

WILLIAMS LAKE

April, 2012

CONSERVATION COMPANY

www.williamslakecc.org

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 14 AT 7:30 P.M.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM SPRY CENTRE
10 KIDSTON ROAD

EVERYONE WELCOME

The WLCC is a non-profit volunteer organization. We welcome everyone who shares the WLCC's mandate to preserve the health of Williams Lake to come to our Annual General Meeting. Your involvement will be particularly needed this year with major developments occurring in the Williams lake watershed area. This is an opportunity for everyone to learn more about these issues and their relationship to Williams Lake and its major water supply, Colpitt Lake. The AGM is also an opportunity for us to review the year's activities and for you to bring forward your concerns and observations.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WILLIAMS LAKE WATERSHED



WEBSITE

To find out more about the WLCC and our activities, check out our website:

www.williamslakecc.org

BOSCOBEL

In early March a beautiful treasure in our neighbourhood forever changed. Known to many as the Edith Hope estate, the land runs between the Purcell's Cove Road and the Northwest Arm. Consisting of ~15 acres, the entry point is the Boscobel Road. The land was sold by Canada Trust to Ken Rowe of IMP. The services of Joseph Ross Realty were engaged and most of the trees were clearcut in a matter of days. This occurred with no notice to the neighbours, including the Anglican Diocese (the estate land borders on a small graveyard).

Needless to say, the community was shocked and a public meeting was held at St Augustine's Church Hall on March 22. The developer was present to answer questions from some of the large crowd of ~145 present. Councillor Linda Mosher and two staff from HRM planning were also present. The community was told that the existing road is to be widened to the width of a public road and ~23 homes will be constructed. An emergency exit will border on the playground in Jollimore. The public path along the Arm will be maintained while the path from Jollimore to the graveyard will be lost under the proposed road. Development is possible because servicing is available and it can proceed as-of-right. It is unfortunate that the developer chose to disregard an earlier plan approved in 1998 after much consultation with the community that provided for 10 homes and the retention of significant tree cover.

Members of the WLCC will be monitoring the construction closely as there is a significant wetland on the property which is part of the Williams Lake watershed. Members of the community are encouraged to report any activity that may compromise the lake. It should be noted that run off from the wetland feeds Williams Lake, with the water running underground and entering the lake below Wenlock Grove. Anyone wanting to view the development plans can visit the HRM planning office located at the Bayers Road Shopping Centre.

GOVERNORS BROOK DEVELOPMENT

During the past year the WLCC has continued discussions with Armco Capital Inc. in an effort to reduce the impact of the Governors Brook Development on Colpitt Lake. With our support, in February, Armco requested and received an amendment to the Development agreement that removed a planned block of townhouses from the ridge above Colpitt Lake and increased the parkland to be deeded to HRM.

Anyone recently using the trails on the Armco side of Governors Brook may have been alarmed by signs of significant logging activity near the brook. This portion of the property will be turned over to HRM for parkland. HRM requires trees at more than a 45 degree angle from the vertical to be cut down as a safety measure before they will assume responsibility for the property. From our inspection of the site, only trees that were significantly damaged (probably from Juan) had been cut and left on site as required.

CLAYTON DEVELOPMENT

Last fall the WLCC learned that the McCurdy Estate Lands to the south and east of Williams Lake had been sold to Clayton Developments, the real estate development arm of the Shaw Group. The land is about 350 acres of undeveloped forest stretching along the south side of Williams Lake from Purcell's Cove Road up to Colpitt Lake. It is crisscrossed by many trails that are important to wildlife and people. Most important to the WLCC is the role this area plays in the Williams Lake watershed. For this reason the WLCC executive requested a meeting with Clayton Developments as soon as possible.

Since then, members of the executive have met twice with Clayton Developments and exchanged e-mails. The President of Clayton Developments, Dan Gibson, attended the first meeting and Mike Hanusiak, VP and the executive responsible for this property, attended both meetings. They introduced the company as open to engaging people from the community to help them design the development. Melanie Dobson made a presentation about the WLCC and Williams Lake - the environmental values as well as community interests in the land. We also discussed water quality and the history of the dam.

At our second meeting Mike Hanusiak gave a presentation showing some of Clayton's previous developments in HRM and a history of the Shaw Group going back 150 years. Mike did not have specific ideas or plans for us to respond to. They indicated their approach is to listen to the community to find out what is important to them first.

He said there are three options for the property: develop unserviced with wells and septic, develop with water and sewer, or develop with a hybrid of both. Leaving the land undeveloped is not an option. The density in any of these scenarios would be lower than in their other developments, Clayton West (8 units, 20 people per acre) or Russell Lake (6 to 7.5 per acre) because the transportation infrastructure does not support those densities. Most of their previous developments have been easily accessible to a series 100 highway while the McCurdy Estate is not.

Mike showed us examples of their "Master Stormwater Management Plans" and some of the techniques they have used. They regularly monitor the lakes in their developments and say they have seen no deterioration of water quality.

Some of their developments have a significant amount of undisturbed land in the backyards although front yards need

to be cleared and leveled. Clayton controls the level of disturbance by property owners after the lots are sold through covenants.

Mike indicated that they want to learn as much as they can about the trails and other features of the land that are important to local residents. He said that trails are one of the most important amenities to potential purchasers of the properties. We also discussed the possibility of retaining a "buffer zone" of undisturbed land along the lakeshore. They indicated that 20 to 60 m might be left undisturbed.

Clayton indicated they are prepared to listen to the community's views on what should happen to the dam.

The WLCC is preparing a study of the important environmental and community assets of the land and the surrounding area. This work will include consultation with the community and will be shared with the public and Clayton Developments when it is completed.

Because clear-cutting and work at Boscobel occurred without notice or community consultation Murray Coolican wrote in March on behalf of the WLCC to Clayton Developments as follows:

"As a result of the action by the developer at Boscobel, the WLCC would like to ask you to commit that Clayton Developments will not cut trees on the former McCurdy Estate lands until Clayton has consulted with the community, discussed your plans for the property with the community, and the plans have been approved by HRM. A quick answer to our request will help to strengthen the trust we were beginning to develop between the WLCC and Clayton Developments." The WLCC also promised to send Clayton Developments specific ideas about the protection of key areas as soon as possible.

On behalf of the developer, Mike Hanusiak replied that "Our evolving relationship with the Williams Lake Conservation Company is very important. To this end, you have my assurances that Clayton Developments Limited will not undertake to cut trees on the former McCurdy property until such time as appropriate development approvals involving the HRM have been realized. This does not include possible survey "sight" lines that may be required in order to confirm topographic elevations or property boundaries. You have my further commitment that we will continue to discuss possible development alternatives with the community, including the WLCC and the Purcell's Cove Road steering committee."

SEWER AND WATER UPDATE

Many residents may be aware that in February 2011, Halifax Regional Council approved funding for a feasibility study to consider the extension of sewer and water down the Purcell's Cove Road. The cost of the study is \$100,000 and the funding was found under the Harbour Plan Initiative. The process began in 2006 when at least one petition was circulated in the area and concerns regarding water quality were raised by the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron (RNSYS). A meeting was held at the Purcell's Cove Social Club in May 2007, and close to 100 individuals attended. It was clear that the majority present were opposed to the extension of services. Nonetheless, an HRM staff report was prepared and the motion to Council supporting the study was made by Councillor Steve Adams on behalf of Councillor Linda Mosher. A call for volunteers to serve on the Community Steering Committee was circulated to property owners in the fall of 2011. The committee is comprised of 3 members from Area 1 (Wenlock Grove to and including Oceanview), 3 from Area 2 (Oceanview to Ferguson's Cove), one representative from both the RNSYS and the Williams Lake Conservation Company (Melanie Dobson), with Councillor Mosher as an ex officio member. CBCL, a local engineering company, has been retained to complete the study.

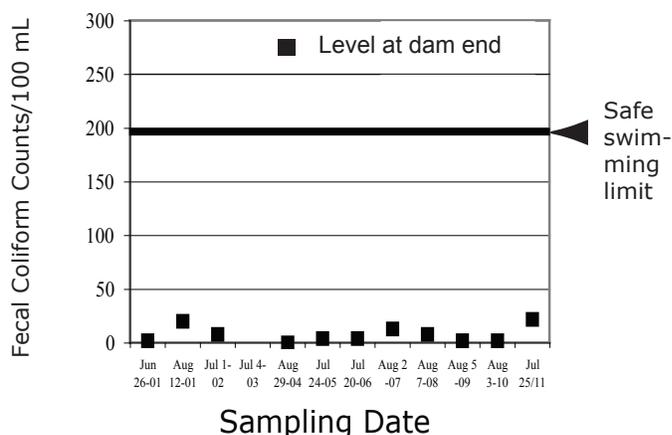
The first meeting of the Community Steering Committee was scheduled to take place on March 26, 2012 but was postponed by HRM staff because of a procedural problem. Apparently, the Chebucto Community Council did not have the authority to appoint the Steering Committee and consequently the matter had to return to Regional Council and then to Chebucto Council. Chebucto Council also announced that a member from Area 1 had resigned and that given the level of opposition to the study in Area 2, they would receive a third member (initially Area 2 was to have only 2 representatives). It should be pointed out that a petition requesting that Area 2 be removed from the study was signed by 80% of Area 2 property owners.

It is expected that the first meeting of the Community Steering Committee will be announced in the near future. Citizens will be able to attend and listen to the committee proceedings. Opportunities for public input will be addressed by the Committee and it is expected these sessions will be advertised.

WATER QUALITY MONITORING

Concerns over water quality in Williams Lake have been cited by District 17 Councillor Linda Mosher as support for extension of city sewage and water services to the RNSYS. According to Councillor Mosher, the need arises because RNSYS draws its water supply from a stream that drains from the southern end of Williams Lake and Williams Lake "is frequently contaminated" or "frequently contaminated from a Canadian drinking water standard". Such misinformation is disturbing. Firstly, all lake water requires treatment to meet Canadian drinking water standards, and this would equally apply to water drawn from the Pockwock Lake (our source of HRM water) or Williams Lake. We do not describe Pockwock Lake as being contaminated just because the water has to be treated before we drink it and it is just as inappropriate to describe Williams Lake in this way. Secondly, publicly-available records do not provide evidence of frequent contamination of the RNSYS water supply. Thirdly, independent monitoring of the water quality in Williams Lake by the WLCC and annual testing by HRM officials has consistently shown the main body of Williams Lake to be safe for swimming. (HRM closes supervised swimming areas if fecal coliform counts are above 200 per 100 mL). WLCC results for samples taken near the dam end at the peak of summer are shown below. We can all look forward to safe swimming in Williams lake this summer.

WLCC Williams Lake Water Testing 2001-2011



WILLIAMS LAKE WILDLIFE



Common snapping turtles make their home in Williams Lake. *Photo courtesy of Melanie Dobson.*

The female above has a shell ~15 inches in length and for the past 3 years in late June has laid her eggs in this vegetable garden on the lake's edge. If you spot one on land, stay clear as they can rapidly stretch their long neck round and deliver a powerful bite. They don't pose any risk if you are in the water as they are quick to swim off when disturbed.

ANNUAL CLEAN-UP



Participants with their "finds" in the fall lakeshore clean-up.
Photos courtesy of Karen Lyle

Thanks to all those who helped out with the annual clean-up of the lakeshore area organized by the WLCC last fall. This year's event is planned for September 22nd, again to be held as part of the national Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup Week. Check out their website (<http://shorelinecleanup.ca/en>) for more details .

We hope to see you there and in the meantime, thanks to all those who don't litter and who do pick up rubbish as they find it during the year.

WLCC MEMBERSHIP

WLCC membership is \$20 per household and can be paid at the AGM or by returning the attached form. (The form is also available through our website at www.williamslakeecc.org)

Heather Watts's history of the Williams Lake area is \$5 when renewing or joining, additional copies are \$10 each. The mandate of the WLCC is to protect the health of Williams Lake. **Everyone who shares this goal is welcome as a member!**

The Board needs your input and also new members. Is your area represented on the Board? The WLCC depends on its volunteers. Please contact any of the Board listed at right to volunteer or suggest a name.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2011-2012

Stewart Cameron • Redwood Avenue
Murray Coolican • Birchview Drive
Marshall Conley • Williams Lake Road
Gordon Dickie • Wyndrock Drive
Melanie Dobson • Wyndrock Drive • 477-0668
Kathleen Hall • Hall's Road • 477-4159
Martha Leary • Redwood Avenue • 420-1520
Karen Lyle • Wenlock Grove • 429-1742
Andrew Ross • Wyndrock Drive • 477-7906
Kay Singleton • Birchview Drive
Anne von Maltzahn • Wenlock Grove • 477-3353

We encourage you to attend the AGM and look forward to seeing you on Monday, May 14th.

MEMBERSHIP FORM \$20. (\$80. FOR 4 YEARS)

To: WILLIAMS LAKE CONSERVATION COMPANY, % Melanie Dobson
11 Wyndrock Drive, Halifax, NS B3P 1R8

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

