

COCO Meeting on November 13, 2008

The November COCO Meeting hosted by the Five Bridges Wilderness Heritage Trust provided much information about planning, recreational and community events for those in attendance. Members of the Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Rails to Trails, St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association, Safety Minded ATV Association, NS Environmental Network, Wooden's River Watershed Association, McDonald's Lake Homeowners' Association, and John Charles HRM planner, Reg Rankin and Peter Lund HRM Councilors gave updates on a number of topics.

A large portion of the meeting was taken up with discussion about planning for the Wilderness Common of the Western Common. Many questions were raised and answered by John Charles and Reg Rankin. Further details will be available at Open Houses on November 27 and December 3. Updated Information can now be found on the HRM website:

<http://www.halifax.ca/RealPropertyPlanning/WCWA/index.html>

Members of the McDonald Lake Homeowners' Association have been working on trails to connect their community with Nichols Lake and other parts of the Western Common Wilderness Common.

BLT R2T will be part of the Dec 5th commemoration for Paula Gallant. Five benches have been installed with funding through Democracy 250. Resurfacing of 3km of trail and serious brush cutting has been done for about 5km. The Volunteer Conference held Nov 21 and 22 was noted. Difficulty on all trails regarding insurance coverage for volunteers was raised. BLT R2T has submitted an application to the Positive Aging Fund in order to get more seniors walking and to purchase Nordic Walking poles. There was discussion about the formation of the coalition for Active Transportation on trails. A Safety Minded ATV Club member noted that if their proposed ATV trails system for the area is accepted by the Province much of the traffic on near urban sections of the BLT R2T trail will be greatly reduced.

Many events of interest were noted by NSEN. Details for "The Story of Stuff", the April 4, 2009 workshop "Go Green: How to Build an Earth Friendly Community" and information about other events can be found at: www.nsen.ca

St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association has a number of initiatives underway. The key topic was the proposed by-law amendment with city council regarding a requirement for development agreements for any commercial property over 5000 sq ft. The proposed amendment would incorporate values such as local design, lighting, type of commercial use etc. that would be sympathetic to the local, coastal nature of SMB.

In addition a project is ongoing utilising the help of local university planning students to provide input into regional planning for St Margaret's Bay area. Persons wishing to provide input are asked to contact: Alexi Baccardax, Candidate, Master of Environmental Studies School for Resource and Environmental Studies, Dalhousie University Telephone: 902-406-6130 Email: alexibaccardax@dal.ca

The Safety Minded ATV Club will host the January COCO Meeting on January 17, 2009 at the Safety Minded ATV Club, Station Road, Head of St Margaret's