

QCHCA – General Meeting Minutes

27 September 2011

Note: these minutes are draft only (until they are approved at the next general meeting). Email corrections to davidbratzer@gmail.com.

Minutes taken by Karen Dearborn as the regular secretary, David Bratzer, was absent.

Meeting called to order at 7:33pm

Invasive Species

Ron Otke opened the meeting by introducing our guest speakers: Cory Manton, Urban Forestry Manager for Saanich; Jenny Eastman, Coordinator of Volunteers for Saanich. The focus of both speakers will be on invasive species removal from Saanich public spaces.

Cory Manton spoke first about mapping trees and the tree canopy survey. Urban forestry is affected by invasive species. Saanich is seeking community input into the process of how to handle invasive species. Saanich is partnering with the UVic (Dr. Val Schaeffer and grad students) to seek staff and public input. There will be presentations on October 6, 2011 from 4:30pm to 6:30pm at the Cedar Hill Golf Course Banquet Room for a presentation on the research.

New invasive species are popping up in parks and on the boulevards. How do we prevent this invasion before it becomes like the broom and the blackberries. Saanich is in the process of putting together a response to the public at the October 6th Open House. Will cover who will do what and when. There's more than what Saanich staff can handle – support from the public will be needed. This is the basis of the Pulling Together program – citizens working with Saanich to clear invasive species from our parks.

Rapid response to these invasive species will reduce the work and cost if invasions are dealt with quickly. Prioritization needs to be put in place – not all sites have the same value. Garry Oak eco-systems have a higher priority along with other sensitive eco-

systems. Waterways are also critical (e.g., containing and then eradicating Japanese knot weed).

Saanich as a municipality needs to work with garden centres and nurseries – invasive species are still being sold. Input is also needed from volunteers in defining what the vision around invasive species removal should look like. Saanich is also looking to work with other municipalities and the CRD – invasive species do not stay put.

Early Detection – Rapid Response to be followed by containment and eradication as the plan of attack. Program sustainability is also a key requirement as it will likely take our lifetime to turn things around in our park systems and on our boulevards.

Lots of good questions from the audience about how they can get involved. Go to the Saanich website and search for ‘environmental services’ or ‘invasive species’ for more information. The website is being updated to bring together, in a central hub, information about invasive species removal.

Jenny Eastman spoke next and firstly thanked Pam Sinclair for her work over the years on invasive species removal. Jenny then led the group through the Pulling Together program. Saanich is a leader in having volunteer participation – for the last 10 years – in the movement to rid the environment of invasive species. The QCHCA gets a “gold star” for the work done in our area for invasive species removal.

Jenny talked about the requirements for getting involved in the program. Saanich acts to bring people and existing groups together; and, also to get new groups started. There are some requirements to lead a group, but Saanich makes the process easy.

Tools of the trade to remove invasive species: pruners, spades and clippers. Invasive species include Himalayan blackberry (cut down and dig out – sometimes smothering with cardboard and lots of mulch); English Hawthorn (cut and cut and cut over years and years); English Ivy (cut down and dig out); Orchard grass (cut the roots out and mulch); Scottish broom (pull on small plants and cut down to the roots on large plants); Daphne (looks a bit like a rhodo or an Arbutus: cut low to the ground on bigger plants and pull out small plants). Garlic Mustard is a newly identified invasive plant.

Jenny had Garry Oak seedlings as a prize for people who could name parks within the QCHCA area with programs in place.

Flowers and a desk organizer were presented to our speakers.

Secretary's Report (given by Karen Dearborn on behalf of David Bratzer)

We've had problems getting access to our association web site for a long time, but recently the executive managed to obtain the username and password from the previous web master. Some information was out of date (ie. the meeting location still said Gordon Head). David spent some time this week updating the site which is located at www.qchca.ca.

David posted 33 pictures from the 2011 Playfair Picnic on our Association Facebook page. Members can find this by going to Facebook and typing in Quadra Cedar Hill Community Association. (Due to some technical problems, he is unable to post these pictures on our association web site. He will try to fix this.)

David has posted the DRAFT minutes from the June 28, 2011 executive meeting on the qchca.ca web site. He has also posted the minutes from the January 25th, 2011 general meeting. The minutes from the May 2011 general meeting will have to be tabled to the next meeting.

Treasurer's Report by Dodie Fraser

Funds available to the Association is \$3,980.

Membership Director's Report by Rikki Bowman

251 paid members and 11 new members. Rikki thanked Jim Bates for the beautiful hand-made cash box.

Pam Sinclair on Playfair Park Invasive Species Clean-up

Pam is seeking help for the next clean-up session in the natural area of Playfair. Pam circulated a sign-up sheet asking for participants. Oct 22 and Oct 29.

Margaret Bachmann for Music in the Park

This was MIP's fifth year. Margaret gave some background on the history of the initiative. The plan was based in bringing joy to the community. In the beginning, there was some concern on how the event would be funded. It was set up as separate committee within the QCHCA with separate accounting. Thanks to Dodie Fraser for taking this on and keeping the books.

Saanich has been a great help over the years – providing funds or taking on duties like advertising and liability insurance. Ron and Betty Otke have been great supporters providing matching funds tied to the donations received on several nights in the last few years.

This year, business who'd made contributions in the past were asked not to this last year – but to pass along their goodwill to other groups. This was accomplished, in large part because MIP has been so successful getting donations from neighbours attending the events.

Each year, MIP has given back to the community – this year, donations will be made to Angel Choppers and St. John Ambulance to name two organizations. In previous years, donations have been made to the Saanich Legacy Fund for the Cecelia Creek Falls Park and the Cedar Hill Art's Centre.

The vast majority of the work done in putting on the events has been contributed by willing committee members and other community volunteers. Partnerships have been formed with many groups.

The committee members voted to continue putting on the event next year. Planning for going forward is always made on a year-by-year basis. It costs about a \$2,000 a night to put on the event. Margaret talked about the initiative of putting in place a permanent stage – the neighbours voted overwhelmingly to support this via a ballot in 2010. Margaret sees this initiative taken on by the QCHCA to pursue this. "Thank you to everyone who comes out to support the event."

Ron Otke thanked Margaret for her leadership in making this happen.

Area Director Reports

Braefoot: Construction on Merriman drive is continuing.

Craigmillar: Blenkinsop road paving complete; thanks to Vicki Sanders for responding to neighbour concerns and ensuring that work is done to improve the pedestrian experience.

Reynolds: Paving and sewer replacement completed; Reynolds is open again. Lumberworld fundraiser is set for October 22nd. Lumberworld's mural has meant that graffiti removal has been lessened as a result. Dumping on the boulevard is a continuing issue.

Cloverdale Core: No action at this time on the development proposed for Cloverdale / Inverness. The Inverness / Quadra proposal went to the Committee of the Whole. Council approved it to go Public Hearing.

Cedar Hill: Plugged culverts at Cedar Hill Golf Course are in the process of being removed.

We still need representatives from Cook / Tattersall, Cook / Tolmie and Quadra / Swan Lake.

New Business

No new business.

Meeting adjourned at 9:04pm

