

Natural Environment Work Group Core

Meeting Notes of December 8, 2006, 12 noon, MVC

Present - Members: Tom Chase (Acting Chair for part of the meeting), Tim Boland, Judy Crawford, Dick Johnson, Brendan O'Neill, Matt Pelikan, Tom Wallace (Chair, partial), Leah Smith (by telephone)

Present – MVC Staff: Mark London, Jo-Ann Taylor, Bill Veno (partial), Chris Seidel (partial)

Present – Others: Susan Shea (Natural Environment Work Group)

1. Outreach to Constituencies

- There was discussion of the need for more input from working landscape and recreation constituents. Dick will call farmers and timber people. Tim will call landscapers (who were recruited by e-mail; this will add a personal invitation). Tim and the Toms will call hunters, with Tom Wallace focusing on the Rod'n'Gun Club members. They will be invited to join the group or just to let us know their ideas on specific points of interest.

2. Next Steps

- The Core determined to devote the next meeting to looking at Recreation; each member will send around his/her own draft of a vision statement and a problem statement (barriers to success). The Core will then create and weigh various strategies to remove those barriers and achieve success. In subsequent meetings, the Core will begin the same analysis for remaining subtopics (Working Landscapes, Biodiversity, and Character).
- Jo-Ann will seed the new on-line discussion board (due to start up imminently) with recreation issues for the larger work group to begin talking about, to be taken from the November 20 discussion; and will set up threads for biodiversity, working landscapes and character.
- There was agreement to begin working on strategies, while continuing to flesh out goals and objectives.
- There was discussion of development of a matrix that would facilitate comparison of impacts of possible strategies across the boundaries of the subtopics (biodiversity, etc.) within the natural environment topic and also with respect to the other Island Plan topics (Water, Housing, etc.)
- The Core could revisit the assessments that were made in development of the Community Development Plans, particularly Open Space Suitability, perhaps refining the choices made (weighting of various factors).
- There was discussion of setting Island-wide standards for quantifying needs and desires for trails, biodiversity, etc.
- There was a suggestion to divide up the Towns' Open Space Plans and sift through them for strategies. Brendan noted that it is often the history of the development of the plans that is more enlightening, rather than just looking at the most recently adopted plan (as they are modified for 5-year approval).

3. Review of first Meeting of Work Group – November 30

- There was general agreement that the first meeting of the larger Work Group was a resounding success; well-attended and very productive.
- Leah reported from the Recreation breakout group that there needs to be more waterfront access, particularly for recreational shellfishing; and that the table did not necessarily stick to discussing recreation in terms of developed, protected and available lands (as directed). Brendan noted a need for further discussion some of the points from the Recreation table, particularly regarding public access. The Core agreed that points raised will be entertained for review and consideration; not all points will survive in the final vision and strategies.
- There was agreement that keeping to “developed, protected and available” is probably a bit complicated for a breakout group; that could be sorted out later.

4. Review of Maps and Data

- MVC GIS Coordinator Chris Seidel appeared and showed the Core several examples of the maps and layers that are available. She described the potential for putting existing data into maps, for mapping newly available data, and for gathering altogether new data.

5. Upcoming Meeting

Core – Thursday, December 21, 2006, 10 –12:00, at MVC

Notes prepared by Jo-Ann Taylor