

District of Metchosin

Minutes

**Buffer Land Working Group**

**July 26, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.**

Council Chambers

Metchosin Municipal Hall

**Present:** Councillor Jay Shukin (Chair), Councillor Shelly Donaldson (Vice-Chair), Bonnie Bouveur, Brian Grant, Anna Hall, Richard Simpson, Gary Smirfitt.

**Regrets:** Bailey Spiteri, Karen Hoffman

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm

**1. Agenda, Additions, Approval**

Jay called the meeting to order. The agenda was approved with addition of New Business items to get updates from members on last month's action items.

**2. Public Participation**

Chris Moehr, President of the Association for the Protection of Rural Metchosin (APRM) and resident of William Head Road, read a statement expressing concerns with:

- a) The Centre Mountain Estate's (CME's) stormwater retention plan not adequately addressing the long-term, downstream impact; and
- b) Selling to the Capital Regional District (CRD) options due to loss of Metchosin control.

Chris advised there is external support for an Ecological Reserve approach and the potential for provincial and/or federal funding. She requested that more aerial photo-type information be provided.

**Action:** Jay to recirculate Chris's May 7th email from APRM.

**3. Adoption of Minutes**

**Moved and Seconded** by Bonnie and Anna to approve the minutes of the Buffer Land Working Group meeting held on July 11, 2023.

**4. New Business**

Updates from Team Members on last month's action items

Jay provided an update to Council at its July 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, noting the Buffer Land Working Group's (WG) observations about the current definitions of parkland/greenspace (specifically P3) in the *Land Use Bylaw*, specifically around the lack of specific language around park/greenspace value preservation. The discussion at Council included concerns about the current zoning (Commercial Recreation 2/3), which allows for residential development.

The question was asked whether the WG felt that accelerating the rezoning process to parkland would be merited. The provincial government's housing strategy was referenced, including efforts with select municipalities on new zoning to allow for additional housing.

The WG discussed general support for re-zoning to parkland but noted process challenges (time (6-12 months) and public input). Consensus was that re-zoning should occur when a better definition of the zone was considered.

Bonnie reviewed the park zoning overview she had developed, looking at neighbouring communities; these were highly variable. Brian discussed how the CRD had different classifications of parks and maybe we could also use them as "go-by" definitions for different types of Metchosin park zones. All definitions included an element of recreation and that we should also include a zone defined more as an Ecological Reserve (similar to BC definition).

**Action:** Jay to send Brian's CRD park classifications and BC Ecological Reserve definition to the rest of the working group.

Richard gave update on the potential of working with Land Trusts. The general view is that this is not appropriate for the Buffer Land (BL).

Gary provided comments on stormwater matters related to Centre Mountain Estates (CME) and the retention pond that is planned for the BL. The report (April 2023) is conceptual and not at the level of detailed design required for Metchosin approval before construction of CME infrastructure. Discussion occurred on work done to date, particularly in relation to the requirements of the Section 219 Covenant and Easement, which allows for the detention pond to be sited on the BL. Questions were also raised about stormwater planning at present (i.e., during the construction process) and what standards were required.

**Action:** Jay to send out Gary's comments to rest of working team and to follow up with Metchosin staff about getting more information about CME stormwater plans and how they are being monitored.

**Action:** Jay to request Metchosin staff to attend the next WG meeting to discuss the stormwater management and detention pond review process, including oversight plans and activities.

**Action:** Request further information from staff on what the resource requirements (ideas about required resources, staff, budget) could be if Metchosin plans to operate and maintain the BL as park/greenspace, given that it would be different than Metchosin's other parks.

Discussion occurred on whether the WG could contact other organizations (e.g., CME developer, Langford regulators, CRD, etc.). Shelly has checked with Council and Metchosin staff and the answer is a clear "no." Communication with other organizations should be coordinated through the team chair/co-chair to the Metchosin staff.

The team understood but expressed frustration / concern about the length of time it takes to get answers to our basic questions, and yet we are still expected to make prudent recommendations on the October schedule.

Discussion occurred on environmental assessments and/or ecological inventories. Brian mentioned that he found some information about the cost to operate and maintain parks.

**Action:** Brian to email information about the cost to operate and maintain parks to the rest of the working group.

a) Buffer Land vision/concept statement

The WG provided feedback and reached alignment on merging the two versions of our BL vision statement into one statement.

**Action:** Brian to harmonize the two versions, based on input and to send out the updated vision statement to the group.

b) Round II Discussion of options and input into the tracking table

The WG will work with the concepts as presented at the July 26 meeting, with members taking a 'first pass' ranking. Discussion will occur at the next meeting.

**Action:** Jay to send out Concept spreadsheet showing the assessment criteria for the concepts being considered. The work team should fill in criteria ranking (1 poor -5 good scale) and consider sending to Jay to tabulate before the next meeting.

c) Confirming next meeting and steps

i. Next meeting: Wednesday August 16<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 pm

ii. Engagement with Council. There appears to be limited opportunity for a presentation by the WG at the August meeting. WG will prepare a 1–2-page summary report to Council with our insights to date. (Note - could also be used for pre-meeting background for the Metchosin staff at the Aug.16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Action:** WG members to send Jay a list of their insights to date by Aug. 6<sup>th</sup>; Jay to compile into a letter, circulating to the WG prior to sending to Council.

iii. The Public Engagement meeting #2 is coming up. Discussion occurred on developing a meeting format that allowed for dialog between WG and residents, as opposed to a series of public statements.

**Action:** Jay to send out proposed dates for next community information meeting (likely September). There was support for an article in the Metchosin Muse for this meeting. WG member to contact the Muse and start working on the BL article since the deadline for the Sept Muse is Aug 15<sup>th</sup> (before the next WG meeting).

## 5. Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.