



**WESTERN COMMON ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
September 27, 2017**

PRESENT: Tom Musial, Chair
Shirley Jollimore, Vice Chair
Dusan Soudek
Kelly Carlton
Beth McGee
Jane MacNeill
Wayne Shellnut

REGRETS: Councillor Adams

STAFF: Gareth Evans, Recreation Planning Specialist
Matthew Keliher, Manager of Solid Waste
Jeff Spares, Construction Project Manager, Parks Capital Projects
Alex Quinn, Construction Engineer, Parks Capital Projects
Penny Kuhn, Program Standards Planner
Maria Jacobs, Planner I
Krista Vining, Legislative Assistant

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, and information items circulated are online at halifax.ca.

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m., and adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., in the Prospect Road Community Centre Art Room, 2141 Prospect Road, Hatchet Lake. Round table introductions were given.

Community Announcements from Community Members

Beth McGee noted that the Council of Community Organizations (COCO) will be meeting October 3, 2017, at the Lakeside Community Centre. The Five Bridges Wilderness Heritage Trust will act as host, and all are welcome to attend.

Shirley Jollimore noted that the 8th Annual Prospect Road Crafters' Market will be held October 21, 2017, at the Prospect Road Community Centre. As well, on October 22, 2017, the Community Centre will be finalizing their natural playground.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 24, 2017

MOVED by Dusan Soudek, seconded by Shirley Jollimore

THAT the minutes of May 24, 2017 be approved, as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

There were no changes to the agenda.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

A brief discussion was held on the as-built trail grades, which exceed five percent in some areas, and adhering to the Western Common Wilderness Common Master Plan that speaks to "barrier free" trails. Members expressed concern at their last meeting that the elevation differences between the trails could limit accessibility for some users.

Jeff Spares, Construction Project Manager, Alex Quinn, Construction Engineer, Parks Capital Projects and Garnet McLaughlin of Cobequid Consulting responded to questions. It was noted that options such as switchbacks and surface finishing could be used to address trail grades exceeding five percent. They spoke to the challenges of maintaining the heritage and natural beauty of the area while trying to make the trails accessible and less than five percent grade.

Members expressed that if the trails were not truly "barrier free," as identified in the Western Common Wilderness Common Master Plan, then it needs to be communicated through signage. As well, members noted the importance of future phasing be truly "barrier free."

Staff noted that Phase 1 of the trails would be used as a construction access point for Phases 3, 4, and 5; and it was suggested to hold off putting the final top surface on the Phase 1 trails until future construction is complete. Once sections of the trails are complete, staff could go back and modify the entrance to Phase 1 to address accessibility and grade. Comments were also made to having rest points for people along the trail so the higher-grade levels are more manageable.

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence – None

7.2 Petitions – None

8. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

9. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

9.1 STAFF

9.1.1 Case 21209: Amendments to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS), The Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Land use by-law for the expansion of HRM Compost Facility at 61 Evergreen Place – Maria Jacobs, Planner I

The following was before the Committee:

- A staff memorandum dated September 21, 2017
- Ragged Lake Composting Facility Annual Report – 2016

Maria Jacobs, Planner I, and Matthew Keliher, Manager of Solid Waste, presented the Municipality's proposal to replace and expand the Municipal composting facility located at 61 Evergreen Place, Goodwood, NS. It was noted that in order to accommodate this proposal, the existing property will need to be increased, as showed in site map outlined in the staff memorandum dated September 21, 2017. A copy of the staff presentation is on file.

The Committee was asked in preparing their recommendation to Halifax and West Community Council, to advise the degree to which the replacement and expansion proposal for the existing HRM composting facility impacts the Western Commons Master Plan in consideration of the following:

- phasing of the Western Commons Masterplan implementation;
- buffering and screening; and
- environmental sustainability of the Western Commons.

During the discussion, the following questions and concerns were raised:

- potential impact on the development of Western Common Wilderness Common Master Plan
- potential development near the Pipeline Road and the nearby waterway
- whether alternative sites were considered
- potential environmental sustainability impact; looking to review soil and water testing results from past 20 years

Staff reviewed the perimeter outlined in their presentation, highlighting that development would not be permitted near the waterway or the pipeline trail.

Staff indicated they could provide some current soil and surface water testing to have a baseline prior to changes at the site. The current test results may not be available in time for the next meeting; but staff would provide historical data, a sample of several years from the last twenty (20) years, along with the most recent 2016 data for the Committee's review in terms of environmental sustainability impact.

Staff also responded to questions respecting odor which relates to environmental integrity and the mitigation controls in place at the facility. It was noted that issues are complaint-driven and suggested if there were any concerns to contact 311 HRM Call Centre or Matthew Keliher, Manager of Solid Waste.

Beth McGee spoke about an issue that occurred April 10, 2008, where a smelly-thick-cotton-ball substance (*Saprolegnia*) was noted in the stream flowing from east to west adjacent to the Pipeline Road. They noted that the clean up took 35 days and would forward their notes to Matt Keliher for their information.

MOVED by Shirley Jollimore, seconded by Wayne Shellnut

To defer Case 21209 to enable staff to provide historical data, a sample of several years of soil and surface water testing over the last 20 years, along with the most recent 2016 data.

The Committee agree to hold a special meeting on October 25, 2017, if required to continue the discussion and make recommendation on this matter.

It was noted that members could forward their comments by email to the Chair, which would be compiled and provided to staff for response at the October 25, 2017, special meeting.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9.1.2 Update on the Development of Nichols Lake Trail – Jeff Spares, Construction Project Manager & Alex Quinn, Construction Engineer, Parks Capital Project

The following was before the Committee:

- A staff memorandum dated September 21, 2017

Alex Quinn, Construction Engineer, Parks Capital Projects spoke to the progress made to date on the phasing of the Western Common Wilderness Common Master Plan, as outlined in the staff memorandum dated September 21, 2017.

In response to a question raised on making the trail a destination point, staff explained that they are prepared to continue the trail west of Nichols Lake and pause work to the east of the lake at the waterfall. This would create the waterfall into an interim destination point. If additional funding becomes available, outside of the current budget, then staff could explore the idea of a bridge. It was noted that a motion is not required at this time to make the waterfall a destination point.

9.1.3 Discussion re: WCAC motion to Halifax and West Community Council re: Removal of all derelict, dangerous, and/or unsightly campsites within the Western Commons Regional Park

The following was before the Committee:

- A staff memorandum dated September 20, 2017; attached Western Common Advisory Committee report to Halifax & West Community Council dated May 29, 2017

Gareth Evans, Recreation Planning Specialist, explained that parks operations staff and the RCMP were working to clean up and remove illegal campsites in the areas identified by Dusan Soudek. They explained the challenges with sites established in remote areas of large undeveloped park land. It was suggested the Western Common Advisory Committee continue to report illegal campsites, either through 311 HRM Call Centre or advise staff at their meetings. It was noted that information would be provided at a future meeting on the areas that have been cleaned up to date. They anticipated that over time as trails are development and the park is used, the feeling of isolation will decrease and mitigate people setting up these types of campsites.

9.1.4 Discussion re: WCAC motion to Halifax and West Community Council re: Western Common Regional park signage

The following was before the Committee:

- A staff memorandum dated September 20, 2017; attached Western Common Advisory Committee report to Halifax & West Community Council dated May 29, 2017

Gareth Evans, Recreation Planning Specialist, advised that parks operations staff has started the process to post signage at various access points of the Western Common Regional Park. They recognized the Committee's recommendations on design and language at the May 24, 2017, meeting. It was noted that

staff is working with HRM Corporate Communications to design the signage, which will be posted in accordance with By-law P-600, Respecting Municipal Parks. The Committee will have an opportunity to review the signage design once completed.

9.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

9.2.1 Dusan Soudek re: Annual reporting on implementation of Western Common Regional Park Master Plan

In addition to the Committee receiving progress updates at their meetings, Dusan Soudek suggested an annual report be provided on progress towards the implementation of the Western Common Wilderness Common Master Plan, similar to the annual report for the Blue Mountain - Birch Cove Lakes Regional Park.

MOVED by Dusan Soudek, seconded by Beth McGee

That the Western Common Advisory Committee recommends that the Halifax and West Community Council recommend that Halifax Regional Council direct staff to report annually on progress towards the implementation of the Western Common Regional Park Master Plan, similar to a requirement to produce an annual report on steps undertaken with respect to the creation of the Blue Mountain - Birch Cove Lakes Regional Park.

It was suggested that the report identify the following:

- Budget allocation
- Progress of the phasing (i.e. how many miles of trail have been built)
- Any issues encountered in construction
- Whether there are any operating, accessibility, or environmental issues

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

10. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

11. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – NONE

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - Wednesday, November 22, 2017 at 6:30p.m., Prospect Road Community Centre Art Room, 2141 Prospect Road, Hatchet Lake

If needed, a special meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. Prospect Road Community Centre Art Room, 2141 Prospect Road, Hatchet Lake.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Krista Vining
Legislative Assistant