



DISTRICT OF SOOKE
Parks and Trails Advisory Committee
Meeting held September 6, 2016
at 1:00 pm
Council Chamber, 2225 Otter Point Road

Committee Members Present:

John Boquist, Chair
Councillor Brenda Parkinson
Debbie Clarkston
Ross Reid
Mark Ziegler

Staff:

Laura Hooper, Parks and Environmental Services Coordinator
Sarah Temple, Corporate Services Assistant

1. The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

2. **Approval of the Agenda:**

MOVED to approve the agenda with the addition of the following items as New Business/Supplemental Information;

NB-1 Delegation: Margarita Dominguez – Off-Leash Dog Park

NB-2 Simplified Trails Map;

and with item 6 - John Phillips Memorial Park Loop Trail moved to immediately following Delegations.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. **Approval of Minutes:**

MOVED to approve the June 7, 2016 minutes as circulated.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. **Delegations**

• **Margarita Dominguez – Victoria Pet Food Bank**

Ms. Dominguez addressed the Committee regarding her request for off-leash use of Whiffin Spit as there is currently no designated off-leash areas for dogs and their owners in Sooke. Ms. Dominguez would like to see certain hours of the day designated for off-leash use of Whiffin Spit, and suggested that 7am – 9am and 8pm – 9pm would be appropriate hours. Ms. Dominguez would also like to host two fundraising events per year, where dogs are permitted off-leash use of Whiffin Spit.

Committee Discussion:

- Possibility of other suitable areas for off-leash use, as Whiffin Spit is heavily used by tourists and locals without dogs.
- Keeping Whiffin Spit clean is a concern.
- Current Bylaws restrict the use of public parks from dusk until dawn.

- Whiffin Spit is also home to nesting and migratory birds, which may be impacted by off-leash dogs.

ACTION ITEM: Bring discussion of off-leash dogs parks forward to an upcoming Parks and Trails Advisory Committee meeting for discussion of possible options and locations.

- **Greater Victoria Green Team**

Amanda Evans spoke on behalf of the Greater Victoria Green Team. Ms. Evans outlined the work of the Green Team and opportunities for collaborating with the District of Sooke for various projects, including invasive species removal, native habitat restoration, stewardship of specific areas etc. On September 25, 2016 the Greater Victoria Green Team will be working in partnership with the Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society to remove invasive species from Ed McGregor Park. The team is also able to work with staff on projects on other parks in the future.

6. **Updates related to Committee Priority Projects**

- **John Phillips Memorial Park – next steps**

Laura Hooper provided an update as to work in John Phillips Memorial Park.

- The loop trail is now complete. Signage will be added.
- 4 picnic tables and 2 benches have been ordered.
- Construction of a washroom is the next identified priority. The preferred arrangement will be adjacent to the staircase leading to the parking lot of the municipal hall. There is a flat location that has easy access to sewer, water and lights. An RFP will be issued for construction of a 2 stall washroom with flushable toilets. The RFP will give a general budget guideline and include specifications such as vandal resistance.

- **Trail Opening and Fun Run and Ride, Sept 24**

Nicky Logins, representing Sooke Family Resource Society, provided an overview of the Fun Run and Ride planned for Sept 24, 2016 in John Phillips Memorial Park. The Fun Run and Ride will also serve as the official opening of the John Phillips Memorial Park Loop Trail. The Mayor will open the event and the District of Sooke has provided sponsorship. Ms. Logins encouraged Committee members to attend and to help to promote the event.

- **Demamiel Creek Trail**

Mark Ziegler provided an update of the June 21, 2016 walk through of the area between Sunriver and the Golf Course on Throup Road. The west side of the river (Throup Road) provided excellent options for trail connections, but the east side (Sunriver) presented several challenges including flood plains and steep access. Further analysis of the area and potential for trail connections would be required to determine feasibility.

Committee Discussion:

- The developers of Sunriver may be interested in collaborating on a trail, increasing pedestrian access to their development.

MOVED to recommend that Council allocate funds in the 2017 – 2021 Financial Plan to investigate a pedestrian crossing of Demamiel Creek from Sunriver to the school sites.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Upcoming Project Planning:

- Greater Victoria Green Team and Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society Joint Event on September 25, 2016. Planning is still in the early stages. The event will likely take place from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm. Historically, attendance from Sooke residents has been low and efforts will be made to better promote the event in the District of Sooke.
- Stewardship of neighbourhood parks has been a great success in many areas and Sooke could work towards promoting local stewardship.

ACTION ITEM: District of Sooke to promote participation in local clean-up events by ensuring a stock of equipment is available to local groups, including gloves, bags and tools as available. Additionally, the District of Sooke to advertise for the September 25, 2016 Ed McGregor Park event on their website and social media.

7. Committee Roundtable:

- Inquiry into status of trail between Goodmere and Horne Road. Staff indicated there had been no progress to date.
- Discussion of a simplified trail map showing major trails that connect pedestrian access throughout town, as discussed by Mayor Tait at the August Rotary Club of Sooke meeting.
- Discussion of loss of pedestrian access through Home Hardware's property.
- Grant Road shoulder widening has been completed.
- Sooke River Road trail has also been completed. Discussion of challenges with site alignment and steepness of a portion of the trail. Cyclists are still using the side of Sooke River Road to navigate around this portion, as the steep slope proves difficult on a bicycle, but was necessary due to environmental concerns. Pedestrians are able to use the steep portion of the trail. Improving the shoulder of Sooke River Road around this portion of the trail may be possible and could improve safety of cyclists.

MOVED to recommend that Council direct staff to investigate re-shouldering of Sooke River Road, on both the East and West sides as necessary, from existing crosswalk to Sooke Road.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED to recommend that Council direct staff to speak with the owners of Home Hardware to determine if pedestrian access can be re-established through their property.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. Development Department Referrals: Nil

9. Action Items – Strategic Plan / Official Community Plan: NIL

10. Next Scheduled Meeting:

- Tuesday, October 4, 2016 at 1:00 pm
- Meetings – The first Tuesday of each month at 1:00 pm.

11. Adjournment:

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 2:25 pm.

Committee Chair