



DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

Steering Committee
Wednesday, September 20, 2017

Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

- Present:** Dorothy Chambers, Sara Stallard, Brianne Czypyha, Jack Meredith, Elise Cote, Craig Elder, Terry Eckstein, Cathy Carolsfeld, Yogi Carolsfeld, Mick Collins, Julian Anderson, Jacques Sirois, John Mullane, Don Monroe, Jody Watson, Kitty Lloyd
- Guests:** Marc Cittone, City of Victoria

DECISIONS				
Next Meeting:		15 November 2017		
ACTIONS			ACTION BY	DUE
1	Follow-up re. Gorge Creek signage 'Who to call if there's a spill'	Dorothy	(Done)	
2	Look in to whether spill on Cecelia Creek is still active	Brianne	ASAP	
3	Locate letter GWI submitted to DFO a few years ago about the pink salmon net pen proposal	Kitty	ASAP	
4	Look into City of Victoria's long-term lease of Bamfield Park (city does not own the park)	Marc Cittone	ASAP	
5	Invite the Victoria Scottish Community Centre Society to attend a GWI meeting to talk about their plans for the Craigflower Manor site	Kitty	Fall	
6	Re-check with Esquimalt – Seabed is under provincial control; need to have a lease. Some municipalities have an agreement with the Province that they'll consult with municipalities first	Kitty	ASAP	

INFORMATION

Approval of Agenda

Review of Action Items/Decisions from July meeting

- Unsanctioned dock in the Esquimalt park (Yarrow St)
 - Esquimalt says that they've approached the province, which has jurisdiction over that part of the waterway seabed, and they do not going to act on local issues like this as they are too short staffed and have more pressing issues to deal with
 - Docks on Esquimalt municipal land present a liability risk. Dorothy has had ~40 e-mails about this issue

- **ACTION:** Re-check with Esquimalt – Seabed is under provincial control; need to have a lease. Some municipalities have an agreement with the Province that they'll consult with municipalities first.
 - Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club applied to add their dock – turned down due to presence of eelgrass
2. GWI letter regarding the MOTI berm at McKenzie interchange was re-sent to the members for information
- MOTI going to Saanich Oct. 2 council meeting; same plan being presented as at open house in March – there's been no change after public input was received; let Saanich know your opinion
 - Kitty confirm – send the GWI letter we submitted to MOTI earlier, to Parks staff for their information (Saanich staff report supported the berm proposal).

Presentation: Draft Vic West Neighbourhood Plan (Marc Cittone, City of Victoria Planning)

Marc presented on the above (see handout – brochure: *Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan*) and on-line: <http://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/neighbourhoods/vic-west/victoria-west-neighbourhood-plan.html>

Additional discussion and questions on “*These Big Moves will guide growth and change in Vic West over the next 25 years*” included:

1. Create strong village hearts (e.g. Craigflower Village, Westside Village)
2. Connect the community with pedestrian and cycling routes
3. Add housing that fits the neighbourhood character in older residential areas
 - Types of housing envisioned: Row housing; 2½ storeys; 3- & 4-storey apartment buildings; town housing
 - Reduce lot size for small lot homes and duplexes
 - Ease up on parking requirements
 - Duplex and suite: small lot house and suite
 - Support new types of housing for heritage-designated properties
4. Create more places to live near transit and amenities
 - Esquimalt Road – housing above employment – up to 5 storeys
 - 5 storeys – can be built of wood (lower environmental impact than concrete); economically viable and can support public amenity contributions and affordable housing
 - underground parking
5. Strengthen connections to the waterfront
 - Expansion of swim beaches/docks
 - Q: For properties with leases but no docks, would City think of buying water lots when properties go up for sale?
 - Jacques – should identify wildlife species, the bird sanctuary is not mentioned, name some species that are present; want to improve environmental features
 - Jody – City of Victoria doesn't actually own Banfield Park – has long-term lease
 - **ACTION:** Marc will look into this
6. Support jobs in the neighbourhood
 - Q: regarding Hi-tech sector: 15% of hi-tech businesses need light industrial zoning – the rest basically need office space
7. Strengthen parks and food systems
 - Arm and Burleith Parks – not much effort spent on these – not very accessible; want to have wildlife access. There are many invasives in these parks
 - Habitat assessment of small parks –

- City of Victoria allows no more private docks along Gorge
- GWI coordinated response
- Sign up to receive plan updates by e-mail: engage@victoria.ca
- Revised plan will go to council in late October

Swans in Gorge/Portage Inlet and Birds Canada Programs - Dorothy

- Beached bird surveys, Kitty sent out the link, it's a federal program, want to have another training workshop, citizen science program, get a package of data, "dead bird cookbook", step by step process, how to ID birds, start with feet (takes longest to disintegrate)
- Conservation Connection sponsored by Habitat Acquisition Trust Oct 12 – Dorothy will have some info about survey there to spread the word, Dorothy sent the link to see what's involved, last year there was a huge die off of rhinoceros auklets due to virus
- 2 swans died unexpectedly, one was found floating in Portage Inlet, massive carcass, took 2 people to get it off the beach, left a widow and cygnet, into freezer then to Ministry of Environment (MOE) for necropsy then less than 2 weeks later, Dorothy got another call that the other swan was found dead; Yogi and Dorothy collected that carcass and sent to MOE
- What killed the swan? All of the swans had been eviscerated, not known why they died though
- Necropsy – otter attacks, no virus or bacteria
- More Q's – are there more river otters around now? Do we have more fish therefore more otters, or fewer fish and that's why the otters are now eating swans?
- These necropsies help with data about swan populations and dynamics
- Trumpeter and the female cousin are now companions
- What is life span? These were 25 years old
- Cygnet has now disappeared but no body found
- At Esquimalt Lagoon – pair of tundra/trumpeter swans

CRD Harbours Program Updates – Jody Watson

Abandoned boats funding application

- CRD applying for federal Abandoned Boats Program funding on behalf of municipalities
- Kitty and Jody working on a couple of funding applications
- One application due next week, education and awareness, best management practices for boat end of life responsibilities
- What to do with end of life boats, disposal options
- Applying for funds to create 2 brochures, education about how to properly deal with your old boat, and about the new registration process being phased in by the federal government in next few years
- Bringing municipal partners together to discuss problem areas where there are many anchored and derelict boats
- Tasked with trying to get municipalities to come up with similar language for regulating anchoring and moorage
- City of Victoria had a court date last week re boats off Banfield Park, 2 individuals served with injunction have hired a lawyer at the last minute who needs a few weeks to get up to speed and prepare
- Kitty toured Tsehum Harbour with Sidney and North Saanich staff, inventoried 8 boats that were wrecked on shore or appeared abandoned and derelict at anchor
- Public notice will be posted for 30 days, then hope to receive authorization from Transport Canada to take possession and dispose of these
- Assessment and disposal funding will then be applied for (application due Oct 30)
- Central Saanich is requesting authorization for 10 boats independent of CRD

- There's a sunken boat in the Gorge, we can apply for funds for assessing, then let Transport Canada decide what they want to do
- Confusion regarding boats at Cadboro Bay, Jody has talked with Oak Bay staff about whether they're applying for funding for this round, or whether they will join with CRD's application
- Q: What about ones that are moored?
- Longer term plan to deal with the anchored derelict boats and live aboard situations
- Transport Canada reps going forward with new proposed changes to Shipping Act – or new legislation to put in place registration requirements
- Looking into a "Boat Turn In Day" – voluntary program to sign dead boats over and get them disposed of responsibly
- Also funds available to research how to recycle fiberglass, there are a couple of local companies applying for this
- John Roe has some links on his website, he has done several inventories on Salt Spring Island, other areas of the Islands Trust

Recent pollution in Gorge Creek

- Kitty spoke with Mark Harper at Esquimalt municipality, they have spent \$125,000 chasing down the source, very diligently trying to figure out this persistent problem, will come to the next GWI meeting to discuss the whole situation, and how to move forward with addressing this issue and improve things for the future
- Dorothy – no signage on Gorge Creek sign regarding who to call if there's a spill
- **ACTION:** Dorothy – will follow up about signs on Gorge Creek

Cecelia Creek

- Jack – a spill was first reported there on Friday, still there on Sunday, but after City of Victoria crew put in booms and checked things on Monday, there was no further spill, conclusion was it was due to first flush run off from streets after weekend rain
- Q: Is the spill still active on Cecelia?
- **ACTION:** Brianne will look into this

Coordinator Updates:

- There will be a restoration workshop with Dave Polster on Nov. 18/19. Workshop is free of charge, field component will be on Haliburton Brook in Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park

Partner Updates

Gorge Tillicum Community Association, Craig:

- Cleaning up Gorge Park on Saturday – garbage and invasive spp

Friends of Swan Creek:

- added 10 tonnes of gravel and riffles into creek over the summer – hoping to see some salmon there this year
- Also checked water quality and O₂, early in year O₂ was 150%, later in summer, 0%
- Expect to see a fish kill
- Fish counting panels will go in on 1st week of Oct on Colquitz, DFO expecting less fish this year, this is the return year of The Blob, when the ocean temperature was 3 degrees warmer than usual, only 265 fish returned that year so not expecting many this year

City of Victoria, Brianne:

- Stormwater utility program, 2nd year of billing, pilot rebate program is being wrapped up for those who want to install stormwater management systems, now under review by council
- Assisting with a Surfrider Foundation beach clean up, 10 local beaches on one day Oct 15

Gorge Swim Fest Society - Jack:

- Cancelling the swim fest had a huge effect on raising awareness of health of the Gorge

World Fisheries Trust - Yogi:

- Reef balls still in the water in the Gorge, moving to Fishermen's wharf 2nd week Oct; Nature House open on the weekends with student volunteers, Seaquaria are going; hosting a science literacy event at Hillside Mall, hands-on exploration, readings by luminaries

Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club, Don:

- Many canoeing and kayaking courses, waiting for river levels to rise, lots of time planning for 50th anniversary 2018

Jacques:

- Now have Migratory Birds Sanctuary signs in all municipalities along the Gorge and all municipalities of the Migratory Birds Sanctuary, 50 signs on public and private properties
- New marine kiosk at Cattle Point
- Oct 15 – All Bufflehead Day being celebrated all over,
- Events at Shoal Harbour, Mary Winspear Centre, Bateman Centre, boat tour of Shoal Harbour on Oct 15

Victoria Golden Rods & Reels, Mick:

Elk/Beaver Lake info

- Mick – Jim Roberts (from Hemmera consulting) did a fish survey in August. Gill netting for 5 days, gathered data on age, stomach contents, size, sex etc. Purpose was to get a handle on fish population before aeration system installed.
- Creating a business case for CRD funding request for aeration systems for two lake systems: large system for Elk; smaller one for Beaver
- No swimming allowed all summer due to presence of toxic blue green algae
- VGR&R has been working on this for 3.5 years. Coordinator has been working now for 15 months. Technically CRD not responsible for water quality (provincial) but is stepping up. Mick maybe freshwater Fish Society of BC would be a partner in funding aeration

Other VGR&R news:

- Jacques Sirois spoke at a recent meeting, provided info on all the Migratory Birds Sanctuary in the region
- Members have been at Goldstream hatchery clipping adipose fins, coho salmon

Colquitz River Stewards: Dorothy:

- Had a call from Harbour Air wanting to install a net pen (chinook) at their docks
- **ACTION** – dig out the letter GWI wrote to DFO a few years ago about the pink salmon net pen proposal

Adjournment: 9:45pm