

HandyDART Neighbourhood Working Group

Teams Video Meeting

Wednesday, March 23rd, 2022

4:00 – 5:00 pm

Attendees

Katie Hamilton (Chair)	Tavola Strategy Group
Lori Beaulieu	BC Transit
Cheryl Deibel	New Roads
Melanie Austin	Burnside Neighbourhood
Don Monsour	Accessibility Transportation Advisory Committee
Bill Emile	Esquimalt Anglers Streamkeepers
Jane Devonshire	View Royal Climate Coalition
Cori Barraclough	Aqua-TeX Scientific

Regrets

Ed Pullman	Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition
Doug Ferrier	Burnside Neighbourhood
Miranda Benn	Burnside Neighbourhood
Errol Nordstrom	BC Transit
Geoff Huber	BC Transit

Notes

New Business:

Katie Hamilton called the meeting to order at 4:04pm.

Katie Hamilton chaired meeting. Outlined agenda and polled group for any additional agenda items or questions they'd like covered in meeting.

Agenda included:

1. Permit Status
2. Progress On-site
3. Environmental Monitoring
4. Salmon Safe certification process
5. What to Expect –After Early Works
6. Town of View Royal Public Amenity
7. First Nations Engagement
8. Communications and Engagement

Jane asked for an update on electric bus fleet

Lori noted they tried to have a member from the Fleet department to give an update on the status of light duty buses and planned procurement activities but they were unavailable due spring break. Will try to have them attend next meeting

Permitting:

All environmental permits now in place with exception of one.

A: Environmental Permits approved:

- Archaeology
- Department of Fisheries and Ocean
- Water Sustainability Act (main creek realignment)

Development Permit

- Town of View Royal Environmental
- Tree removal and protection

B: Remaining permits:

- Water Sustainability Act (high side of Burnside Rd)

Cori noted that the permit needed for a small area on the high side of Burnside will be an improvement as the channel is functioning largely as a blackberry jungle along a ditch running adjacent to the roadway. Once moved slightly and contoured it will provide an improved riparian area and cleaner water flow that will benefit the stream running into Craigflower Creek.

Construction progress onsite:

- Drone photos taken every month – will start to document and report on how the site is changing
- Reminder that there are two prime contractors on site: Jacob Brothers and Hall Constructors
- Both are actively working now and will remain on site for the next few months as part of early works contracts
- A lot of progress on site, new trail alignment and reduced grade is becoming more clear as well as how much land is left for View Royal public amenity. New retaining wall is evident along new trail alignment.

- Hall Constructors has removed a lot of the blackberry on the high hill and are removing the dirt on the hill carefully
- A number of “odd” finds on site – wrecked car frame, carpet, several bowling bowls, bottom of a fridge, tires.

Environmental monitoring: Cori Barraclough, Aqua-Tex Scientific

- Cori is the independent environmental monitor (leading Aqua-Tex team) reporting to BC Transit. Each contractor also has an environmental monitor – 1) Gwaii Engineering and 2) DR Clough Consulting
- Notes 50 photo points on site that she monitors weekly for any impacts. Used them as view points and photo points for documenting activity and any impacts.
- Checks to ensure SPEA boundaries are still marked, spill kits in place, fences and water are where they should be, sild fences have no gaps, etc
- Also monitors turbidity and water quality – notes a lot of the heightened turbidity on site is from upper watershed travelling down
- Two small fish (Smolts) were found in watercourse two, in centre of site, were salvaged and moved to Craigflower Creek. Highlights the potential the restored stream will offer to Craigflower Creek in providing similar protected habitat
- Bright yellow FOD mats in place at property exit, seem to be working – catch “foreign objects and debris” from equipment and trucks leaving the site.
- Continuous turbidity monitoring stations in place along Creek – updates to her ipad every 15 minutes on turbidity and water temperature. Placed before and after site. Allows environmental monitors to determine whether there any changes in the creek and where it’s coming from site or not. Local streamkeepers also have access to the data
- A drain was found under Hydro tower that was draining into watercourse2 . Has now been closed off
- Pleased with the efforts on site to protect environment
- No “Events of concern” to date

Salmon Safe:

- Recently included neighbourhood working group and gorge waterway initiative members in virtual pre-assessment session. First time they’d done this on a project. Purpose was to explain their methods and assessment criteria
- This project is one of two on Vancouver island underway. Telus centre downtown also pursuing certification but in early stages. This project may be the first to be certified
- On-site tour for the three assessment team members was then conducted last week
- Video being made to explain what the certification process is and how itworks
- Cori – was a good rainy day to have them onsite

What's next after early works

- Wick drains installed and sit for a while to allow the water in the deep clay to percolate to the surface and then redistribute through gravel back in to the environment. This allows the ground to settle before construction
- Hydro tower and lines will move, some tree trimming will be required
- Piling for construction will occur
- Then main site development

Town of View Royal public amenity

- Process to be led by Town, planning and engagement will occur on how the land might be utilized
- Now that retaining wall is in place and trail alignment is clear, you can see how much land is available for Town to develop
- Project team will keep this group updated as plans are known

First Nations – Sarah MacPherson, First Nations engagement consultant

- Esquimalt expressed interest in documenting and identifying culturally significant plants to the watershed
- Representatives from Songhees and Tsahout will assist in identifying, documenting existing plants and advising on replantings
- Will create a legacy document for Nation to use in future
- Have been in discussions with Two Eyed Seeing network – exploring opportunities for funding and using this project as a “ living classroom” for youth learning
- Esquimalt has indicated they feel a blessing is an important step to occur for cleansing the area
- Typically a burning ceremony – food or clothes
- They welcome the NWG members to participate
- Date and time to be confirmed – hopefully this spring
- Art is being explored. A call for artists may occur this spring.
- Also, with Salmon Safe a new role of an Indigenous Monitor was explored but there wasn't anyone who could fill it so now looking at opportunities for youth education for local nations and indigenous
- Archeologists and cultural monitors will be on site starting this week

Communications and Engagement

- Now 100 subscribers to e-newsletter, goes out every two weeks
- Videos well received, more in the works. First one was about tree removal, reuse and protection
- Have reached out to the folks at neighbouring Stoneridge wetland to invite them to learn more about the stream restoration and new channel being introduced on site.

- Two tours have been given on site since January 1 – GWI and NWG members invited, as well as Town staff and council.
- Two fruit trees are being salvaged on site and will hopefully be rehomed in View Royal somewhere
- Correspondence is continually monitored and recorded. Only two emails since mid-December received. One concerned about loss of blackberries, one about construction noise during the day

Anything else?

- Cori shared some recent pictures of activities on site – sandbags, silt fencing, water quality, drain under hydro tower,
- Environmental mitigation is often a much of little things that when combined make a big difference
- Danger trees being addressed
- Cori reminded NWG she works as part of a larger Aqua- Tex team that acts in her absence.

Questions:

Melanie – what’s coming up next? Where do the wick drains go and how do they work?

Lori – largely where the main parking area will be, not where the high hill is. Water comes to the top and percolates through crushed gravel and back into environment. Allows the soil to settle

Katie closed meeting at 4:59 pm. Reminded members to email any follow-up questions. Per members preference, will continue to schedule meeting on ad-hoc basis