

Council of Community Organizations Meeting

September 24, 2009

The September COCO Meeting was held on September 24 at the Cafeteria of the Brookside Junior High School. Host, John Cascadden of the McDonald Lake Residents Association chaired the meeting. Information about a number of community events and issues were shared. Both Councillor Peter Lund and Councillor Reg Rankin were in attendance to hear the issues raised and to give information about HRM endeavours.

Mike Marriott, Safety Minded ATV Club, reported on the funding to upgrade 10 to 12 kilometres of the St. Margaret's Bay Rails to Trails. ATV Club members and SMB Rails to Trails members will be replacing 30 bollards with adjustable gates to allow for easy access by emergency vehicles. One bridge in Upper Tantallon has been repaired with new side rails, stringers and redecked to accommodate all users. More work on bridges is planned and will be undertaken.

John Charles, HRM Planner, reported that he has been working on the Western Commons Wilderness Common plan with members of the Western Common Wilderness Common Advisory Committee and with EDM, the consultants on the Project. A final draft of the report will be ready soon. He and EDM staff will meet with WC Advisory Committee on October 1. John outlined that a Wilderness Common Regional Park is being proposed for part of the area with a series of 5 year phases to be undertaken to complete planning for Big Indian Lake, Blueberry Lake and Otter Lake. The whole plan will soon be posted on the HRM website. By mid-October dates will be available for Public Consultations. A number of questions were raised including the status of wilderness protection for the area. The proposed park will be like long-term HRM parks at Pt. Pleasant and Shubie. The items costed out have been primarily for trails with monies coming from the HRM Park dollars. The HRM plan calls for 6 Master Plans for six Parks. Ongoing oversight for this Park would be provided by the WCAC.

Beth McGee reported on FBWHT and Chebucto Wilderness Coalition activities by giving a short overview of Report #11 from the Steering Committee of the CWC, as well as the research work undertaken by biologists in the Crown Land Block in July and August. Copies of both reports were available for viewing. As private citizen Beth raised the issue of undersize lots on the Bay and also raised the issue of encroachment by a property owner on HRM lands at the Head of St. Margaret's Bay.

Ella McQuinn, St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association outlined the four areas of focus of the association following the recent AGM. These areas include: island preservation, Water Quality, Community Development and Coastal Governance. She spoke about the Association developing a Stewardship Plan with each island owner. The planning at Canadian Tire has included suggestions made by SMBSA for low lights and more landscaping. Other chains will be approached. WM Fares has donated 18 acres of land to SMBSA; these lands are contiguous with the public lands that form part of the proposed Wilderness Area. Another company will be approached about adding their

lands to those gifted by Mr. Fares. Geoff leBoutillier has been the lead on Coastal Governance issues

Reg Rankin, HRM Councillor, reported that there is an application by HRM for the rezoning of the Drysdale Bog area. There is a delay as a private citizen has come forward with an application to expand his holdings. He spoke about issues with a golf driving range with calls by a private citizen to D of E over earth being moved around. A road parallel to the Prospect Road is being built on this property. No application for permits has been made to HRM.

Construction continues on the Prospect Community Centre.

The Transit Yard in Ragged Lake Park on Prospect Road will have a Park'n Ride There will be egress out of Ragged Lake Park onto a ramp to Hwy 103

A bicycle route is being planned for Hwy 333.

In the next several months HRM will purchase the Chester Spur Line under the Federal Build.Canada initiative. This spur line begins in Bayers Lake Business Park and goes in to the city.

Barb Allen and Shelley Thomas, Resource Opportunity Centre, reported on the progress of the Prospect Community Centre. Barb, is Chair of the Steering Committee. The building construction is right on schedule. The Project Manager suggests the building might be finished in early Spring with plans for the building to be open in June 2009. Shelley ,Chair of the Board of the Resource Opportunity Centre is very busy along with the Board in the creation of business and operational infrastructure for the new facility .In mid October there will be a Hard Hat Tour for the Committee.

The AGM for the Resource Opportunity Centre will be held on October 26.

Peter Lund, HRM Councillor - District 23, outlined HRM projects for his district. Terms of Reference for the St. Margaret's Bay corridor have been set. Tantallon and Hubbards have been approved for the Visioning Process. Terms of Reference for a Watershed Study for Tantallon have been issued. A watershed study now has to be undertaken in a commutershed prior to development being undertaken. Peter is recommending that water sampling should be done in communities on a prescribed basis. Hydrological studies need to be done prior to development being started. Peter talked about the need to have septic designs for undersized lots reviewed by a third party. He also talked about cluster development-condominium development to allow for group septics.

Catherine Klefenz, Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Rails to Trails talked about the Nordic Walking programs started this year at BLT R2T. There are walking classes for all levels with classes offered 10 times a week. There will be Nordic Walking on November 7. There is good advertising about HRM trails activities on the HRM website.

Dusan Soudek, Canoe Kayak NS, spent the summer checking on portages and canoe routes around the province. He spoke of his concern about the patches of dying Jack Pines he has been finding on the CP.

On October 23 Dusan and the band of canoists/kayakers will make their annual trip from Blind Bay to Hubley Lake on the Chebucto Peninsula. They may have a writer/photographer from The Coast with them.

Bill Matheson, Co Chair of the Western Common Wilderness Common Advisory Committee, echoed some of John Charles updates on the work of the Committee. The Committee members are looking forward to getting together to review the Draft Plan on October 1.

John Cascadden, McDonald Lake Residents Association, let us know there is a small Community Park at McDonald Lake, A Recreational Canoe Outing was held on the lake two weeks ago organized through HRM Recreational staff. Water testing on the Prospect River system has been extended downstream to McDonald Lake, Peter's Lake Residents are complaining of noise and exhaust from ATVs and would like to see legislation to reduce both. With HRM's retirement of the big fire pit at Nichols Lake there was only one party there this year.

The **Next COCO Meeting** will be held at 7 p.m. on **Thursday, November 19** at the **Lakeside Community Centre**. Host group is Canoe Kayak NS