



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No.13,2,1
Halifax and West Community Council
May 11, 2021

TO: Chair and Members of the Halifax and West Community Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed
Michael Lamplugh, Chair of Western Common Advisory Committee

DATE: April 30, 2021

SUBJECT: Implementing Natural Surface Back Country Trails within Interior of the Western Common Wilderness Common

ORIGIN

Motion from the April 28, 2021 Western Common Advisory Committee meeting.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 5(a) of the Western Common Advisory Committee Terms of Reference:

The Municipality's management of the Western Common will be guided by the following objectives:

- (a) the protection of valuable ecological and cultural assets;*
- (b) the provision of access to sustainable wilderness recreation through improvements and programs;*

RECOMMENDATION

The Western Common Advisory Committee recommends Halifax and West Community Council recommends that Regional Council request a staff report and amendments to the Western Common Wilderness Common Master Plan to consider the implementation of natural surface backcountry trails within interior areas of the Western Wilderness Common.

BACKGROUND

The Western Common Advisory Committee received an update from staff at the April 28, 2021 special meeting that explained to construct trails for all ages and abilities with a sub-5% grade throughout the park would cause significant disruption to the natural setting of the park. This would impact the Municipality's objective to manage the Western Common such to protect the valuable ecological and cultural assets of the Western Common.

DISCUSSION

The Committee discussed the details of the update at the April 28, 2021 special meeting. As explained by staff the impact to the natural setting by implementing sub-5% grade slopes for all ages and abilities would cause significant disruption to the park. This would conflict with the Halifax Regional Municipality's objectives of the park. The Municipality's guiding principles for the park as detailed in the Western Common Wilderness Common Master Plan are to provide "...the protection of valuable ecological and cultural assets;" and "the provision of access to sustainable wilderness recreation through improvements and programs;". In order to maintain as much of the natural setting of the park as possible the Western Common Advisory Committee agreed a staff report to consider implementing natural surface backcountry trails was necessary to minimize impact to the environment.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications will need to be identified by staff in a future report.

RISK CONSIDERATION

Risk considerations will need to be identified by staff in a future report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Western Common Advisory Committee is an advisory committee to the Halifax and West Community Council and is comprised of six members of the public and one appointed member of Halifax and West Common Council. The meetings are open to the public through a public livestream and the agendas and minutes are posted online in advance of the meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The environmental implications will need to be identified by staff in a future report.

ALTERNATIVES

The committee did not provide alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Liam Power, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Municipal Clerk, 902-233-3054
