

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT
TRAIL NETWORK TASK FORCE
GAMBIER ISLAND SOUTH WEST PENINSULA

July 1, 2017

MINUTES FROM THE TRAIL NETWORK TASK FORCE GAMBIER ISLAND SOUTH WEST PENINSULA MEETING HELD AT GAMBIER ISLAND COMMUNITY CENTRE, ANDY'S ROAD, NEW BRIGHTON, BC

PRESENT:	Members	Boris Gorgitza Carol Barlow Emily Pickett Kevin Grodesky Natasha Tousaw Todd Gordon
ALSO PRESENT:	Parks Planning Coordinator (Chair) Electoral Area F Alternate Director	Sam Adams Kate-Louise Stamford
	Recorder Public	Diane Corbett 2

CALL TO ORDER 9:35 a.m.

AGENDA Adopted as amended with the following additions after minutes:

- Update to questions
- Next steps update

MINUTES

3.1 Trail Network Task Force Gambier Island South West Peninsula

The Trail Network Task Force Gambier Island South West Peninsula minutes of June 17, 2017 were adopted as amended:

- Item 6.1, bullet 7, first half of sentence 3 should read: "Drivers are occasionally intoxicated"
- Item 6.3, bullet 1: remove "Outhouse at West Bay"

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4.1 Update to questions

- Fire

Staff reported that, according to a local Fire Chief's understanding, the fire hazard rating system for the islands in Howe Sound is included within the Coastal Fire System landmass –

so there is no specific hazard rating for Gambier Island. If a fire department were to be established for the island, a fire chief could implement restrictions seen as appropriate. Can the SCR D shut down a trail? If the SCR D had a bylaw that says that. SCR D does have a shut down procedure. In the case of fire risk on the island, the BC Forest Service has the legislated authority. Staff noted further research on this is needed.

Actions:

- Staff will:
 - contact a provincial fire centre manager for further information.
 - contact Stuart Watson for further information regarding the legislative framework related to fire services on Gambier.
 - investigate regarding SCR D regulations and shutting down trails.

- Search and Rescue

Staff reported the SAR training officer liked the idea of SAR training on Gambier and had noted that logistical issues include time and travel to and from the island, and time commitments from SAR members. Potential solution: maybe a joint practice with Gibsons marine SAR group over a day or weekend. SAR member recruitment is underway at this time. The training officer indicated he would contact staff the following week.

4.2 Next steps update

There was discussion of adding a Task Force meeting prior to the community meeting, and postponing the community meeting until later in August.

REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

5.1 Privacy

Questions for consideration regarding privacy presented by staff before the meeting:

- Can you think of some security issues that might arise from trail usage? How could these be mitigated?*
- What types of privacy issues may arise from trail usage? How could these be mitigated?*
- If trails are built who should pay for the infrastructure like fencing or landscaping if it is considered necessary?*
- What level of community support would you consider appropriate before a trail is developed?*

General summary of issues and concerns raised in discussion:

- Trespassing by walkers on private property
- Encroachment by private owners on public rights of way
- Potential impact of trails on privacy of property owners living by public right of way
- Improving transportation options and accessibility for community residents
- Movement of visitors through the community towards Crown/forest lands and trails
- Emotional nature of residents' views on trail development

Proposed solutions to address privacy issues included:

- Signage
- Education
- Protocol for development of trails
- Clearly defined trail to help guide walkers
- No trail development
- Berms and hedges
- Check accuracy of information available on internet
- Community consultation

Points mentioned in discussion included:

- Issue of walkers trespassing on private property that were reported to members:
 - people camping on a resident's property;
 - a person entering someone's house to get a glass of water;
 - people walking down a driveway to take a picture;
 - people picnicking on private property;
 - a house door kicked in.
- To reduce walkers cutting through their property to get into the woods, some people had built a berm between the road and their property, relocating a trail away from their house and making it clear where the trail is. Looks very natural, with trees growing up on the berm.
- Look at what is happening on the internet – such as checking out Mountain Road Trail, which is “nearly impassable”. It may have been mentioned in a blog.
- Member who lives near trail near West Bay Road could see and hear people coming up the trail, and had not had issues with security or break-ins, perhaps because the trail is well defined. It was note that location is a very public spot, with lots of people around and cars going by – different from trails in the bush.
- Have a protocol that can be identified, so it is clear for every trail. Identify the different issues around privacy. Hope to prevent more conflict. People want a resolution.
- Issue of emotional response around trails.
- Needs: respect and privacy.
- Need solutions that connect the community fabric.
- Need education along with regulations that go out, to get the message across to the general public to not go down peoples' private roads.
- Have signs that say: “No camping available”.
- Potential conflict in development of trails for the southwest peninsula, the main residential area of Gambier: desire for privacy and maintenance of the status quo regarding trails, versus public right of access to public land and improved mobility and access for community residents.
- Need sensitivity in how we harmonize the map with the land.

Comments included:

- There used to be trails that people knew about, that were built over as time passed. Several connecting trails were absorbed by people into their property. Need to establish a principle that these are public. It is not OK for a neighbouring landowner to put a fence on the other side of the right of way saying it is theirs. Hydro came; then roads came. There has been subdivision. Connectors, a lot of skidding roads have been grown over.
- If we are open and transparent about things and talk about our need for privacy and activity, then hopefully there is a way.
- Have community consultation process that invites community input, so people don't have

to go through conflict.

- We have a lot of wilderness here. What is the point of short snappy trails if there is a house right there? Can't we move it back a bit? Would like to see trails that are longer, going to a destination.
- Mountain Road Trail advantage is access to a beautiful environmentally sensitive area, and access to Crown land. It is a well thought out trail. On the privacy issue, focus not so much on where they are on rights of way but how trails affect other peoples' property. Mountain Road Trail satisfied a lot of the issues: prevented property being trespassed; gave access to Crown land. Think benefits have outweighed the costs. The property owners should also realize Austin Trails have been public for twenty years. Developer was allowed to put trails in instead of park. When people purchased their properties, they should have noticed that there were rights of way on their properties.
 - Look at the benefit and costs to the owner and the public in general.
 - Not doing a trail is also something that will bring people to war. There are a lot of people who want trails.
 - Example of Community Connector trail: People who bought properties next to it knew there was a public right of way. They think their rights are more important than the public. That is a public resource that is being owned by a private person. The reason the Community Connector is popular is it cuts off a kilometer of walking between West Bay and the community centre.
 - When the Community Connector first came up at early trail meetings, it was promoted because there was fear of the road at bottom washing into the ditch. It would provide an alternate way for people to get through from West Bay.
- Let private owners know where the rights of way are; give people information so that when they choose to build a house, it won't impact rights for trails in the future.
- It is on the title; people know there is road. I know people who didn't buy a property because of road allowance. Regarding the trails on the peninsula under discussion, there were four or five in a document about twenty years old. People have been talking about the same trails for decades.
- Each trail needs to be looked at in terms of the benefits and the costs to the private property owner, and benefits to the public in general. Think this is what the environmental screening tool is about. ...Look objectively at benefits provided as opposed to the cost to the property owners. It is beyond trade offs; it is a way of measuring whether there is social value to proceeding with a particular trail or not. ...Privacy is a big concern. If someone doesn't want a trail because of their apparent loss of privacy, that is up there for me.
 - In an older report, it cites work done on the island for master planning; there are some spots where people have been in dialogue for awhile.
 - Need to take consideration as to the impact on people. On the level of citizenship, people need to acknowledge and accept that public land is public land. Concern: when the private sector infringes on public rights.

Action: Sam and Kevin will do an internet search related to Gambier trails.

5.2 Trail Locations – *Deferred to next meeting*

The Chair invited members of the public to comment. Points mentioned included:

- Would like to see not a lot of trails but some kind of impetus towards some kind of trail system, a properly created protocol of a trail system, for the reason of privacy. People will

likely stay on a trail that is clearly defined. Am against trails all over the place for the sake of trails. Not having a trail will not stop people from going onto public property.

- Gambier has one of the largest old growth areas left in Howe Sound. Negotiations are still going on with the woodlot leases. That land is unceded territory. Currently it is up for debate as to what will happen on the Crown land of Gambier.
- Opposition to “the three proposed trails” due to privacy issues. Concern that trails not be created in very established neighbourhoods.

NEXT MEETING **July 22** *Trail location field trip*

ADJOURNMENT 11:35 a.m.