

District of Metchosin

Minutes

Buffer Land Working Group Meeting

September 12, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.

Council Chamber

Metchosin Municipal Hall

Present: Councillor Jay Shukin (Chair), Councillor Shelly Donaldson (Vice-Chair), Bonnie Bouveur, Brian Grant, Anna Hall, Richard Simpson, Gary Smirfitt, Karen Hoffman, Bailey Spiteri

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m.

1. Agenda, Additions and Approval

Jay called the meeting to order. The agenda was approved with a minor revision to the date under New Business (7b); the community input meeting will be held on October 4, 2023.

Carried

2. Presentations

There were no presentations.

3. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

4. Adoption of Minutes

- a) Buffer Land Working Group (WG) Meeting, August 16, 2023. Bonnie suggested a revision to the first bullet under Section 7c New Business.

Replace:

Consensus was that the WG would advocate for immediately rezoning...

With:

Further discussion to take place at the next meeting regarding immediately rezoning...

Minutes were approved with the revised language

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

No business from the minutes.

6. Reports

- a) There was general discussion on the following:

- Jay provided updates on the development of the stormwater management (SWM) plan for the Centre Mountain Estates (CME).

The third version of the plan indicates that a bioswale will be used as a water quality measure; however, the plan did not specify the size, design or location. Jay noted concerns with the lack of clarity on whether other water quality measures will be incorporated into the system. At the August 11 meeting, Council has passed a motion to not approve the SWM plan until clear assurances of that advanced treatment were incorporated into the system. Richard inquired if the covenant contains information on water quality Gary and Jay confirmed that it does not. It was also flagged that there are significant benefits to bioswales being engineered into the whole SWM system; the plan does not appear to currently include that.

- Anna and Shelly expressed concern that the Agricultural Advisory Select Committee still had not received the SWM plan, as required by District policy. Anna noted that Avian flu outbreaks related to nearby waterbodies are concern for local farms, especially those that have rare and hard to bred stock and would be interested to understand the risk and if it's a real or perceived one. Jay indicated that it might be an issue to raise through Metchosin Environmental Advisory Select Committee.

7. New Business

a) Review of Recommendations as discussed on August 16, 2023

- The WG discussed proposing a multi-step recommendation to council for the Buffer Lands.
Step 1: Immediately rezone the Buffer Lands to Metchosin's existing P3 zone – Park and Open Space, and
Step 2: Subsequently (and in parallel to Step 1) begin the process of establishing a new zone that would be compatible with the vision statement for the Buffer Lands.
Step 3: Rezone the Buffer Lands to the new Zone (ex. P4), which would better support environmental protection and conservation goals.
- The main purposes of immediately rezoning the Buffer Lands to P3 – Park and Open Space Zone was discussed:
 - The timeline for establishing a new zone could be a long process (2+ years likely), whereas re-zoning to P3 would be faster (likely less than 6 months).
 - P3 zoning would provide an interim safeguard from subdivision and/or sale (would require petitions/referendum processes) for the time where a new zone is being established.
 - Provides assurance to residents that the management of the Buffer Lands has been thoroughly considered, and that Metchosin is serious about protecting the Buffer Lands for its intended purpose.
- Discussion about timeline for amending/adding new bylaws for the current zoning:
 - The Dogs in Metchosin Working Group has found that it's a long process (change has been submitted for over 6 months now)
 - The WG is hopeful that it can state expectations for timelines embedded within its recommendations to council (i.e. anticipate that a new zone would be established within 2 years)
- **ACTION: Jay is going to discuss with Metchosin's Planner**
 - What considerations are there for creating a new zone?

- Timelines for creating a new zone
- Would the Trails Masterplan and/or OCP need to be updated?
- What are potential delays?
- Considered advocating for a separate financial “line item” specific for the maintenance of the Buffer Lands be developed during budget discussions; specifically using the revenue Metchosin receives from the Industrial Park to maintain the Buffer Lands.
 - This could allow for potential grants for studies within the Buffer Lands, etc. in addition to regular maintenance.
- The WG explored some other potential considerations under a new zone such as:
 - Tailoring it specifically to the Buffer Lands/spot zoning
 - Two “new” zones to allow for flexibility between the Buffer Land lobes
 - Is there a unique characteristic of the Buffer Land that can be protected?
 - Would the “new” zone(s) be transferrable to other potential new parks/land
 - Possibility for a “Friends of the Buffer Land”-type group (stewardship)
 - Potential for increased for “recreation” use as the Business Park is developed
 - Resourcing needs
- The importance of an acoustic buffer was briefly discussed.

b) Discussion of the October 4 Community Input Meeting

- October 4, 2023, 7:00 p.m. date was confirmed.
- The format on the community input meeting was discussed:
 - Similar to the first community input meeting
 - Jay will lead a presentation (~20 minutes), leading into a question/comment period (group discussion)
 - The draft presentation drafted by Jay was discussed and agreed upon, with minor revisions:
 - Move “other ideas considered” further up into the Working Group Process piece.
 - Want to focus on the WG’s Recommendation to Council and gather community input/feedback on what we present.
 - **ACTION: Bailey to get some updated aerial pictures for the presentation**
 - Ensure that next steps – and the purpose – are clear. “We want to gather and incorporate input from the public”
- **ACTION: Jay to send out a draft presentation for member’s review by September 20th.**
- Advertising for the meeting:
 - **ACTION: Shelly will organise a note in the Council block in the Muse and the marquee**
 - **ACTION: Bailey will post in the Metchosin Facebook groups**

c) Recommendation to Council

- The WG agreed to target submitting its recommendation to Council on October 23, 2023
 - October 18th is likely too tight of a turn around to allow for proper review/input by all members.
 - If we target submitting the report to council for the meeting on October 23, 2023, it gives council time with the report before adding it to the following meeting in November.
- Outline would be similar to the community input session – there would be crossover.
- **ACTION: Jay to develop a first draft of the recommendation report**

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:17 p.m.