



DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

Steering Committee
 Tuesday, June 09, 2015
 Colwood Municipal Hall

Present: Nancy Wilkin, Jason Nault, Judy Nault, Dave King, Beth Mitchell, Joe Richardson, Phil Lambert; Kerri Trace, Jody Watson, Kitty Lloyd

DECISIONS			
1	Move the scheduled August meeting to September, combine with a member/ volunteer barbeque at Fort Rodd Hill		
2	ELSI will prepare a coordinated response to RRU 5-year Sustainability Plan, when available		
		ACTION BY	DUE
1	ELSI will provide coordinated response to RRU's 5-year sustainability plan	All	July
2	Explore idea of holding an event at the lagoon where the road is closed	Judith	May/June
3	Organize a sign for the dune grass planting plots at the lagoon	Sue/Cynthia	ASAP
4	Send new RRU 5-year Sustainability Plan to ELSI for review	Nancy	When available
5	Follow up with Colwood and Canadian Wildlife Service regarding bird nest disturbance on sand banks near Albert Head; forward blog about this	Kitty	ASAP
6	Send out the 2009 letter that ELSI submitted to Colwood re Essencia Development Agreement	Kitty	ASAP
7	Send a letter to Colwood referring to ELSI letter from 2009, why don't we have same level of consultation as last round?	Kitty/All	ASAP
8	Request that Colwood put links to ELSI website on theirs	Kitty	ASAP
9	Talk to CRD Parks and Integrated Water Services re: bullfrogs in Colwood Cr	Jody	ASAP

INFORMATION

Review of action items from previous meeting:

Reporting Bird Strikes: Jody pointed out how important it is to document bird strikes on overhead wires at the lagoon if witnessed. This will help with enforcement of MBS regulations. Beth reported at least 4 mute swans have died this way recently. BC Hydro needs evidence to make a case for putting utility lines under the bridge. There are bird diverters on the lines at the bridge now. Only one street light there now, maybe we don't need two wires there anymore?

RRU Five-year sustainability plan – printed 100 draft copies; Nancy will send a link to the document after RRU Board of Governors has seen it. This will be an online, living document, continually updated as new information becomes available; 10 focus areas; metrics associated with greenhouse gas reduction targets can be regularly updated online so document is always up to date. RRU expected 29% reduction in GHGs, actually realized 31% to date.

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Coordinated response? Going to Board of Governors on June 26th, once they have seen it Nancy can forward to us for input

ACTION: Nancy will send link to the document, Kitty will forward to ELSI for input and coordinated response

Dogs on leash at RRU: Nancy talked to staff in charge of that; also Gord Beauvillier at Colwood Parks; staff are now aware of issue and will act on any complaints

Jody: Gorge Waterway Initiative members are in the process of putting up signs to mark the Victoria Harbour MBS; from 10 Mile Point to Portage Inlet; maybe could do that here too

Beth: Rough winged swallows' nests at the sand bluffs at Royal Bay have been disturbed by people on the beach

ACTION: Follow up with CWS and Colwood; forward Ann Nightingale's blog that describes disturbance

[Note: Colwood received a complaint about this which was forwarded to Kitty; she passed along to contacts at Canadian Wildlife Service; expect response after July 6 when back from holiday]

Development Updates:

Royal Bay:

- Phase 1 going through application process, near where new high school is; Colwood is waiting for plans
- Jason: Royal Bay – detailed drawings of plan was presented at May 25th council meeting

Ocean Grove:

- developer has not come forward with anything new at this point

Pacific Landing:

- heading to Planning and Land Use Committee on June 16 to address rezoning and text revisions to existing development agreement (DA)
- Changes that pertain to ELSI include:
 - Existing DA (Essencia) from Feb. 2009 contains an agreement to implement ELSI recommendations regarding tree retention, water quality, riparian areas, building siting, design and construction
 - Original agreement was to have one major plan and one-time construction; now planning to construct the project in 5 - 6 phases; language around phasing needs to be updated; ELSI recommendations will be incorporated into all phases; will inform all designs, development plans and construction; ELSI recommendations will not be requirements; changing the wording to indicate that they are design guidelines
- Need an environmental development permit for each phase, ELSI will be referred to at each phase
- This will not be going through committee or council, just staff and ELSI is a referral agency
- Contractors are currently busy there doing test wells determining water table levels
- Need to get rezoning and variance worked out first, then DA will be completed
- Staff report to be posted on Friday June 12; PLUC meeting Tuesday June 16
- Frustration expressed about the process; not enough time to fully review and get a coordinated response, this will be nearly impossible
- Most other municipalities have a 30 day referral process, Colwood has designated ELSI as a referral agency, but we aren't able to fulfill this role
- Colwood doesn't usually have a referral process for development agreement process
- This is a development agreement; not the same process as for a rezoning
- ELSI would like to see change in policy for development agreements so that we have time to perform the referral agency function

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- Process for DAs needs to be updated to allow more public input; developers seem to be using this to avoid public hearing process
- Beth walked around the site with Ray Parks, Pendray House will remain, major renovations planned; other house will be removed; gardens to remain; putting in a floating base for the parking lot

ACTION: Send ELSI a copy of letter submitted in 2009

ACTION: Send a letter to Colwood referring to this letter from 2009, why don't we have same level of consultation as last round?

Interpretive Signs and mural

- No updates, will talk to Sandra Russell, Communications Manager. Sandra recently requested a meeting with Kitty to discuss updating all the signs at the lagoon.
- Kitty and Jody plan to meet with Sandra, Iain and others to move this forward
- Totem being carved in front of Blue Heron House at RRU, gift from Chancellor to RRU for 75th anniversary; artist is Doug LaFortune, maybe this would be a good tie-in

Presentation: Bowker Creek restoration through Oak Bay High School – Jody Watson

- Bowker Creek Initiative has developed a 100 year action plan for the watershed; goal is to try and return hydrological function to a fully developed and urbanized watershed; 38 watershed-wide action items to be incorporated into OCPs, becomes part of the way they do business in 3 municipalities (Oak Bay, Saanich, Victoria)
- Many actions for each of 17 creek reaches
- 66% of creek is in pipes, during process of ditching for farming, then piping for urbanization as watershed became more impervious and ditches were getting blown out from flooding
- Top 10 key actions to try and accomplish over near term, and as opportunities arise on site to site basis
- Oak Bay High – one of the top 10 items; new school being built in 2015, good opportunity to restore creek while site is being developed
- UBCM Gas Tax Innovations grant of \$738,000; with District of Oak Bay, School District 61, CRD as partners
- 220m of creek involved in this restoration
- Students involved with design charrette; 'creeks and careers' workshop with engineers, municipal planners, landscape architects; need many areas of expertise to restore this type of creek site
- Site is at the lower end of the watershed, lots of issues with flows, storm events
- Siting with new school, needed to keep school open during construction
- Many people have participated, students, community, etc; SD 61 responded by allocating lots of land for this restoration; steep and eroding bank covered with invasive plants; 25 – 28m available for the restoration which was a big concession
- Complex project, 2 major contractors, specific design charrette, 2 design teams, did costing and arrived at final design; students came up with ideas including a place to hang out and study (grassy knoll); school staff – wanted low maintenance; BCI – wanted functional creek with riparian vegetation
- Multi-use 3m greenway, bike/walk trail with hub area; Oak Bay Rec Centre will be able to do programming at a community hub there too
- Garry oak meadow, graveled lookout area
- At outdoor classroom area, seating for 30 students, trails coming down are universally accessible, tying into an existing walkway
- Science curriculum is being developed to focus on the creek; flow study site, long term monitoring station, students will look at flows over time

- Retaining wall was built around creek for a running track in 1994, creek was in a straight channel with a steep grade change
- Groynes will be placed to add reinforcement and help hide the wall;
- Low flow in summer, so there is a tiny amount of water in a wide channel; restoration designed so that when flows are low, there is still some depth to the central channel for any aquatic life there;
- Downstream there's an obstruction (pipes) so might be flooding further down, but not at this site due to larger capacity being built into the design
- Any fish?
 - There are crayfish at Oak Bay High site, they live in the wall
 - Obstructions near creek mouth prevent salmon from migrating upstream
- Will get a natural bottom back in the creek (most of creek in Oak Bay is not in pipes but has been concreted or asphalted in the creek bed);

Updates: CRD Harbours Program

Water Quality Objectives:

- Working with Ministry of Environment for all 5 harbour areas; currently have general province-wide guidelines, these are often not achievable or practicable
- Our WQOs will be more workable for municipalities to phase in achievable targets, especially in industrial areas (Victoria, Esquimalt)
- MoE presented preliminary draft to municipalities recently, now we're waiting for province to come back with their recommendations, then back to muni's, then for wider public consultation
- Need to decide to have several smaller regional sessions or a few large ones; ELSI could host an open house; need to consult on how to work together to achieve objectives

Other updates:

- Still waiting to hear about funding from National Wetland Conservation Fund, announcements have been delayed, so we've missed the opportunity for this year's field work; inventories should be done in May/June especially for eelgrass, to have comparable data with original 2000 data
- Estuary mapping, bird surveys, underwater surveys, identifying high priority restoration areas
- In discussion with colleagues at Department of National Defense in Esquimalt Harbour to see if they can bring some funds to table to re-do inventories
- Budgeting – now on 4 year cycle, making a case for supplemental budget request for 2015/16 in order to be able to complete the harbour inventory

Beth – Is Shorekeepers program still ongoing?

- Not officially, no support from DFO, although some groups have been continuing to collect data for their own use/information
- Still measuring flow and temperature in Colwood Creek?
 - Yes, Joe would like to see any new data generated

Outreach:

- Broom pull in May – 5 people there; would like to get bigger groups out to help; ELSI not on Colwood site with other community groups

ACTION: Talk to Colwood about getting links to ELSI website from theirs.

- Ideas discussed for getting more volunteers and local residents involved with fish monitoring:
 - Link on Colwood website; home page of ELSI website,
 - Feature story in media
 - RRU Crossroads magazine and on the events page on the RRU site;
 - check into "Meet Up" website – can we make a site for this?
 - Perhaps a speakers series event – Shona Smith or Patrick Lucey suggested as possible speakers; try and raise awareness of fish monitoring program

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- Can use Phil Lambert as contact for VNHS, he is now in charge of publicity for VNHS
- Canada Day: Kitty will be away, Natalie Bandringa will bring ELSI display as she will be at adjacent CRD display and can cover for ELSI as well. Other volunteer help much appreciated!

Coordinator updates:

- Royal Bay Bakery – Owner stopped by the ELSI display at Mother’s Day event at RRU, would like to have copies of the lagoon signs at the bakery for customers to learn more about the lagoon; Kitty is taking laminated copies of signs and ELSI brochures to the bakery after the meeting today
- New ELSI display – want to develop a new display with the new CRD/ELSI branding, updated orthophoto and map; looking for committee input.
- Suggestions:
 - who we are, what we do and how we do it
 - include information about the citizen science work that ELSI does
 - add the wildlife refuge areas to the map
 - referral agency for the City of Colwood
 - importance of the Migratory Bird Sanctuary – list birds that use this area

Partner updates:

VNHS – Did a beach seine at Willows Beach recently; attended Oceans Day event at Sidney; co-sponsored Fort Rodd Hill BioBlitz; Metchosin has one coming up this weekend, also one happening on Saturna Island, Parks has an app for the BioBlitz - can upload photos and goes to [iNaturalist](#) website

RRU – Updated 5 year Sustainability Plan will be an online living document, metrics-based and constantly updated as new information is received; ELSI members will review and provide comments, Living in Harmony – major shift in focus, includes the First Nations and Aboriginal Coordinator, also addresses social sustainability; 75th anniversary – money raised from gala will go to a scholarship program; RRU also considering a project to create an outdoor classroom, trying to get some corporate donors for this project. Development project – library will be turned into a student centre, plans for a new academic building, received a Carbon Neutral grant to change every outdoor light on the campus to LED, will save \$23,000/year in hydro bills

Colwood – several developments are in planning stages, corporately well on the way to meeting targets but not out of the community, bullfrogs have been seen in Colwood Creek Park

ACTION: Jody talk to CRD Parks and Integrated Water Services re: bullfrogs

Bee Creek – tree cutting in the MBS, won’t do any other planting until Patrick sees the restoration plan

Parks: About 200 people participated in the BioBlitz, possibly a new mushroom species found; historic Nature Trail project underway on some of the old original trails towards the lagoon, worked with Species At Risk Act team and First Nations – three stories: military, ecology, FN use; Garry Oak learning meadow interpretive signage will likely be installed next year, 3 weeks ago the meadow was stunning, now a fully functioning Garry oak meadow; one of RRU peacocks is at FRH – keeping campers awake and getting aggressive.

DECISION: Change meeting date to September and organize a barbeque at Fort Rodd Hill

Meeting adjourned: 4:45pm