

MINUTES
RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Via Microsoft Teams

April 26, 2022

Present: Councillor Rebecca Mersereau (Council Liaison); Tory Stevens (Chair); Kevin Brown; Purnima Govindarajulu; Jeremy Gye; Chris Lowe; Brian Wilkes; Bev Windjack

Staff: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager of Parks; Thomas Munson, Senior Environmental Planner; Nancy Chaggar, Senior Committee Clerk

Regrets: Tim Ennis; Stewart Guy

Guests: Cassandra Cummings; Alison Kwan

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m.

2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

Councillor Mersereau read the Territorial Acknowledgement and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED by K. Brown and Seconded by B. Wilkes: "That the Agenda for the April 26, 2022 Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be approved."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by B. Wilkes and Seconded by C. Lowe: "That the minutes of the March 29, 2022, Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be adopted as amended."

CARRIED

5. RECEIPT OF CORRESPONDENCE

MOVED by C. Lowe and Seconded by J. Gye: "That the correspondence be received for information."

CARRIED

6. INTRODUCTION OF DIAMOND HEAD CONSULTING TEAM

The Diamond Head Consulting (DHC) Project Manager presented to the Committee on the delivery of the State of Biodiversity report and noted the following:

- DHC provides services for environmental planning, arboriculture, wildfire management, biological assessment, tree care, and ecological restoration.
- The team is comprised of five individuals who will carry out the project for the State of

Biodiversity report.

- DHC is simultaneously working on Saanich's Urban Forest Strategy.
- The timeline for the project is expected to be approximately five months.
- The proposed methodologies include a focus on Conservation Standards.
- The next step for the project is data acquisition and processing.
- After the data is reviewed, the team will conduct field work which is planned for the week of May 8th.
- As part of the State of Biodiversity, DHC will use a regional perspective when identifying key hubs and corridors for natural areas.
- Once the data is reviewed and the field work and background research are completed, the State of Biodiversity Report (technical document) and a public-facing summary will be prepared.
- The Report will summarize existing conditions in the District.
- DHC will engage with Committee members, staff, and local First Nations as outlined in the Terms of Reference. Engagement sessions include attending site visits together.
- Materials prepared by DHC will be sent through staff; Committee members may send materials directly to DHC through the Chair with a copy to staff.
- Roles for the project: DHC prepares materials/report and carries out engagement; Committee members collaborate with staff to set direction with staff and review materials; Staff conduct contract management.
- Next steps: Staff will send relevant background material to DHC for review; Committee members will share resources and findings; DHC will take spatial data into the field and update as necessary.

The following discussions ensued in response to the DHC presentation:

- DHC has budgeted 60 hours for engagement with staff and Committee members, and is flexible on how this time is used.
- It was proposed that DHC attend the June 28th RSTC meeting to provide a mapping review, and the August 23rd meeting for content review.
- It will be important to note in the Report that areas outside of the identified hubs and corridors are not discounted.
- Miradi software will not be used to implement the Conservation Standards approach due to cost. DHC intends to follow previous (and familiar) methods used for similar projects in other jurisdictions.
- It was suggested that a local expert attend with DHC on field trips to help in evaluating existing conditions and explaining what certain areas should look like in terms of biodiversity.
- With regards to the Committee's engagement in the written report, DHC will initially draft and share a table of contents and data dictionary. A discussion based approach will be used to help guide the content for the report.
- Committee members are to canvass their availability for site visits occurring May 8-11, and list important sites that warrant visits. This information is to be provided to the Chair by May 4th and will then be shared with DHC for coordination.
- List of sites should be shared with staff for review; Parks staff may be able to assist with onsite walk-throughs.

7. RSTC WORKING GROUP REPORTS

C. Lowe provided an update on the Stewardship Working Group and noted the following:

- The working group is drafting a table of contents for a report that will bring recommendations to the Committee.
- There is a consensus that additional resources are required to achieve enhanced

- stewardship in Saanich.
- The group is gathering stewardship examples and pulling recommendations from those experiences.
- It was recommended that the working group's findings be directed to staff and the DHC team, and not to Council at this point in time.

The Chair provided an update on the Environmental Policy Framework (EPF) Working Group and noted the following:

- Many meetings occurred and the work resulted in a second draft of the EPF which remains as work in progress; however, it is felt that it may now be presented to Eric Pelkey of the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council for their input.
- There is still time for Committee members to make comments on the draft or write out some of the unfinished sections.
- It was expressed that the document is taking shape nicely.
- It was suggested that the draft document be presented to Eric Pelkey with a memo/cover letter to provide context and some guidance about what kind of input the Committee is looking for.

8. COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATIONS

B. Wilkes led a discussion with regards to the briefing note from Brian Emmett and Brian Wilkes on Marine Shoreline Development Permit Areas (MSDPA) and the following was noted:

- It was recommended that the Committee endorse the concept of a MSDPA as part of a more comprehensive approach to marine shoreline stewardship.
- It was observed that voluntary stewardship can only go so far, and requires regulation.
- Some local jurisdictions have already implemented MSDPA.
- Marine shorelines have unique attributes and are subject to developmental impacts which can differ from upland areas.
- Marine shoreline policy recommendations are included as part of the Stewardship and Biodiversity Working Group discussions and findings.
- It will be important to gather additional information and details on the proposed policy to better inform the community.
- The Green Shores model provides a good framework for administration of the proposed MSDPA.
- There are other at-risk areas/habitats that are equally as important as marine shorelines that should be considered for policy by Council.
- It was suggested that MSDPA be rolled into the Biodiversity Strategy and not be brought forward to Council at this time.
- It was suggested that the Committee gather information on all significant habitats and forward it to the DHC team for consideration in the overall Biodiversity Strategy, rather than endorse each issue separately and forward to Council.
- DHC is already aware of the Committee's identified targets/at-risk habitat areas and it is hoped that DHC will prioritize these areas.
- Brian Emmett should be invited to attend site visits with DHC that pertain to MSDPA.

MOVED by B. Wilkes and Seconded by J. Gye: "That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee endorse the concept of Marine Shoreline Development Permit Areas as part of a more comprehensive approach to marine shoreline stewardship and refer it to the Diamond Head Consultants."

"That the Motion be amended to revise the wording as follows:

- **Delete "endorse the concept of Marine Shoreline Development Permit Areas**

as part of a more comprehensive approach to marine shoreline stewardship and refer it to the Diamond Head Consultants” and replace it with “receive the briefing note on Marine Shoreline Development Permit Areas dated April 19, 2022 and refer it to Diamond Head Consultants for information.”

Main Motion, as Amended:

“That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee receive the briefing note on Marine Shoreline Development Permit Areas dated April 19, 2022 and refer it to Diamond Head Consultants for information.”

The Motion was then Put and CARRIED

9. UPDATE ON FIRST NATIONS RELATIONS

Councillor Mersereau provided an update on First Nations Relations as it pertains to representation for the RSTC and the following was noted:

- Councillor Mersereau met with the Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services to discuss the resignation of the latest RSTC First Nations representative.
- It is felt that it would be difficult to bring in a replacement and bring them up to speed at this advanced stage.
- It is recommended that this Committee lean into the relationship already established with Eric Pelkey and attempt to have fulsome engagement with the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council (WLC) through its Environment Committee.
- Messenger trail maps might have relevance to the green infrastructure network; this information could be forwarded to Diamond Head Consultants directly from WLC should they wish to do so.
- DHC’s contract includes terms for engagement with local First Nations. The consulting team is waiting for direction from staff on how to broach this.

10. DISCUSSION OF PROJECT COORDINATOR/SECRETARIAT ROLE

The Chair led a discussion about the Project Coordinator’s role and the following was noted:

- It was expressed that the urgent need for a Coordinator has diminished due to the Committee’s efforts in completing some of the work.
- There is a need for someone to help with the drafting of documents; technical writing takes time and effort.
- Previously, the Committee had discussed putting out a separate contract for this role; however, this process may be difficult as the scope of work is still unknown.
- At this stage, the role of the Coordinator may be characterized as discreet.
- Staff suggested that the position of Student Parks Technician allows for various scopes of work related to parks and natural environment.
- This role should be characterized as a supporting role to help move things along between meetings, and not so much coordinating or managing.
- Committee members’ time is limited and the support is needed.
- It was expressed that the Committee bring on someone who has an authority and experience that a student may not have.
- It was expressed that assistance is needed with completing the Environmental Policy Framework document, specifically in exploring policy areas and strategies.
- The Terms of Reference don’t specify that the policy areas need to be reviewed and there is no expectation that this be completed by the Committee.
- On behalf of the Environmental Policy Framework Working Group, the Chair

expressed that, in order to provide advice and guidance on what needs to be done, the policy areas need to be explored.

- The Terms of Reference state that staff will write the EPF and the Committee provides advice for staff. The EPF is not due until Milestone 3.
- This discussion on the role of the Coordinator will continue at a later time, either through email discussion or at the next RSTC meeting.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for May 24, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Tory Stevens, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary