

**MINUTES**  
**ENIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room #2  
**January 17, 2018 at 5:30 p.m.**

Present: Chair: Councillor Leif Wergeland

Members: Kevin Brown, Al-Nashir Charania, Jude Coates, Mary-Haig Brown, Roberta Hesselgrave, Ryan Senechal, Carmel Thomson

Staff: Gary Darrah, Manager Park Planning and Development; Becky Goodall, Park Planner Designer; Tricia Demacedo, Environmental Planning Officer; Tania Douglas, Senior Committee Clerk; Jeff Keays, Committee Clerk

Regrets: George Klima

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**MINUTES**

**MOVED by A. Charania and seconded by M. Brown, "That the minutes of the Environmental and Natural Areas Advisory Committee meeting held October 18, 2017 be adopted as circulated."**

**CARRIED**

**HARO WOODS**

Gary Darrah, Manager Park Planning provided the committee with an overview of the status of the Draft Haro Woods Park Management Plan including the following highlights:

- Staff are close to producing a final draft plan
- Seeking input from committees via small group workshops,
- Asked committee to break into two (2) small working groups and, based on the circulated draft plan, answer the follow questions:
  1. What do you like?
  2. What did we miss?

Becky Goodall, Park Planner Designer provided the committee with a high-level overview of the draft plan's key components. The following highlights are noted:

- Haro Woods is a wooded area located in the Cadboro Bay Local Area.
- The area consists of four parcels totalling 8.8 ha (21.7 ac).
- Three different owners: The Capital Region District, UVic and the District of Saanich.
- Saanich owns two (2) parcels totalling 5.75 ha (14.2 ac).
- The proposed plan pertains to the District's parcels only.
- Key issues addressed by the plan are unmanaged use, environmental degradation and proliferation of invasive plants and a lack of communication with park users.
- Three (3) public events since 2016.

- November 2017 - 73 participants attended and open-house and 488 surveys were received.
- 10 meetings with the Haro Woods Advisory Group (HWAG).
- Trail uses remain contentious and unresolved.
- Cycling activities:
  - More feedback required.
  - No consensus.
- Fourth public event may be necessary.
- Final plan to Council in 2018.

*The committee broke into two (2) small working groups and were allotted 15 minutes to brainstorm and report on the staff questions.*

Working Group 'A' reported the following:

- What do you like?
  - That the possibility of an off-trail cycling was left open:
    - Need exists.
    - Explore partnerships with CRD and University of Victoria; and
    - Undertake effective outreach with youth and other users.
  - Trails consolidation into designated system.
  - Good community engagement.
  - Draft plan attempts to strike a balance with numerous competing user groups (walking, biking, pets etc.).
- What did we miss?
  - More information regarding phased approach and associated budgets.
  - Is there a need to address areas for on/off leash pets?
  - Address damage done to the area.

Working Group 'B' reported the following:

- What do you like?
  - Focus on both the 'woods' and 'park' aspects of the area.
  - Collaboration and continuity.
  - Friends of Haro Woods.
  - Signage as communication and education component:
    - Native plants; and
    - Ecosystem health.
  - Education in schools.
- What did we miss?
  - Plan for a 4<sup>th</sup> consultation.
    - How extensive is the designation?
    - How will enforcement occur?
    - Absence of formal biking/cycle-cross/BMX facilities.
    - Justify potential relocation of activities in order to restore environmentally sensitive areas.

Committee discussion followed the group presentations, the following highlights were noted:

- Concern regarding 'over regulation' as many groups are utilizing the many natural areas. Formalization could tip the balance.
- Biking is a reality (there is no official designated area at present).

- Activity (cycling use) has occurred for more than twenty (20) years.
- Outright ban (cycling) is an uphill battle we can't win.
- Greater cooperation with CRD sought.
- There will be a blanket easement on CRD parcel post construction.
- CRD parcel to house sewage attenuation tanks resulting in heavy disruption of the natural area. Would be ideal area for a bike facility.
  - Associated risk for the CRD.
- Cycling users made up of numerous individuals with divergent viewpoints, no identified single user group or organization to take the lead.
- South Island Mountain Bike Society (SIMBS) suggested as potential partner; however, their current capacity is unknown as they are busy with Hartland.
- Staff will bring final plan back to committee, targeted for April.

### **SIGNIFICANT TREE NOMINATION ROWAN STREET**

Tricia Demacedo, Environmental Planning Officer provided the committee with a brief overview of the significant tree nomination at 1585 Rowan St., including the following highlights:

- Nominated by property owner.
- Specimen is larger than most of the adjacent Oaks in the area.
- Site visit suggests the specimen is approximately 125 to 150 years old.
- Staff recommends the tree be designated as an Outstanding Specimen in Size or Shape Category.

Committee discussion followed the staff presentation, the following highlights were noted:

- Excellent Garry Oak specimen.
- View from school is excellent.
- Benefits of designation.
  - Harder to remove
  - Owner can access grant for maintenance.
- There was some confusion amongst committee members with regard to the provisions of the existing grant program.
- There are approximately 150 trees in the designation program.
- Tree tours could be created with themes. Tours would provide education on significant trees and the program. The Committee could spearhead this.
- Discussion regarding tree tour to be brought forward as a future agenda item.

**MOVED by K. Brown and seconded by R. Hesselgrave, "That the Environmental and Natural Areas Advisory Committee approve this nomination (1585 Rowan Street) as a Significant Tree under the *Outstanding Specimen in Size or Shape* category"**

**CARRIED**

**PLASTIC BAG MODEL BYLAW**

A memo from the Manager of Environmental Services, dated January 11, 2018 was circulated providing an update on the Plastic Bag Model Bylaw. The following highlights are noted:

- Staff will prepare an information report to address questions stemming from both the October 17, 2018 ENAC meeting and the November 9, 2018 meeting of PTED.

Committee discussion followed the staff presentation, the following highlights were noted:

- Concern with Part 2 – Regulations, Item 6: Will businesses be able to use their discretion, in the context of safe food handling practices, in the event a customer wants to utilize a heavily soiled bag. Will there be reasonable exceptions?
- The circulated document is a starting point, leadership will be defined by consensus on the matter as there are many divergent points of view.
- Unlikely that there will be the same bylaw throughout the region, likely to be differences.
- Staff could meet with counterparts at the City of Victoria to discuss best practices and their experiences.
- Committee consensus with staff recommendation to combine inquiries into one report.
- Staff to report back with a timeline on the process.

**UPDATE – EDPA**

Tricia Demacedo, Environmental Planning Officer provided the committee with an update on the status of the EDPA. Staff read the draft Council motions to rescind the EDPA. The following highlights were noted:

- Council tabled motions to rescind the EDPA.
- There will be a formal Public Hearing (to be scheduled).
- Policy landscape will revert to pre-2012 bylaws.

Committee discussion followed the staff update. The following highlights were noted:

- More engagement required this time around, policy was too broad and left many unanswered questions.
- Disappointment that a small number of effected residents were able to overturn the policy. This is not an effective way to move forward, and should not be the precedent for future policy implementation.
- Concern that the policy vacuum will leave only the pre-2012 climate adaption and biodiversity strategies as framework for future policy development
- Surprise that Council had changed their minds.
- Bylaw didn't fit.
- Work with what we have (existing EDPA framework) and fix it.
- Committee encouraged to engage with Council, take the time so we get it right.
- Committee to be apprised of Public Hearing date.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:12PM

**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2018

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Chair

I hereby certify these minutes are accurate.

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Committee Secretary