

MINUTES
PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Via Microsoft Teams
June 22, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Judy Brownoff (Chair); Pam Carroll; Rachel Corder; David Little; Amy-Jade Louie; Darrell Wick; Leigh Campbell

Staff: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager of Parks; Tiana Solares, Senior Manager of Recreation; Paul de Greeff, Parks Manager of Planning & Development; Megan Squires, Senior Transportation Planner; Amber Walker, Community Planner; Mike Goldsworthy, Park Planner; Julie Lommerse, Park Planner; Megan MacDonald, Senior Committee Clerk

Guests: Megan Turnock, Less & Associates

Regrets: Annie Djiotsa (resigned); Dex Owen; Ted Austin

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| ADOPTION OF MINUTES |
| MOVED by P. Carroll and Seconded by D. Little: "That the minutes of the April 27, 2022 Parks, Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee meeting be adopted." |
| CARRIED |
| RECEIPT OF CORRESPONDENCE |
| The correspondence was received for information. |
| CHAIR'S REMARKS |
| This is last meeting before the summer break; the September 28 th meeting is yet to be confirmed as it is close to the Election cycle. |
| PEOPLE, PETS, AND PARKS STRATEGY |
| M. Turnock, Lees & Associates, presented an update on the People, Pets, and Parks Strategy to the Committee and noted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The purpose of the Strategy is to allow Saanich and its parks users to achieve positive desired relationships between all people, pets, and the environment.• The project is currently in phase 3 (consultation and validation). The project will see three rounds of engagement including a public survey.• Currently, dogs are permitted off-leash. The bylaw includes some trails and parks where dogs are not allowed or are allowed on-leash.• Dog licenses increased dramatically since 2019.• Feedback was collected from preliminary surveys at pop-up dog parks.• Pop-up dog parks will return in Summer 2022. |
| The following discussions ensued in response to the presentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There will be some recommendations around bylaw changes as part of the Strategy.• It was observed that the presence of enforcement officers helps with compliance of leashed dogs.• Saanich animal control is now managed by the Capital Regional District (CRD) effective |

June 1, 2022.

- There has been outreach to specific groups and organizations to complete the survey.

BECKWITH DAM UPDATE

The Park Planner presented on the dam decommissioning at Beckwith Park and noted the following:

- Beckwith Pond is a man-made feature from the 1970s that was formed to provide a source of irrigation water for a neighbouring farm.
- Despite the pond being located in the park, a third party currently owns the water license; the farm no longer requires irrigation so the dam must be decommissioned.
- Decommissioning the dam means there are no future requirements to inspect and maintain the dam to the required standards set by Provincial Dam Safety Branch.
- The decommissioning will also create a new stream channel and riparian habitat.
- A breach on the dam is required to ensure that it poses no safety risk to the public.

The following discussions ensued in response to the presentation:

- The main pond's water level will decrease slightly as a result of the dam decommissioning.
- It is not believed that the change in water level will affect the surrounding natural environment.
- The change should not impact the flow into Beckwith Creek.
- The pond has an existing overflow through a pipe.

MOVED by R. Corder and Seconded by P. Carroll: "That the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Advisory Committee support the discharge of the Water Licence and breaching of the main dam in Beckwith Park as outlined in the proposal by staff."

- Park use is well established, and the pond is getting well-filtered water.
- The consultants have designed the decommissioning appropriately for park and natural area, and no trees will be impacted.

CARRIED

CECELIA CREEK

The Parks Manager of Planning & Development, presented a revised concept for the Cecelia Creek Falls Park stormwater management and noted the following:

- An Engineering feasibility study was the foundation for a 2009 concept plan to daylight a small section of the creek.
- High costs, technical challenges, and lack of funding have prevented the plan from being realized.
- Staff are proposing a phased approach which will include park pathways, raingardens and a restored channel, pedestrian bridges, and riparian restoration plantings.
- The revised concept will see reduced excavation, reduced tree loss, accommodation of future greenway improvements and more useable park space.

The following discussions ensued in response to the presentation:

- Daylighting is a strategy to pursue and celebrate habitat restoration, urban habitat, and human contact with green space.
- The challenge is that not every site is suitable for daylighting.
- Putting water in contact with plants is one of the best ways to clean water.
- This project was approved as a Centennial project for Saanich.

- Staff have determined that a one-time request of \$160,000 will be required to complete phase 1 of this project.

MOVED by P. Carroll and Seconded by L. Campbell: “That the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Advisory Committee accepts this new concept and recommends that it goes to Council as part of the 2023 budget deliberations.”

CARRIED

MISTING STATIONS

The Parks Manager of Planning & Development, presented on Saanich public cooling stations and noted the following:

- The goal is to provide emergency cooling stations for public use throughout the District during extreme heat conditions.
- Saanich Neighbourhood Parks Program water supply have been installed and completed.
- Temporary misting stations (in 2022) will require staff set up and monitoring during heat waves. Selected sites will have an existing water supply and priority will be given to high use areas with limited tree cover.
- The strategy proposes that permanent park fixture installations occur in 2023 and beyond.

The following discussions ensued in response to the presentation:

- Vancouver street-based misting stations have received positive reviews.
- It was suggested that users be provided an opportunity to provide feedback on the temporary misting stations.
- This initiative may be supported through the emergency preparedness update.

MOVED by D. Little and Seconded by R. Corder: “That the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Advisory Committee supports the initiative of installing temporary misting stations, and requests that staff report back to the Committee in the fall.”

CARRIED

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

The Senior Transportation Planner presented to the Committee on the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) Update and noted the following:

- The ATP is a guide for investment in active transportation improvements for the next 30 years. This update will focus on reviewing specific aspects of the plan, and incorporating new and emerging information to ensure that the plan continues to be relevant and actionable.
- The scope involves incorporating initiatives for road safety, electric bikes and micromobility devices, and traffic calming.
- Community engagement will be an important part of the planning process for the ATP update. Governments, stakeholders and the public will have opportunities to provide input through various channels.

The following discussions ensued in response to the presentation:

- The trail network is part of the ATP.
- Electric bikes on the trail network are of concern; many pedestrians are no longer using some trails because of speeding electric bikes.
- Consideration should be given to washroom options for users of water activities.
- Increased traffic and speed have an impact on active transportation in Saanich. Staff are

working on policy to address speed limits, and the road safety action plan looks at how to reduce and eliminate serious collisions and fatalities.

- There is a broad array of transportation methods on the trail network and routes throughout the day. Trail safety will be important to address in addition to road safety.
- It was noted that the addition of “poles” in rural Saanich have been successful in keeping drivers out of the cyclists’ path.
- Concerns were expressed around the issue of school drop offs and pick ups.

STRATEGIC OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE

The Community Planner provided an update on the Strategic Official Community Plan (OCP) and noted the following:

- The majority of the plan content is still relevant; staff will build on recent processes and adopted policy and Council direction in order to make priority updates in a short time frame.
- The current consultation focus is on new policy areas and land use framework.
- The timeline for the project is one year and phased into: analysis and policy development; validation and refinement; and plan adoption. Community engagement will occur at each of these phases.
- The District requires more policy on equitable access to parks in order to enable residents to walk to a park or open space.
- A survey as well as a link to sign up for updates will be shared with Committee members.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is yet to be determined.

Councillor Brownoff, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary