

District of Metchosin

Minutes

Environmental Advisory Select Committee Meeting

Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 7:00 P.M.

Council Chamber

Metchosin Municipal Hall

Present: Garry Fletcher (Chair), Councillor Steve Gray, Andy MacKinnon, Bill Cave, Merrilee Hoen (recorder), Anna Hall, Ric Perron

Regrets: Erin Van de Water

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Agenda, Additions and Approval

Moved and Seconded by Andy and Rick that the Committee approve the agenda with the addition of a discussion of changing our monthly meeting schedule.

Carried

2. Presentations

a) Alison LeDuc, President, Bilston Watershed Habitat Protection Association (BWHPA), gave a presentation about Stormwater Management which was also included in the agenda package. Brent Donaldson pointed out that stormwater management should be planned on a district level not just development by development. Activities in other districts such as Langford affect Metchosin. Andy suggested that the BWHPA produces a document listing the 6-8 items that they would like to see in the Centre Mountain Residential Stormwater Management Plan to guide MEASC's eventual response to that document. Alison has agreed to do that.

Action item: Steve will get the 2019 Land Cover GIS layers for Bilston watershed.

3. Public Participation: None

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Andy and Bill that the Committee approve the minutes of the Environmental Advisory Select Committee meeting held on June 27, 2023.

Carried

5. Review of Minutes

a) Council and Standing Committee Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Andy and Bill that the Committee receive the Council and Standing Committee Minutes for information.

Carried

b) Advisory Committee Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Andy and Bill that the Committee receive the Advisory Committee Minutes for information.

Carried

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

a) Metchosin Climate Plan

- Steve and Merrilee to begin work on evaluation criteria.
- The Agricultural Plan RFP has been awarded. MEASC would have like to see more about addressing climate change.
- Adoption of the zero carbon step code will be considered at the upcoming meeting of the Environmental and Natural Areas Committee
- It was thought that the Canadian Federation of Municipalities (CFM) might have climate change funding that is only available to its members. No CFM climate grants have been identified.
- Our application to the CRD for grants to install two electric vehicle chargers has failed because the CRD did not get the grant it expected. Metchosin Administration will pursue a contract with a provider.
- Metchosin will continue to promote the CRD's Home Energy Navigator Program to assist citizens in obtaining grants for energy saving home upgrades.
- MEASC previously recommended to Council that they not allow the natural gas extensions to any new development. Council has asked the Administration to investigate the implications of this.

b) Federal Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Fund

- We had hoped that this fund would fund some of our invasive species control measures (e.g., knotweed) but have found that it is only for the invasive green crab which is not a significant problem here.

c) Buffer Land Stormwater Management Planning

- MEASC does not feel qualified to comment on the engineering data presented in the Centre Mountain Residential Stormwater Management Plan.
- There will be updated versions of the plan issued for some time. MEASC would like each new version of the document to be clearly identified.
- MEASC is aware that they cannot release any preliminary versions of the document and that there are significant penalties for doing so.
- MEASC expects that final approval from Metchosin will be required this document and also its detailed implementation plan.
- MEASC members expressed concerns about the implication that water flows may be switched from one creek to another and would like information about this if that is in the plan. There was also concern expressed that guarantees about water quality standards were not as firm as we would like.
- In light of the extreme weather we have been experiencing and the many unknowns surrounding climate change, would it not be advisable to plan for even worse scenario than a 200 year event?
- With the massive removal of trees and soil disturbance which has taken place this year, what can Metchosin expect in terms of storm water runoff this year? And for the protection of the riparian areas?

Moved and Seconded by Andy and Anna that MEASC recommends to Council that they should hire someone with expertise in hydrology and engineering to review the Centre Mountain Residential Stormwater Management Plan

Carried

d) Sue Big Oil Campaign

- Council requested more information about what costs might be incurred if the law suit failed. There will be a presentation by Andrew Gage of West Coast Environmental Law to the Environmental and Natural Areas Committee on October 16, 2023. They will explain more about the implications of joining this campaign.

e) Proposed Rezoning Application, Beckingham Road.

- The Developer has now applied for an 18 lot subdivision instead of the earlier 24 lot proposal. This means that it will be handled by staff under existing policies and bylaws. It was noted that a positive outcome of this issue has been significant public engagement and input.

7. New Business

a) 2023 Union of BC Municipalities Convention

- All of Metchosin's resolutions concerning the protection of old growth forests, enhancing/protecting biodiversity in local communities, and reducing anchorages outside of the Port of Vancouver were passed at the UBCM and the issues will now be taken over by them for further action.

b) Bilston Creek Watershed Management Planning

- In Metchosin's Strategic plan, environmental stewardship is identified as a goal and there is a specific reference to "preserve and protect our shoreline, watersheds and aquifers". MEASC would like to develop a Bilston Creek integrated water shed management plan. It has been suggested that a version of the plan which was developed some years ago be re-examined and revised.

Action Item: Merrilee, Andy and Steve will meet to discuss next steps.

c) Riparian Area Regulation

- Steve brought the committee's attention to the document "Riparian Areas Regulation for Local Governments". He recommended the District enforce more strict riparian area regulations to protect these sensitive ecosystems throughout Metchosin and pointed out that the Metchosin Foundation's Bilston Conservation Corridor Project is an example of work in this area.

Action Item: Andy and Steve will review the provincial regulations and bring forward potential approaches for consideration at the next MEASC meeting.

d) New meeting date

- Due to a conflict, a committee member cannot attend on most of our meeting dates. We will investigate whether any alternative times are available

8. Reports: none

9. Correspondence:

All correspondence was received by MEASC.

10. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date

Moved and Seconded by Bill and Merrilee that the Committee adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Carried

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.