley are under the impression that inclusion within the Land Reserve guarantees that the land will remain as greenspace. What most people aren't aware of, is that greenhouses are considered a permitted agricultural use. Up to 75% of the land may be covered with greenhouses, providing they are soil-based crops. Part of this detailed background work is in educating the Valley residents about the Land Reserve, and also providing avenues for exploring the common ground between farming and heritage conservation goals.

Within this idea of "finding common ground" and "developing an inclusive process", one research participant said:

> People, farmers who just want to be in business and other people who have some different ideas, I can see that they weren't included in the process. One of your questions was, how these things are initiated, whether they come from the Municipality or they come from an advocacy group or something. I think it can come from anybody, that doesn't matter, but it has to be an inclusive process. If you're seen as a special interest group, which [*Name omitted*] may have been seen as, pushing something that suits you rather than a general image or concept that the other players can see they fit into, or that they also want, then you're setting up a conflict situation. And it's a real shame, because probably in their own way both the people who live up on Mt. Newton, the residents who live on the road, and the farmers, there is common ground there. And the common ground would be that they all like the Valley, and they like it the way it is and they don't want to see it change. I think there's consensus there, but they're all coming at it from different points of view.

When asked about other aspects of the background work that had not been completed before the meeting, the topic of education came up. The same respondent said:

> And the problem is that it should have been done before. And I kick myself for not appreciating how much of it hadn't been done and we didn't have a lot of time to get ready... But I don't think I had as good an understanding as I do now of how ignorant everybody was.

Although educating the residents about the issues and the motives for conservation may not have influenced the outcome of the designation proposal, it likely would have provided an opportunity for discussion and possibly provided some opportunities for collaborative work.

When asked about the local government response to the proposal for the valley, a respondent commented that government was very supportive of heritage issues, and they were also supportive of farming issues:

> They've also been very supportive of agricultural preservation and agricultural issues. Up until now, there hasn't been any open conflict between those points of view. It's been a happy relationship and the two things have been able to work together and complement each other. This is the only situation, which has put those interests in a conflict situation.

> Which is very unfortunate, its true that we have had some tensions around it Particularly, its taken some effort sometimes to advance the heritage issues through the Agricultural Land Commission, and to get their support, ...But we did, but by and large there hasn't been this sort of open conflict of attitudes that happened at the meeting.

Although these two disparate groups have not directly supported each other, neither were they in open hostilities. As mentioned by a previous informant, the common ground between the two groups may not be immediately visible. However, the two groups already agree that the Valley is a special place. What is not agreed on, is how to maintain this special sense of place. The opportunity for future collaborative explorations of this issue now rests in the hands of the local government, and the residents who are still interested in seeing the valley recognised in some way:

> What you need whether before or after a meeting is a process involved with a working group or a grass roots group. And so I still feel there is the opportunity for leadership to be coming either through the Council or through... it may not be necessarily through the Heritage Commission. But I think there is still the opportunity for leadership to encourage the community to have dialogue about their future and their common goals if there are any.

This underlines the lack of a "community" within the geographic confines of the Valley.[10] It has also been suggested that the Heritage Commission was viewed by the Valley residents as a special interest group of elites, mostly concerned with preserving their viewscape.

Based on responses to the questions asked, it is clear that this opportunity for dialogue was neglected. During the preparations for the community meeting, the focus was not on creating opportunities for small group discussion, or to find goals to work towards as a

[10] "Community" in placemaking is a special term. It is something that is built and created rather than a group of people who live in the same geographic area. There is little indication that a "community" is present in the Mount Newton Valley.

group. This neglect in part resulted from the mode of communication that was selected, and also from a lack of preparation by the proponents:

> [T]he homework hadn't been done with the community group. That was the intended purpose of the meeting was to have, to provide information. It was too aggressive, the background work hadn't been done. All of the written communication that went out was just a disaster. It was unexpected. The right thinking didn't go into it. And unfortunately we only know this in retrospect. Public communication was not the right communication, the format of the meeting wasn't right, the whole notion of putting out the Heritage Conservation Area was a bad plan.

The lack of collaboration and communication between the Heritage Commission and the residents lent the heritage designation a paternal slant. An examination of the Australian literature surrounding placemaking theory indicates that placemaking is understood as public participation in place. This suggests that opportunities and structures for community buy-in and participation are essential for placemaking to occur. These structures were not present, and as a result, rather than really asking for input from the community, one research participant suggested that the Heritage Commission appeared to be saying:

> Oh you really don't have any idea how to appreciate the more cultural aspects of your property so maybe we should guide you that way. That's how it felt to me. And I think more or less these people said get lost. ...And I felt that it was although perhaps not intended, it was perceived as an attempt at gentrification or re-gentrification of the area.

Upon reflection, another community member realised that the approach that was used did not in fact ask the community to participate in some of the foundational work. It was suggested that this could have been alleviated by:

> I think the letter should have asked what everybody liked about the valley. Then we would have had some feedback and like 10 reasons why you love the MNV. Something like that.

Again, this idea references the theory of placemaking, where structures for community involvement are built into the placemaking process. While this would not guarantee the successful resolution of a planning problem, it would allow the community to participate in the process, or create a solution that best meets their needs.

It is interesting to note that because the meeting was billed as an informational session, there was little preparation in terms of goal-setting and dissemination of information. There have been also been suggestions that there was an insidious campaign of mis-information from opponents. But, from the proponents of heritage conservation:

> I think somehow, enough information didn't get out before the meeting. I think they came to the meeting uninformed or informed with half-truths. Somehow they felt really threatened. ...I feel that the people who live along the road should have been contacted and talked to. I know there are a lot of people who are sympathetic but didn't speak.

An opportunity was missed for creative collaboration by not going out to meet the people this designation would most directly affect. As mentioned earlier, this proposal appeared to have been thought up entirely within the Council building. When speaking of the process involved in heritage conservation, another research participant said:

> The important part I find in dealing with all of these projects, the temporal part is the easiest part to solve. That's by far the easiest. You can go out and identify what you may feel is of heritage value. Go out and look at the legal issues. Those are pretty simple and straightforward. The difficult part is the people. 80% of work in heritage is people negotiation. And how you work through it. The solution that comes out depends on how willing people are to come out with a solution. If you go into hard bargaining, you end up with a poorer solution that you would otherwise. Potential partners say you're too difficult to work with, I won't try to find a more effective solution, because I'll just be bitten in the hand.

The residents of the Valley may have read the communication from Central Saanich as being a choice; they could either have a Heritage Conservation Area, or they could reject the proposal. Based on an understanding that there were underlying issues regarding

greenhouses, and a fear of regulation, their logical choice was to reject the idea. Again, this opportunity for collaboration was missed because the residents weren't involved in shaping the process or the parameters.

What can be distilled from the comments regarding the collaborative aspects of the proposed designation is that it was a very small group working towards a goal. While this group is not closed to outsiders, it may appear that they work in isolation. The Council of the time had a reputation of being anti-development and pro-conservation. In most situations, this would not work against them. In this instance, it raised the suspicions of many residents. What is also known, is that information was not reaching the Valley residents in a timely manner. The educational aspect of the process was to be completed at the meeting. The result was that mis-information circulated prior to the public meeting, and people based their decisions on the only information they had access to. The lack of collaboration between professionals and the residents also created other problems.

The most significant of these was the lack of clear avenues for public involvement. It was not the intention of the H.A.C. or the Council to exclude anyone from the design of the process. As mentioned earlier, the enthusiasm of the proponents actually worked against them. Because of their knowledge of the legislation, and also their strong feelings about the historic and aesthetic aspects of the Mount Newton Valley, they had already decided that some sort of heritage conservation was the answer. A majority of Valley residents did not feel included in this decision and were unable to gain a better understanding of the proposal due to the lack of information provided:

> ...In the development or planning sense, the Council [or the Heritage Commission] cannot go ahead of the community. The hard work has to be done on process and meetings and compromise, education and

> understanding. Once the hard work has been done, then there may be a change of attitude.

The proponents were unable to see that most Valley residents needed time to "catch up." More importantly, they needed an opportunity to "dialogue" about their fears and understanding of heritage conservation. The dialogic space that Schneekloth and Shibley (1997) refer to is probably not a meeting in a gymnasium. The more intimate opportunities for interaction and questioning need to take place before such a public meeting. These opportunities for dialogue and discourse allows the parameters of the subject to more accurately reflect the needs and desires of the Valley residents. A sense of ownership of process is what is aspired to during this stage of placemaking.

5.2.3 The Intended Constituency

The above analysis of some of the difficulties encountered is further illustrated by the lack of understanding of the intended constituency by the H.A.C. and Council. The information sent to the Valley residents was based on the assumption that heritage conservation is intrinsically good, and that the residents would be able to see the positive values that would emerge from it. What was not considered by the Heritage Commission and the District Council is that the general reaction of property owners to heritage conservation is fear. This suggestion was made by more than one of the respondents. Linked to the importance of knowing the intended constituency is the perceived attitude of the farming community by the respondents. The research participants perceived that the farming community is anti-heritage, anti-regulatory intervention and unwilling to change. However, it is interesting to note that the process that was used did not reflect any of these presuppositions about the community.

The proponents of the heritage designation generally felt that the valley was worthy of some protection and recognition. Although the valley residents reaffirmed that they also felt that the valley was special, they disagreed on the regulatory aspects of conservation. For those involved in the design of the process, this was a fundamental difference in perception. The Valley residents resisting the proposal maintained that they would take good care of the valley and there was not a need for regulation. Thos Valley residents supporting the H.A.C. felt that the heritage value was at risk, and could be irrevocably lost with minor changes to the landscape, with existing regulations, or with changes in government policy at the provincial level. As a result, the proponents saw the additional regulation as being something necessary and good. It was pointed out by a participant in the study that:

> [T]here was a naivete that the bulk of the people in that area would want this, would see this as being good. There was just this naïve assumption, and it seems in a way that people have forgotten maybe or maybe never knew that when the word heritage is said to a property owner most of the time the response is fear. Right? Because they are afraid of what that's going to do to their property ...But you see in a gentle sort of environment like the Mount Newton Valley, I guess people just saw the beauty and the value of that Valley. Clearly that was a wrong assumption. Clearly what people saw was regulation and they were terrified and they said so.

The fear that was identified came from several sources. The first was likely the lack of hard information the Valley residents had regarding heritage conservation in general. The second was that many people were concerned about a decrease in property values. Another research participant mentioned that at the public meeting in April, "there were a couple of crabby developers who said that you'll probably lose property values. And they were never refuted." The final aspect was that farmers were concerned that the increased regulation of their land through a heritage conservation area would infringe on their ability to operate a financially viable farm. These fears are linked to the lack of

communication between the involved parties and the glossing over of the underlying issues of greenhouses and regulation, within the letter, and at the public meeting.

The constituency was mis-read in two key ways: first, that the majority of Valley residents would be able to see the value of heritage conservation; secondly, that it was clear what the proposed conservation area in the valley was attempting to achieve. There were no clear goals set by the H.A.C., and the attached extract from the community guide had indicated that maximum regulatory controls could be imposed. The purpose of the meeting was to set these goals, but without a clear idea of what was going to happen, the Valley residents assumed the worst, and rejected the option of exploring heritage conservation.

Because the focus of this study is the process from the point of view of local government, the attitude toward the land by the farm community was not directly explored through interviews with farmers. However, this was an issue that did surface in several interviews. To paraphrase some of the research participants, farmers see the land as a real-estate asset where they make money. Suburbanites see the land as part of the scenery. The issue of regulating the land directly impacts on the farming way of life, and farmers' ability to support themselves. The issue of land regulation and the lack of understanding of this attitude played a major role in the failure of the conservation process in the valley.

Many participants pointed out that farmers are perceived as being very anti-regulation. One local government official said:

> Some of the farmers are very interesting folks. They don't like rules and regulations. Whenever you try to put something that looks like a rule or regulation in front of them, they're going to come out swinging bats and not

> be(ing) very receptive to new concepts and ideas. So we have to recognise that, and if we come back to this discussion again, we're going to have to do a better job and learn from this first experience.

Part of this learning process is the recognition that not everyone is able to see the value of heritage conservation, and that the process needs to be designed with these people in mind by including them in the process.

This inability of the heritage proponents to "connect" with the residents of the valley was one of the major points of contention in the actual design of the process, because it was not clear what interest groups were represented:

> [I]n terms of public process, in terms of process, designing the process. If you want to design a process that's going to be successful, and I don't think there is anything wrong in doing that. Because I think in a case like this, education and information are key. At the end of the day maybe people say no anyway. But the public process for success in a case like that probably needed to be much more protracted, much gentler, small little bits happening over a very long period of time.

The difficulties of rural heritage conservation are only just beginning to be examined by the planning profession. The needs of the farming community and the difficulties they experience in their existing relations with multiple levels of government does not appear to pre-dispose them to trust new initiatives. The attitudes of farmers and their relationships with local government are an area where further exploration would be helpful.

Placemaking practice indicates that people are hesitant to participate in collaborative processes when "the issue is too remote, the number of people involved is too great, the cost is too high, when they feel inadequate, and when they feel they are unlikely to influence the final outcome" (Yencken, 1995). It is also suggested that when involved in planning as placemaking, "people need to feel comfortable with each other and the

experts" (Yencken, 1995). There is no one clear process that is appropriate for every situation. However, it is possible to design a process that has a better chance of succeeding. In order to do that, one needs a clear understanding of the audience and an idea of the objections they might raise.

Within urban areas, this may be more easily achieved, as there are multiple "third" places where people can go within the neighbourhood or district to discuss them.[11] However:

> Going to a place like Mount Newton, first of all there isn't the public forum to kind of know that, like there is in a city centre where there's lots of talk about revitalisation and stuff like that. So maybe it's more visible. But you know the Mount Newton Valley is this rural landscape. Everybody's in their houses, they don't talk about it. I remember taking [*Name omitted*] up to the area, you know where Simpson Road is, the view, incredible. You have this landscape that is like paradise on earth. Unbelievable, beautiful, you don't get any more beautiful than that. You just assume that everybody sees it. But you know they don't. The women, and it was a lot of women, and the guys that are farmers, they see something completely different. They see that land as a place where they make their money. They don't see the esoteric, aesthetic thing. They see the strawberry field, or the pumpkin field or the greenhouse. And it's a completely different view that was not well understood or even now is not well understood. That would be one of my observations. We didn't know who we were dealing with. The people who live up on the hillside, the slopes, the kind of gentlemen farmer people, they are the aesthetics, the wealthy, well-educated, well-travelled aesthetic people. Then there are people on the other side, on the Valley bottom who are farmers for god's sake. They make their money off their farms.

The lack of a dialogic space within the geography of the Mount Newton Valley creates problems when designing a process. The creation of a dialogic space prior to the formal public process allows for: the issues to be discussed and debated; encourages the confirmation of shared meanings and understanding of "place"; the identification of

[11] "Third" places were suggested by Ray Oldenburg (1997) as the locales where members of a community come together for dialogue. Examples include pubs and coffee shops, kitchens and backyards. They are informal meeting places where humans engage in relationship building.

outstanding questions to be resolved; and potential solutions to be examined. The result of this debate and discussion is often that the opposition is no longer as strident because they have had an opportunity to be heard and included as part of the placemaking (or the place-maintaining, or placesaving) actions. A future consideration for heritage conservation initiatives will be the creation of such a place prior to large group meetings.

As with any public process, a wide range of opinion can be anticipated. Within the conservation field, it is debatable whether there is any wider gap than between rural and urban heritage conservation efforts. Within the Mount Newton Valley, Tomlan's observations regarding the difficulties encountered in rural conservation rings especially true (Tomlan, 1992, p. 76—See Chapter 2). One of the participants in the study mentioned that there are only five or six large landowners on the floor of the Valley. This scattered constituency is not very well understood by the rest of the community, who may view agricultural land as part of a viewscape instead of a productive place for raising crops and livestock.

The mis-reading of the intended constituency brought forward another issue within heritage conservation—the difference between urban and rural areas. One of the research participants who didn't support the concept of a conservation area suggested that this use of the legislation is:

> More applicable in urban areas. And I can't even say why. I guess because they are people's dwellings and they could get together and see how they could benefit from it. Where people who actually make their living from and on their land, I think they are less traditionally willing to do something that would affect their properties en masse. I don't think it is in the mindset of people who live on agricultural parcels and milk cows [to consider heritage].

When discussing the difficulties encountered during the process, a research participant was asked how attitudes toward land differed in the farming community compared to

urban areas. It had been indicated that not understanding there *was* a difference in attitude between the farming community and urban areas had played a role, as had the attitude of farmers toward regulation. It was suggested that the attitude was based on:

> Very different perspective ...What's to say [the attitude toward land] is more entrenched in one than in the other or suburban areas? They work in Victoria and come home at night and they like the view. And I think it's the same for people living on rural farms as well, the coupon clippers. In other words, retired people who aren't really concerned about working in the area. Whereas people living and working on the rural lands, there is a great resistance to control from the suburban areas. And that did come up during the meeting. I don't know who [said it], but the concept again of people who don't live in this area controlling their lives. And there is a resentment, the same thing as with the creek setback. It would be the same as people in Saanich and Oak Bay making decisions that control our lives. And I think that feeling runs pretty deep in terms of the Agricultural Land Reserve.[12]

In essence, this participant is discussing the real and perceived threats that farmers experience from land-use regulation. The business of agriculture is increasingly threatened by suburban expansion, and heritage conservation may be another threat to an agrarian way of life. A second research participant suggested that heritage conservation may be a new way of gentrifying a rural area. Problems encountered in negotiating between farmers and conservationists are attributable to the lack of communication between the stakeholder groups. This stems from the proponents of conservation not understanding the pressures and threats experienced by farmers, and also from ill-defined goals which frightened many constituents.

5.2.4 Previous Public Processes

Public process is an important part of local government within British Columbia. Within the District of Central Saanich, the most recent successful public process was the update of the Official Community Plan. This process took slightly more than a year to

[12] The Hagan Creek setbacks are discussed as an issue in section 5.2.4.

complete, and involved multiple events where the residents of the municipality were asked to express their views and help shape the future of the District.

When asked to compare the process used in the OCP update to the one used for the proposed designation, a local government official said:

> I think the process we followed for the Official Community Plan was more of a warm-up, slower discussion, smaller bites and was also framed from a document that everyone is familiar with. Because we didn't really change our OCP much. It's a lot better and has more meat and those kinds of things, but that's what is expected now a days in documentation, compared to the ones in the past. The conservation area was a new concept, sort of like the Pacificat [a BC Ferry project] or whatever those boats are called. Wanting to leap way ahead in thinking, it may not work out the way you might wish sometimes, and you have to learn just to deal with that, find the pieces that are good and go on from there. The conservation area, Council probably wasn't as involved as much as maybe [it should have been].

Although the community plan update was the most recent process to affect the entire community, there have been other controversial public processes in the area.

The most recent occurred about 5 years ago, and related to the creek setbacks for Hagan Creek. The creek runs through the Mount Newton Valley, and is currently being restored to its former capacity as a trout-bearing habitat. At the time the changes were made to the Land Use Bylaw, they were considered very controversial. In the interviews for this study, three participants mentioned this action on the part of the previous Council as having influenced the reaction of the Valley residents.

The setbacks were ostensibly increased for environmental reasons relating to the restoration of stream habitat. The local government understands that modifications to these setbacks can be made by applying to the Board of Variance. One of the research

participants explained how this previous process might have influenced the outcome of the heritage designation process:

> About 5 years ago now, a group of people raised this issue about building setbacks in the watershed area. It was 15 meters in the zoning bylaw and it was increased to 30. A lot of those same people that live in the MNV were very unhappy that it raised the issue about control over their property. That issue was raised several times certainly in the public meeting. Look what happened to us over the creek setbacks. And that was bullshit. It was only for buildings, and what they had to do was go to the board of variance and get a permit if you need to. But still, people tend to be on the right end of the spectrum when it comes to land-use. They like their freedom, and they don't want any control. And a HCA was another example or extension of the problems or perceived problems they had with the creek setback. So because Hagan creek runs through the valley, the same people stood up again.

The same participant also mentioned that this linkage was unexpected, but that it did follow the pattern of the farming community rejecting additional controls on the land. This same participant also mentioned that environmental issues within the valley have contributed to this distrust of government:

> So I think there is always a basic distrust of government and I think it has grown through environmental issues. Certainly creek issues and water issues in the farming community. Where something looks innocent on the surface, but there is nothing but a pain. You never really know what it means. It's not an easy question to answer, but there is part of that in that community because of control. That came up a number of times—that there is enough regulation to the ALR. Enough rules, we don't need anymore. From a theme, that's what they were saying.

It is interesting to note that at the same time the proposal for the Heritage Conservation Area was being discussed, there was also a controversial proposal to install a municipal water line along the Mt. Newton Cross Road. It has been suggested that the construction of this water line might enable greenhouses in the Valley, and that it would allow subdivision of properties that are currently limited by water restrictions. It is possible that this proposal contributed to the negative response to the heritage designation although it was not discussed by any of the research participants.

Another research respondent further commented by suggesting that because residents felt that the creek setbacks had been forced upon them by a previous council over their objections during the public process, there was a lack of trust on the part of the residents, of the local government. It was suggested that:

> I think the biggest problem facing it wasn't the concept, but trust. The residents didn't trust the motives behind it. That's a very hard thing to overcome. You have to do something to gain the trust of the residents and I don't see a short-term way of doing that.

When asked what had caused this trust to be violated, the response was:

> I mentioned one of those issues beforehand was the creek setbacks. A lot of residents, particularly farmers felt that the creek setbacks had been put in place without very much public consultation that they had been ramrodded through. That's from the farmers' side and then from the owners on the slopes, they originally bought the property and were told that one day they would have the option to subdivide, and that was taken from them as well. It wasn't a lack of trust with our council, it was a lack of trust with the political system.

It is unclear if Council engaged the Valley residents in any activities that might have assisted in explaining the necessity of the setbacks, and how they could be altered. What is clear though, is that this previous process had unexpected implications for the proposed Heritage Conservation Area. The fear of further regulation and distrust of government led the farm community to mount a vocal and well-organised opposition to the proposal. The residents on the Mount Newton 'Slopes' also had concerns dating back to a plan in the 1980s that would allow them to subdivide. This would have permitted roughly 1500 units of housing on the slopes, and would have connected to a residential development in North Saanich known as Dean Park Estates. People purchased the land in Central Saanich speculating that this plan would be implemented, and they would be able to subdivide. The municipality eventually rescinded the plan; but many of the residents are still hopeful that they might someday have the option to subdivide. These residents opposed the heritage proposal as it would limit their ability to significantly alter the landscape. What is ironic is that the development of greenhouses

on the valley floor would also significantly decrease the value of the properties on the slopes. This would make the prospect of subdividing much less appealing, since the viewscape would no longer be as aesthetically pleasing.

Had the proponents of the Heritage Conservation Area created the structures for community involvement earlier in the process, the underlying issue of distrust of government regulation and its associated tensions might have come to light early enough to ensure efforts to mitigate its effects through public dialogue. These structures also might have allowed for better communication about the fear of strict land regulation on the part of the farming community.

Part 2: Reflections on the Public Process

The research participants were selected on the basis of their involvement in various capacities in the proposal for the Heritage Conservation Area. As such, many of them have had time to reflect on the process and pinpoint the weaknesses in the approach. They have also had time to reflect on what they would do differently given similar circumstances and opportunity. Many had suggestions for improving the process. Section 5.3.1, will focus on these suggestions and illustrates that a process more closely aligned with the theory of placemaking could be employed. Examples from other municipalities, based on discussions with heritage planners from other areas, are illustrated in section 5.3.2. It focuses on the elements of successful processes in both Victoria and Nanaimo. And finally, section 5.3.3, will sum up some of the other suggestions that emerged from the sample about how heritage conservation objectives might be best achieved.

5.3.1 Changes to the Process

For those most directly involved in the design of the process, the results of the public meeting were disheartening. Much effort and time had been expended to prepare for the meeting. Being met with such opposition caused many to rethink both their involvement and the process that was used. Interview participants commented that participating in the research and being asked to reflect on the process was a very valuable part of their personal learning experience. The community members and the local government officials were all asked the same question with regards to the process: Knowing what you know now, what would you do differently if you could start over again? The responses to this question were surprising in their depth, and also surprising in that most respondents seem to have an uncanny grasp of placemaking theory, without ever reading about it, or even being able to name it. This reinforces the position of placemaking as a fundamental human art or practice associated with community-building. I also noted that although the residents of the Mount Newton Valley are occasionally referred to as a "community" by the research participants, it appears that the "community" still needs to be built from the current fragments which are in the form of various interest groups, geographic or otherwise.

From the local government officials' perspective, there were suggestions relating to the size of the meeting, the stakeholders involved, and the need for ongoing dialogue. One suggestion was that both before and after any community process there is a need for positive reinforcement:

> What you need either before or after a meeting is a process involved with a working group or a grass roots group. And so I still feel here is the opportunity for leadership to be coming either through the Council or through, it may not be necessarily through the Heritage Commission. But I think there is still the opportunity for leadership to encourage the

> community to have dialogue about their future and their common goals if there are any.

It is clear to most research participants that communication with the stakeholder groups and seeking the involvement and support of residents is an essential component of the background work to be done prior to any public meeting.

In the case of the Mount Newton Valley, this suggestion for an ongoing working group could be implemented to smooth some of the tensions over the creek setbacks, and also to encourage dialogue between interest groups about issues affecting them within local areas. Specifically with regards to the Mount Newton process, the same respondent suggested that the choice of setting and size might have an impact:

> And I suppose one might have also have considered a series of smaller group meetings or open houses, give a choice of times, hold them in smaller more intimate settings. The church hall, different places, somebody's house, not the school with the capacity to hold 150 people. Obvious things of that sort.

It is unfortunate that these "obvious" things are clear only in hindsight. The comment again points to the necessity for dialogue within the Valley prior to a formal public process. It may also indicate the need for professional involvement in the design of public processes, as experience indicates that individuals who are too close to an issue may not see areas of potential discord. The above comment also recognises the importance of location of a meeting and the number of people involved. The opportunity for small group discussion is essential to any process where consensus-building is a factor.

The number of people in attendance at the public meeting was also a concern for a research participant who suggested that speaking in front of large groups was very intimidating for some people. It was suggested that a silent minority of people who

supported the concept of the conservation area did not speak at the meeting for this reason.

The same participant also suggested that a softer more emotional approach would be helpful. The suggestion of a slide and video presentation was made, illustrating what "it" was that made the Valley a special place. This emotional approach could also have been bolstered by some hard data on the economic benefits of heritage conservation:

> I think we should've had a more emotional approach, because heritage is an emotional thing. And another thing, I think they should realise that there is an economic sound base to heritage. It does encourage people to come out here and go to the vegetable stands, have lunch in Brentwood or at the Prairie Inn. Heritage encourages people to come. Ugly greenhouses and ugly developments do not encourage anyone to come. If they had destroyed the Olde Town of Victoria, those American tourists wouldn't flock over. And people love this, it's the favourite valley route. So lets face it, being counted is the bottom line. And they think that heritage is an airy-fairy elitist sort of thing. And I think that if you can prove to them that it's not an economic disadvantage.

In the case of the Mount Newton Valley, the amount of information available to the Valley residents was insufficient. The need for more information about the issues that really concerned residents, such as the financial implications of conservation and the issue of regulatory control of land are critical.

The same respondent was also concerned that the process appeared to be "coming from on high." There were very few local people at the public meeting who spoke in favour of the proposed designation, even though several had previously approached members of the H.A.C. to indicate their support. It was mentioned earlier that the entire proposal appeared to be conceived in the Council building without adequate input from the community. A more community-based or grass-roots approach was needed:

> I think we should've had more people who live right here speaking. Maybe some old timers ... I think if it looked like it was more coming out

> of the community, and not coming from on high, it would have been a different psychological process. I think that was a mistake.

Although local government commitment to a project is important, there must also be a real grassroots commitment engendered by the imperative that the associated process had started with, and included, the residents themselves. The "optics" of setting up the process in this way might have alleviated the "us versus them" attitude that prevailed.

Another research participant was irritated by the adversarial roles that had been set up by the lack of public participation into the process. For this participant, the timing of the information going out to the residents of the area was the key to a more inclusive and community-based approach:

> Clearly that it should have been brought public sooner by the HAC and Council. And I think that there should have been some public process, or at least going out and talking to people pretty soon after the idea came up. And got at least a sampling by talking to people informally. And maybe set up a small committee. It should have gone through Council. And that irritates me. What's happened with this Council, normally they are called advisory committees, because council passes a motion to the committee that tells them what to do. They shouldn't be acting independently from my perspective. Then the politicians always have a finger on what's going on, not to manipulate it, but to be able to answer questions about what's going on. It should come back to Council for some sort of discussion, then back to the committee. For that you've got control, Roberts' rules, and it's a public process.

This type of process would allow for broader consultation prior to a community meeting, and, more importantly, would offer structures for more widespread involvement of Valley residents and stakeholders. The fear the residents expressed that this proposal would be passed over their objections, (similar to the setbacks to Hagan Creek) would also be able to be addressed. The scale of this suggested process is also more in keeping with the ideas suggested by Yencken (1995) when he writes about the value of collaboration in placemaking.

Another research participant indicated that a consensual approach could be used for future heritage activities. The involvement of stakeholders from a variety of groups at the beginning, especially during goal-setting was also a suggested solution. There were numerous groups within the valley that were identified for inclusion in the early stages of consensus-building. The suggestion was for the farmers, the environmentalists, the creek conservation group, the slopes residents, and old and new residents to share their perspectives and visions for the future of the valley.

The same participant noted that clear parameters for the process were not set prior to the community meeting. The lack of any terms of reference for the process was confusing for the citizens involved. The H.A.C. had expected that the Valley residents would set these terms, while in the interim, the community focused on other issues due to the lack of information. When asked if terms of reference were set at the outset, another research participant said:

> Not that I know of. So of course if you don't have things spelled out if people can't see what exactly you want then they imagine that you do want everything that is possible. Which is what they saw in the mail out. So to go out there with a clear picture of what's wanted and what is being sought could be helpful and reassuring. The farmers would say I don't like this but you know I can go along with that, instead of nobody's telling me what to do. The homeowners could see how they could support what's being done.

The terms of reference were suggested as a starting point, in order to initiate dialogue. This also gives people an opportunity to see where they might initially come to consensus and where additional work will need to take place. While a process needs to allow a certain amount of flexibility, it also needs to be discrete. There was an attempt to narrow the focus by the H.A.C. by providing a map outlining tentative boundaries for the conservation area, illustrated in Chapter 1. However, the boundaries were not the main

point of contention. The focus needed to be on examples of regulatory control and the flexibility allowed by the Heritage Conservation Area legislation.

All of the research participants recognised that a shift in thinking needed to occur before another conservation designation could be attempted. There was also general recognition that the problems created by the initial letter that went out to the residents of the area needed to be addressed. There was general consensus that small group meetings with different groups needed to take place so that accurate information could be passed on. The majority of suggestions centred on involving more Valley residents at an earlier stage in the process. The desire to gain the trust of the residents was also mentioned, and again this could be achieved through broader public involvement, in a community-building initiative.

The group of people who have offered the ideas presented in this section are not suggesting that any of these approaches would guarantee a successful designation process.[13] However, by placing control of the process more fully in the hands of the residents of the area, many of the obstacles encountered would have been diminished or alleviated.

While placemaking is not the only theory to deal with issues of public process, it may prove very useful in heritage conservation efforts because of its multi-disciplinary approach. The collaboration of stakeholder groups under the management of a planning professional has potential for success. There are no clear steps that will work for all

[13] It has been suggested that a more open process need not even include or be limited to heritage conservation. Several people at the community meeting indicated they wanted to see ongoing discussions of local issues.

situations, but the educational and collaborative aspects of the placemaking approach offers a model that enables true communities to plan for themselves.

5.3.2 Examples from Other Communities

Two of the research participants have in-depth experience in the field of heritage planning. Their interviews followed a slightly different structure, as they were asked to detail the process that was employed for their most successful projects, and the elements that made these projects successful. While both examples are from urban contexts, they are still able to illustrate how the obstacles that arose were overcome, and what the elements of a successful process might be. These examples are provided to illustrate that some of the practices of placemaking are being utilised by planners in the conservation field with great success, and to provide a small basis for comparison to the process employed by the District of Central Saanich.

The City of Victoria is known for its numerous heritage buildings and for its proactive approach to conservation. The City has a number of programs to support various aspects of conservation, the most important being an organisation that is able to provide funding. After the controversial Eaton Centre project in the mid 1980s, involving the demolition of 14 heritage buildings, it was realised that a new downtown plan and heritage registry was needed. A grant was received from the BC Heritage Trust to fund the project, and a consultant was hired.

At that time, heritage conservation was controversial in the downtown area since the central business district was ripe for redevelopment. The consultant compiled a new list of buildings within the central business district for inclusion on the heritage registry. The second part of the consultant's job was to make policy recommendations regarding how

to deal with the heritage buildings. However, in order to add the prospective buildings to the heritage registry, the owners needed to be contacted. The next step in the process was to:

> Advise a bunch of property owners about what we were going to do. That was potentially controversial having your building added to the heritage registry, in a downtown ripe for redevelopment. And it was. And what we did, was that once the consultants had completed the report, and the contract was ended, at that point we embarked on a fairly long-term consultation.
>
> The way it worked, we started out with mail-outs advising them that this is what we proposed and we did a series of workshops, and what in effect we tried to do in those workshops, is explain to people why we were proposing to add buildings to the heritage registry.

The owners were also advised that incentives were being offered if they voluntarily designated their building. Due to the large volume of buildings that were to be added to the heritage registry, it was decided to break the process into more manageable pieces:

> So we arranged a series of 4 workshops and broke it down by area, so we could deal with each area as 4 separate components. And we went out, and we also decided we wouldn't do it in City Hall, we did it outside of City Hall, and kind of just gave it a more comfortable feeling. One was, in the Library, one was in the maritime museum, one was down in Swans pub, in the restaurant there. And we invited the property owners in that quadrant, which numbered about 20-25, not all of them showed up. We went in with a slide show. We tried to explain the whole rationale of what and why we were doing. Out of that process, we had some of them who were ok with the process, they weren't strongly opposed. When we actually did the notifications, about half of them, 42, came back with an objection. So when council dealt with the recommendations, they were able to proceed with adding the 42 who didn't object to the registry, and the other 42 they referred back to the heritage advisory committee for further consultation with the owners.

By breaking it down into manageable pieces, a certain amount of success was achieved. The initial success created some momentum, but there was also the realization that the process needed to be continued. The remaining objectors to inclusion on the heritage registry were invited to come back for a more detailed process:

> So what we did was set up a process in which we had a great deal of dialogue with the individual owners. What we did, we had the heritage

> advisory committee set up a series of special meetings, which was a big commitment for them, because we literally had one meeting every week for 6 months. It was quite incredible. We would have their one regular meeting a month, then we would have 3 special meetings, we blocked out about 2-2.5 hours, we gave each property owner 30 minutes to tell the committee why they didn't like the idea and to ask questions. I think that was a fairly important step, because what it did, even though a lot of those property owners didn't change their minds, it gave them an opportunity to feel that they were being heard, that somebody was listening.

This step of creating dialogue with the constituents was critical to the success of the process. More importantly, the City had anticipated that heritage conservation was going to be a controversial process, and they were dedicated to making it as transparent as possible. By setting aside time for dialogue with the people most affected, structures for stakeholder involvement were created. The support of the H.A.C. and municipal staff created an environment where stakeholder participation was well managed and accessible. The entire process was run over a six-month period, and at the end the Council of the time passed the buildings into the heritage registry even though some of the owners were still reluctant:

> The nature of the hearing, going into it, we were very nervous, because this kind of thing could just blow up sky high. But I think because of the nature of the consultation process that had been undertaken in that 6 month lead up period [we were successful]. There was a tremendous amount of dialogue and meetings and listening and talking, the opposition was not quite as strident as it might have been, it was more muted. And I think that helped carry the day.

It was suggested that the opportunity to be heard played a major role in muting the opposition. In addition, some properties were dropped from the list of potential registry buildings, so it appears there was a certain amount of compromise.

This process differs from the one in the Mount Newton Valley in a few key ways. Firstly, the residents of the City of Victoria are generally sympathetic to heritage conservation, although many individual building owners are not. Secondly, the process that was used

involved small manageable groups, and a fair amount of positive publicity through the local newspapers. Most importantly, there were clear avenues for public participation, and an active education campaign was the purpose of the initial stakeholder meetings. There was also a great deal of preparation for opposition, rather than an assumption that the property owners affected would be supportive. Finally, there were very clear goals. The purpose of the public consultation was to gain support for the inclusion of specific buildings on the heritage registry.

The other example of a successful process took place in Nanaimo in the 1980s. This experience also occurs before the new legislation was adopted. It is comparable to the Mount Newton Valley in that the residents of Nanaimo were also unsympathetic to heritage conservation initiatives. In this example, stocks of buildings in the downtown were suffering from neglect, mostly because expansion of the city was on the outskirts. The interest in heritage stemmed from a need for downtown revitalization. Nanaimo had a nearly intact stock of heritage buildings, which included some designed by Rattenbury.[14] There was an expression of interest from Heritage Canada, and the BC Heritage Trust, "and a certain amount of interest on the part of the city." The proposal for the Mount Newton Valley is similar to the one in Nanaimo as:

> There were a number of volunteers, they had a Heritage Advisory Committee and there were some volunteers on it initially who sparked things. And it was really the bringing together of all those resources, agencies, and people that really made it successful. And what we were able to do was build on that initial interest. And this really dynamite group of people came together in the early to mid 1980s. And this is so key, is to have this coalition of forces. If its just lobbying from one end of the world it's not very successful in my experience. But it was the coming together of half a dozen really vibrant forces.

[14] Francis Mawson Rattenbury (1867-1935) is famous for his design for the BC Legislature. He also designed the Banff Springs Hotel, the Empress Hotel in Victoria, and Chateau Lake Louise. He was murdered by his chauffeur when he returned to England. His son John, studied under Frank Lloyd Wright. (Province of British Columbia, 2000)

The lobbying was not the only element of the project that was successful. By the end of the project:

> We raised $2.5 million for downtown revitalisation, and somewhere around $.5million for heritage restoration and conservation. It was really a remarkable project. And it restored 18 projects. We had 2 projects, the initial downtown core project and then the Fitzwilliam street project. And there were 2 areas, 2 heritage conservation projects and 2 other little fringe areas. A whole bunch of buildings, a whole bunch of money. Most of them sort of 50/50 matching grants, and we did street work. $2.5 million went into public works and the $.5 million went into individual buildings and some interpretative work.

The project was not easy, as there was resistance from heritage building owners and also from the local government. But the principal actors involved in the project persevered, and eventually widespread support was achieved. Much of this success is credited to the project organizers who were "shrewd, calculating lobbyists." They:

> [W]eren't just loud and noisy, they were shrewd and really knew how to get what they wanted. Tenacious! That was the other thing, we infiltrated the bureaucracy. And were tenacious. And there was a lot of resistance. And fear, that's what it was, and anxiety because they were confronted with this group of people who just weren't going to go away. And it was all done in a very positive way. It was all positive, everything we presented was positive and these were the advantages. And eventually it was very persuasive I think.

The presentation and dissemination of information was critical for success. The emphasis on the positive aspects of conservation and revitalization was conveyed Nanaimo residents through multiple events. Success with the policy makers was achieved in this way:

> the approach was to raise public awareness and to get the public support and then to pressure the decision makers. And that's exactly what happened and was very successful.

As with the case in the District of Central Saanich, the affected property-owners needed to be pressured, but the approach was never seen as confrontational or adversarial. An alternative to traditional planning practice was presented, and the potential benefits were consistently illustrated. What is interesting about the Nanaimo example is the way the

stakeholders were brought into the project through multiple events. The one described below is illustrative of an approach that is similar to the one described in the placemaking literature:

> And we had tons of community events, that was the focus of the activity. Tons of parades, and ribbon cuttings, and openings. And we had a heritage pub crawl every year. And it was a lot of fun. I mean that where you are, it's Nanaimo, the land of the pub. And so every year in June we hosted a heritage pub-crawl. Because all the pubs they were historic buildings. We would start at one end of town and wind our way through all of the bars to the other end of town. It was a great route, a lot of fun. At each bar we would do, and these are logger and fisherman bars, we'd be dressed in costume and we would go in and take over the bar for half an hour and then go on to the next bar. And the beginning of each visit someone would stand up and give a spiel on the history of the bar, and who designed the hotel and why it was important in the history, and where the city councillors had drunk their beer after their meetings in the 1800's.

The activities that were planned took into account the attitude and sprit of the city. No particular stakeholder groups were targeted, but a variety of groups were included at each event:

> It was really interesting because it attracted all sorts of people. And some of the most interesting people who came, were those that otherwise would never have been comfortable going to a bar. So we had these older women who would come, the minister from the Anglican Church downtown...That was the kind of classic public event we would pull off. It was really fun and novel and attracted all kinds of people that wouldn't normally come to that kind of event. It was educational, it was educational to the people sitting in the bars drinking their beer on the red terry cloth. And it was really interesting. I think the most successful restoration projects in downtown Nanaimo are the bars. There are some really good restoration projects, some fantastic buildings...So going back to your central question, I think that the public involvement was critical, absolutely critical. And the de-emphasis on regulation and the emphasis on raising awareness and support through that way was critical and was pivotal.

The inclusion of community leaders from local institutions is interesting to note. One of the missing elements in the Mount Newton case is that there is little mutual support between the various special interest groups within the Valley. It is unclear if there is really a "community" there, or merely special interest groups. In Nanaimo, the process was also brought to people who might not otherwise have participated. And conversely,

the area was made accessible to people who normally would not be there. Many of the people involved in the project were from out of town. Their enthusiasm and excitement about the area allowed long-term residents a different perspective on their home place. The citizens were so used to seeing a run-down area that they were unable to see other possibilities. Therefore, the emphasis was on what made Nanaimo a special place rather than regulation. And once recognition of the positive aspects of the city's heritage was realized, broad support for conservation was achieved.

Within Central Saanich, many people realize that the Mount Newton Valley is special, but by living there for a very long time, they may be unable to see it from any other perspective. Although people are not contemptuous of the valley, they may be so familiar with it that it no longer inspires any strong feelings. Creating emotional attachment to a place and to a project of this sort is essential.

Urban revitalization through heritage in Nanaimo illustrates some of the key features of a successful placemaking project. First, it was collaborative. A group of people from different backgrounds and perspectives came together to work on it. Secondly, community participation through activities and events was encouraged. Opportunities for participation were created for those who might not normally have become involved. Collaboration between different interest groups was achieved with community leaders participating in events. Finally, the process was a long-term effort. The City of Nanaimo is still struggling to maintain its downtown heritage, but the foundations for ongoing community participation are still in place.

Comparing the Nanaimo experience to the Central Saanich experience is difficult; still, some conclusions may be drawn. First, in Central Saanich resident support is critical and

was not forthcoming. Preliminary efforts to achieve this goal were largely unsuccessful due to a failure to comprehend the possible objections to the process. Secondly, securing mutual aid from other interest groups through collaboration was not pursued. Finally, a sufficient amount of time was not allotted to the process to gain community support, and to encourage an emotional attachment to the place.

Both of these successful examples provide an illustration that a placemaking approach to heritage conservation can be successfully used in the British Columbia context. The elements that allowed these projects to prevail are simple. First, the affected stakeholders were brought into the process at an early stage. Second, it was assumed that the stakeholders were suspicious or hesitant about conservation, and all communication with the residents was designed to take this into account. And finally, collaboration between multiple groups was achieved, dialogue was encouraged and compromises were made. Both of these examples also illustrate that although the proponents were met with opposition, the ability to persevere ultimately created the necessary conditions for success.

5.3.4 Alternative Approaches

The conversations with the research participants touched on a wide range of topics. A subject that came up with some regularity was that of using other methods to achieve heritage conservation goals. The legislation in British Columbia is acknowledged by most professionals to be the most pro-active in Canada. However, due to a lack of provincial government funding for heritage activities, there are few professionals who are able to fully utilize the options it contains.

One provincial government representative suggests that the legislation is:

> [V]ery good. It provides a whole array of things that can be done. I think it's very creative. I'll give you one example, the Heritage Alteration Permit. You make a designation, to make a change, you have a Heritage Alteration Permit. And people think that to make a change I need a permit. And if you look at the legislation it says to vary and supplement the bylaw, so through a permit you can actually make changes to the bylaw. A lot of power in a HAP. Which is a waste on local governments, because they only see it as a permit to make a change and that's it, they don't see it to make a supplemental change.

It was further suggested that the legislation wasn't being used to its full potential for a number of reasons, including the lack of staff and funding:

> One of the ways in which it can remedy that is to have staff. Places like Victoria, Richmond Vancouver you have a big enough staff to do that. In the smaller communities you don't have that. This was the role the province was supposed to have, was to provide that kind of continuity ... I am there for municipalities, if they have questions, I help them in that process. We used to have lots of people doing that. Now I'm the only one for the whole province ... So the more government cuts back the less creatively we can use it. The less heritage conservation happens, the less that happens, the less you are having social and economic revitalisation .

This is an obstacle to heritage conservation because the legislation actually provides enormous flexibility. However, the lack of staff and education about the full range of uses of the legislation creates a situation where local governments have difficulty embracing heritage conservation because they are unable to see the full range of potential rewards.

With this in mind, some of the research participants suggested that using the heritage conservation legislation may not be the best choice, or that designation processes need to emphasize the incentives that are available. Because heritage designation is viewed by some as punitive, a carrot and stick approach is especially advocated. The City of Victoria is a good example. The majority of heritage buildings are within a development permit area, which only allows new construction to be 1 times the area of the lot, which means that it is economically advantageous to refurbish a 4 or 5 story heritage building. In addition to this, grants are available from the city to complete upgrades. These grants

are part of the budget of the City, and are recouped through the increased property values and higher property taxes.

It was also suggested by one of the research participants:

> I think that each municipality that has a heritage commission should start with $20,000 and tuck it away. I think there should be grants and tax reductions to encourage people.

These suggestions were echoed by other participants, with the realization that the grants program for rehabilitation and renovation would eventually pay for itself, as property values would increase which in turn increases the municipal property tax base.

Another suggestion from a research participant was to not use heritage legislation at all. This approach would be strongly supplemented by educational campaigns aimed at homeowners and residents supporting stewardship actions:

> I'm a big supporter of stewardship. And I suggested that the Heritage Advisory Commission look at stewardship. In other words, completely voluntary. Legislation ain't gonna work, it just pisses people off. You come up with a voluntary participation. It's like recycling—20 years ago nobody did it, and eventually you get to the 80% support mark. And I think what they should've done, its easy to be analytical, but they should've come up with something that provided some real examples like protecting hedgerows, rather than put in examples from an urban environment. So I think that had they put in some simple examples, it would have been less alarmist.

This type of participation would be completely voluntary, and the actions undertaken to support this idea would involve creating the opportunity and political climate for stewardship.

Other suggestions were similar to the idea of stewardship, where watchdog organizations would be created to keep the community informed of potential changes. It was acknowledged that this type of organization would still be active in lobbying for

heritage designation, but that a more community-based approach would be used to gain support. While placemaking theory provides a framework for public process in heritage conservation activities, it is not exclusive of regulatory means such as those entailed within these alternative approaches. It is therefore the task of the conservationist as placemaker to balance regulation and legislation with public process and opinion. This balance will best be achieved by adopting placemaking as an ethic of planning, where planners and conservationists blur the boundary between "professional" and "people-in-place." This notion of placemaking entails conservationists and planners getting out of their specialist boxes and behaving not just professionally, but as part of the "people-in-place." This shifting boundary will allow a "community" to develop and recognizes that the people active in any given place, or place-in-the-making, are the real agents of placemaking.

Chapter 6 Conclusions

6.1 Revisiting the Questions

Within any democratic process, there is the possibility that a proposal will be rejected. Although the people directly involved in the attempted designation of the Mount Newton Valley as a Heritage Conservation Area are disappointed, they have indicated that the idea is not completely dead, and that seeds have been sown within the community for the future. There is agreement within the municipality that the Mount Newton Valley is a special place, and that there are specific properties of heritage value. The disagreements lie mainly in the means to conserve heritage for the future.

My research questions focussed on examining the processes involved in heritage conservation at the local level. The research questioned how effective locally-driven conservation might be best achieved; how placemaking theory could better inform and strengthen the public processes used in heritage designations; and how a placemaking perspective could better frame the conserving and planning regarding heritage landscapes. These questions were grounded in practice by exploring them within the context of a failed heritage landscape conservation designation in the Mount Newton Valley are of the District of Central Saanich, British Columbia.

It appears that the process of designating the Mount Newton Valley as a Heritage Conservation Area was badly flawed in many ways. Among the lessons learned from this process is that the desire for heritage conservation must come from multiple stakeholder groups within the area. Because the proposal appeared to originate from the Council and their appointed body--the--Heritage Advisory Commission, the propertied interests within the Valley did not have an ownership stake in the proposal or the

process. Locally-driven conservation implies that the initiative must not come wholly from government. Instead, it appears to indicate that a grass-roots process and broad-based support from the residents of the area are necessities for the proposal to have any chance of success. To achieve broad public support, communication between local government and residents is necessary, as well as dialogue between different interest groups. This type of communication can best be characterized as the development of "human relationships, represented by words such as *caring, trust,* and perhaps even *love*" (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, p. 200). This type of communication can leave individuals and groups feeling vulnerable, and also subjects the professional to certain risks, however these open relationships encourage collaboration and commitment "for the process, the people, and the place" (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, p. 200). Placemaking theory indicates that "confirmation" and "interrogation" are key parts of the dialogue, suggesting mutual aid between interest groups. This aspect of a process subjects communication to the influence of many and invests control of the process with all individuals involved in the conversation rather than just the proponents.

The second research question concerns how placemaking theory might inform and strengthen the public process used in heritage designations. From the research participants we know that there were four key areas where the public process failed. The first was in the communication addressed to the Mount Newton Valley residents; second, was the lack of collaboration and participation between the Valley residents and the local government; third, was that the intended constituency and their concerns were mis-judged; and fourth, was that previous contentious public processes had led to a distrust of local government. If placemaking theory had been applied to this proposal, it might be anticipated that at the very least, the proposal would still be under discussion.

In particular, the Australian literature revealed a strong dedication to the institutionalized or formalized process of placemaking and provided guidelines about what constituted a "good" process. The emphasis placed on collaboration, public participation, good project management and clear structures for community involvement were the main areas identified. It is interesting to note that the research participants identified all of these areas when reflecting on what they would do differently if given the opportunity to start over again. Placemaking theory could be used to strengthen heritage conservation proposals by providing a checklist of essential activities that need to take place prior to public meetings. These activities would fall under the categories of collaboration and public process, and would include opportunities for confirmation of shared meanings and interrogation of areas of disagreement. This would allow proponents to address the major concerns of residents and would diffuse adversarial positions.

The final research question asked how a placemaking perspective could better frame the conservation and associated planning process, regarding proposed heritage landscapes. The Mount Newton Valley example demonstrates clearly that management and planning of the process are essential to achieve any degree of success. Placemaking could provide concise direction to create a process in which the stakeholders could be part of the collaborative effort needed to propel the project. It also could encourage solutions and processes that are directly appropriate to the needs of the residents at the time. The flexibility of this body of theory encourages creative thinking and the collaboration of groups that might not otherwise work together. Much of the literature indicates that artists and designers can play a significant role in placemaking practice. It is apparent that professional planners with knowledge of placemaking theory have an essential role in facilitating the public process associated with heritage conservation. The drawbacks in implementing placemaking processes through the efforts of professionals, include

however, the financial restrictions under which most local governments operate, and the significant amounts of time that Council and staff may be expected to devote to the process. Related to this is the difficulty in finding professionals with an understanding of placemaking, and an awareness of the implications of such an approach in the way they discharge their professional duties. In addition, there is a need to establish training opportunities for local governments and community advisory groups in placemaking praxis.

One of the important considerations in answering the final research question is that placemaking represents a new ethical challenge for most planners and local governments, especially as to how planners "profess" their planning in their praxis. The resulting theory is shifting and changing rapidly to be adapted to a variety of new contexts. Part of this shift is occurring as people become aware of the need to develop processes that are accessible to the stakeholder groups and encourage involvement by residents in decision-making. A related consideration is how to define and develop "community." If placemaking is to be employed as a planning praxis, planners will need not only a deepened understanding of how to read places, but also how to understand and inspire people. It is the community that actually performs the placemaking, and the planner is a part of this community with certain technical knowledge. We must not forget that the most important knowledge comes from "people-in-place." They ultimately have the critical knowledge that will enable a collaborative process to succeed. The perspective of placemaking will become more defined as professionals and laypersons alike strive to find new and better ways of planning for heritage conservation.

6.2 Recommendations

These recommendations are based on the analysis of the process in the Mount Newton Valley, and the brief comparison to other successful heritage conservation projects.

- Communicating with the stakeholder groups is critical in the early stages of a process. The need for dialogue between groups representing different views is documented throughout the process in Central Saanich. It is also demonstrated that large-scale community meetings are not the best place for such dialogue to take place. A great deal of background planning and research must be completed and initial stages of public process must include education and opportunities for questioning in small group settings.

- Partnerships between organizations and interest groups, and working collaboratively with individuals and groups may ensure greater acceptance by the community. It is noted that collaborative processes are more difficult and time-consuming than co-operative processes, but will be inherently more in tune with the needs and visions of the "community." Central Saanich unwittingly set up an adversarial process by not including representatives from other groups in the early planning stages. The concept of mutual learning between interest groups needs to be explored. This exploration does not need to occur within the confines of official public consultation, and would likely be ongoing.

- Information presented to the constituency should take into account their experiences with public consultation, the issues that are important to them, and the general knowledge of the stakeholders about the topic in question. Many of the research

participants recognized that the community reaction to the proposal in Central Saanich was based on fear. The farming community in particular seemed to resent previous municipal actions with regard to Hagan Creek, but the Heritage Commission did not realize this. It is suggested that the municipality maintains a record of public processes, and that this record should indicate the community response, problems encountered, and recommendations for future processes. This would indicate "hot spots" within the community, and would encourage reflection on the process and provide suggestions for future processes.

- There is a great need for information about heritage conservation specific to rural areas. It is assumed that the differences between rural and urban areas will require the development of a different approach to heritage conservation in rural areas. As evidenced by the farming community in Central Saanich, conservation and local government are viewed with suspicion. The realities of farming, and the difficulty many farmers are experiencing also indicates that heritage conservation may not be viable in agricultural areas or that if conservation activities are pursued, incentives and compensation should be clearly explained.

- Literature and information regarding the actual public process shaping conservation designations is needed. The majority of literature encountered during the literature review indicated the reasons for undertaking heritage conservation and the end result of a *successful* public process. There is a need for an exploration of unsuccessful public processes at the local level so that other municipalities can learn from previous mistakes. A series of comparative case studies from across Canada would be the preferred means to address this shortage of information. These case

studies could also provide information on the differences in provincial legislation about heritage conservation.

- Educational opportunities for planners, local governments, and municipal advisory committees about placemaking as a form of public process are recommended. This could take the form of one-day professional workshops and could be part of the Canadian Institute of Planners ongoing educational program. Within British Columbia, the City Program from Simon Fraser University provides learning opportunities for planners and interested community members. To date, there have been no seminars on placemaking as a new form of praxis.

- Funding for heritage conservation is needed from both the provincial and local government levels. Funding for tax breaks, and restoration incentives would enhance public acceptance of heritage conservation. In view of decreasing transfer payments from the provincial government to municipal government, there may be opportunities for private initiatives or investment in heritage conservation at the local level. This could take the form of creating private foundations to provide grants, or it could involve partnerships with corporations and sponsorship of sites and activities.

6.3 Theorizing "Placesaving"

Through this thesis, I have been suggested that there is a need for a new body of knowledge that integrates heritage conservation and placemaking. Analysis of the failed heritage conservation proposal for the Mount Newton Valley in Central Saanich indicates that there are gaps in knowledge of how to develop and manage such processes. The

first of these is that the existing literature on heritage conservation focuses mostly on why local government and special interest groups should want to conserve historic artifacts, but not necessarily on the process needed to achieve such conservation. It is also assumed that conservation will be achieved through a regulatory approach that often inadvertently generates suspicion and distrust. There is little grounded knowledge regarding the process required to gain community support for heritage conservation. This omission has meant that heritage issues are not an immediate consideration during the planning and development process. The theory regarding a "sense of place" indicates that heritage and a connection to the past are important elements of community identity. To protect the integrity of that identity, heritage conservation is a necessary activity. Placemaking seeks to further develop and strengthen the ties within communities. The combination of placemaking and heritage conservation could emphasize the ties of a community to place, and would seek to develop and explore the commonalties of these ties between groups within the community.

"Placesaving" was initially theorized as being an activity that would combine heritage conservation and community-building. It is clear from the experiences within the District of Central Saanich that there are many actions that need to be taken before this idea can be fully implemented. Placemaking on its own, as a new context for planners to work within has potential in terms of achieving community planning by the community. Prior to planning by the community, planners and conservationists may need to reassess their role as an unassailable "professional" in a position of knowledge and power. The very idea of placemaking as a collaborative effort reveals the professional's vulnerability. How can we work within a community if we set ourselves apart from them, by not devolving responsibility for knowledge to all individuals? This act will require planners to reject the positivist model of the construction of knowledge as coming from "outside the world-as-

lived" (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, 195). Planners and conservationists need to recognize that knowledge, especially knowledge about place, is socially and politically constructed. Thus the real knowledge required for successful heritage conservation as placemaking comes from within the community. This is not to say that the specialized knowledge of planners and conservationists is no longer required. Rather it suggests that how we utilize this knowledge in daily planning activities needs to be transparent and that professionals should not be afraid to seek knowledge from a variety of sources.

Even as placemaking has the potential to redefine professional practice, it also has the potential to direct planning and conservation actions by communities. Its most innovative use might be in finding issues within a community that are controversial and providing an avenue for the community to resolve these issues. Heritage conservation is one area where new processes are needed, and the potential of these newly forged processes for planners and local governments are limitless. It remains for these ideas to be explored and refined within the many municipalities of British Columbia and beyond, to demonstrate its versatility and range.

Appendix 1 Informed Consent and Interview Guide

The research participants were advised that the purpose of the research is to explore how and why local government might best achieve locally-driven heritage conservation. Research participants were advised that their identified would remain confidential, and that transcripts of the interviews were not going to be included as part of the thesis. They were also advised that they could withdraw from the research at any time, and that they were not required to answer questions they were uncomfortable responding to. A brief explanation of placemaking theory as an alternative approach to conservation was made, as well as a statement expressing interest in the process employed by the research participants in their own heritage conservation projects.

The interview guide consisted of a series of questions. Similar questions were asked to all participants, and were explored for detail and clarity within the interview:

How long have you been involved in heritage conservation?
What do you understand by the term Heritage Landscape Conservation?
Would you tell me about some of your experiences with conservation in the past 5-10 years? (Pick one and probe for greater detail)

- -What was being conserved?
- -What elements of the site were identified as being "special"?
- -Who was involved in the process?
- -What was the local governments' response?
- -What was the community response?
- -How long did the process take?
- -Identify the key players involved in the effort?
- -If you could change start the process over again, what would you change?

<u>To the Provincial Agency participants (in addition to the above)</u>
Who lobbied in support of the new legislation? Who opposed it? Why?
What compromises were made?

Appendix 2 The Letter and Attachments

The Corporation of the District of Central Saanich

December 15, 1998

Dear Mount Newton Valley Resident:

As Mayor of Central Saanich and as Chair of the Central Saanich Heritage Commission, we would jointly like to share with you an idea the Council and the Commission have been considering for the last two years regarding heritage conservation in the Mount Newton Valley.

In 1995, the Government of British Columbia passed new heritage legislation creating a variety of protection mechanisms which municipal governments could use to conserve local heritage resources. One of these "tools" is the "heritage conservation area" defined as a distinct district or area with unique heritage values and character identified for heritage conservation purposes in an official community plan and formalized as a bylaw. It is widely felt that the Mount Newton Valley as a distinct geographic area has many unique features which deserve protection and that, if the residents were agreeable, this new tool may be the best means of achieving that protection. However, this initiative would not be successful without extensive property owner support and participation.

This letter is the first step in the communication with Valley residents. The District believes that the Mount Newton Valley area is one of the unique and historically significant areas in British Columbia which has to date been largely spared unsympathetic development. A conservation area designation would help to ensure that features such as hedgerows, right-of-way trees, rural roadways and rural land uses continue to be a part of the landscape. In addition, there are many heritage buildings, trees, gardens, viewscapes, and other features in the valley which could be voluntarily scheduled as part of the conservation area if the property owners desired this.

The cultural landscape in the valley dates to over one hundred and forty years in terms of European migration and thousands of years of First Nations habitation. Mount Newton was the "place of refuge" for local native peoples according to their legend of the great flood and a place of physical and spiritual sustenance. For Europeans the valley was the first place of settlement on the Saanich Peninsula, becoming the farms of Thompson, Lidgate, Hagan, McPhail, and other pioneers. This rich heritage is still apparent today on the eve of the new millenium.

1903 Mount Newton Cross Road, Saanichton, B.C. V8M 2A9
Phone: (250) 652-4444 Fax: (250) 652-0135

You as residents know well the things which make this valley a special place in Central Saanich today and we are indeed very lucky to live either in it or near it. The Mount Newton Valley is not only loved and appreciated by its residents but also by the people of Greater Victoria who come here to be refreshed and restored by a beautiful place that has escaped the heavy hand of the Twentieth Century. We hope that together we can help build a common vision and appreciate the special values: historic, educational, aesthetic, natural and social that are contained in this landscape. We would like to protect what is special in this valley and maintain better community control over the changes which will inevitably need to be addressed. This is a situation where the public good and the private good can hopefully merge as one.

The process of creating a Heritage Conservation Area usually takes some time to accomplish. The provisions can be very strict or rather loose depending on the consensus of the people affected. It takes much planning, research and, most importantly, consultation with residents. Other areas of B.C. such as West Vancouver and Delta have used this heritage legislation very successfully. With these successful examples in mind, the District and the Heritage Commission would like to plan a community meeting as the next step in the process so that residents can learn more about heritage conservation areas, how one might be applied in the locality, what features might be included, and what boundaries might be set. At this meeting, we would have individuals such as heritage professionals, historians, botanists, Commission members, members of Council, and representatives of valley organizations to provide different perspectives on the valley's resources, to answer your questions, and to hear your ideas and concerns.

We will notify residents of the date and place of the first meeting. All members of the community will be welcome and will be given a chance to speak. If you have any questions, please call Noel Richardson, Chair, Central Saanich Heritage Commission at 652-4024, John Winsor, Director of Planning and Development Services at 544-4209, or Councillor Chris Graham at 652-2828. Won't you join us in forging this important cooperative initiative?

Sincerely,

Wayne Hunter
Mayor

Noel Richardson, Chair
Central Saanich Heritage Commission

Attachment:

- Extract from Heritage Conservation:
  A Community Guide for Local Government – Province of B.C. 1995

Heritage Conservation Area

Municipal Act s. 945(6), s. 945(7), s. 945(8), s. 945(9), s. 1026, and s.1027

What is it?

A heritage conservation area is a **distinct district with special heritage value and/or heritage character,** identified for heritage conservation purposes in an **official community plan.**

When do you use it?

A local government establishes a heritage conservation area when it has identified a **distinctive area** which it feels should be managed by **long-term protection.** A heritage conservation area is **not** an appropriate tool for a single site.

continued ▶

What does it do?

A heritage conservation area is intended to provide **long-term protection to a distinctive area** which contains resources with special heritage value and/or heritage character. A heritage conservation area can provide protection to **all or some** of the properties in a heritage conservation area. Properties that are to be protected must be specifically identified in the bylaw.

In a heritage conservation area, a property owner may **not** do any of the following without a **heritage alteration permit:**

- **subdivision** of a property;
- **addition** of a structure or addition to an existing structure;
- **construction** of a new building; or
- **alteration** to a building, structure, land, or feature.

Example

1

A community identifies a neighbourhood that it believes warrants long-term heritage protection. Following local government consultation with the property owners in the area, it is agreed that a number of historic structures, buildings, and landscape features should be protected by the creation of a heritage conservation area in the community's official community plan.

Local government prepares a bylaw outlining a description of the special features or characteristics which justify the establishment of the heritage conservation area, the objectives of the heritage conservation area, and guidelines for how the objectives will be achieved. The bylaw also includes a schedule to the official community plan that lists those structures, buildings, and landscape features which are specifically protected by the heritage conservation area.

Local government notifies property owners in the area and holds a public hearing regarding the bylaw. Council adopts the bylaw, and notifies the Land Title Office and the minister responsible for the ***Heritage Conservation Act.***

How do you use it?

1. Through a process of planning and research, a community **identifies a distinctive area** that it determines should be managed by **long-term** heritage protection.
2. Local government, in **consultation with the area property owners**, agrees that a heritage conservation area is the best tool to provide long-term protection.
3. Local government consults with area property owners regarding the **control mechanisms** (including design controls) which may be included in the bylaw.
4. Local government **prepares a bylaw** to amend the **official community plan** to identify the heritage conservation area.

   The bylaw must include:

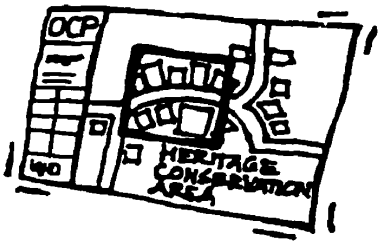
   - a description of the special features or characteristics which justify the establishment of a heritage conservation area,
   - the objectives of the heritage conservation area, and
   - guidelines for how the objectives will be achieved.

   The bylaw may also:

   - identify circumstances for which a permit is not required, and
   - include a schedule listing the protected properties in the area, and identify features or characteristics that contribute to the heritage value or heritage character of the area.
5. At least ten days before a public hearing is held to discuss the amendment, local government **notifies all owners** of property listed on the heritage conservation area schedule.
6. Local government **adopts** the heritage conservation area bylaw.
7. Local government **notifies** the Land Title Office and the minister responsible for the *Heritage Conservation Act* of the adoption of the heritage conservation area bylaw, as well as any **additions** or **deletions** that may be made to the heritage conservation area schedule.

Legislative References

MA s. 945(6), s. 945(7), s. 945(8), s. 945(9), s. 1026 and s. 1027



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