

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF CENTRAL SAANICH

Minutes of the **PARKS & FACILITIES COMMITTEE** Meeting
Monday, June 13, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.
Central Saanich Municipal Council Chamber

PRESENT: Councillor Michele Haddon, Chair
Mayor Allison Habkirk
Councillors: Graham, Korol, Mason and Thompson
Gary C. Nason, Administrator
Trish Flanders, Municipal Clerk
Hope V. Burns, Director of Planning & Building Services (in part)
Nirmal Bhattacharya, Municipal Engineer
Bonnie McKenzie, Manager of Community Services
Ruby Shea, Recording Secretary

ABSENT: Councillor King

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

The Administrator, Mr. Gary C. Nason, noted the addition to the agenda of the following late items of correspondence pertaining to the Central Saanich Horse Owners Association's Request for an Equestrian Facility:

- Tanya Harding, 6805 Pat Bay Highway, May 26, 2005;
- Nancy Hardman, 6864 East Saanich Road, June 8, 2005;
- Jennifer Oakes, 2013 Govenlock Place, June 9, 2005;
- Glynis Schultz, 1122 Clarke Road, June 7, 2005;
- Cathy Totten, 6328 Bryn Road, June 8, 2005;
- Petition (18 signatories), June 10, 2005;

789.05 MOVED BY COUNCILLOR MASON
 NO SECONDER

That the Agenda for the Parks & Facilities Committee Meeting held on June 13, 2005 be approved as amended.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1. Central Saanich Horse Owners Association – Request for Equestrian Facility

a) Copies of the following letters which were previously received by Council at the May 2nd, May 16th, and June 6th, 2005 Regular Council Meetings, as well as letters which have been received since the June 6th, 2005 Meeting:

1. Carol Lewis, 6681 Tamany Drive, April 12, 2005;
2. Isobel Doyle, 2367 Tanner Ridge Place, April 15, 2005;
3. Maureen Nelms, 1851 Haldon Road, April 15, 2005;
4. Louise C. Wesley, 1470 McTavish Road, April 15, 2005;
5. Tony Yonge, 1600 White Road, April 17, 2005;
6. Caroline Caiger, 7260 Kristin Place, April 18, 2005;
7. Valerie Hughes, 1339 Hovey Road, April 18, 2005;
8. Terry Eade, 1486 Newton Heights, April 18, 2005;
9. Hugh and Maureen Spoor, 1400 Hovey Road, April 19, 2005;
10. Audrey McClellan, 1490 Thurlow Road, April 20, 2005;
11. Joyce Wallbridge, 5739 Old West Saanich Road, April 20, 2005;
12. Terry Forsyth, 1511 Hovey Road, April 21, 2005;
13. Jill Yonge, 1600 White Road, April 22, 2005;
14. Elizabeth Smith, 1520 Hovey Road, April 24, 2005;
15. Dan Pedrick, 596 Toronto Street, April 25, 2005;
16. Shannon Chelsea, 6681 Tamany Drive, April 24, 2005;
17. Cindy Lebel, 9511 Maryland Drive, April 19, 2005;
18. Adam Buick, April 25, 2005;
19. Meagan Blake, 6271 Central Saanich Road, April 20, 2005;
20. Nadine Mitchell, 2170 Stelly's Cross Road, April 25, 2005;
21. Nikita Lee, 8165 Woodwyn Terrace, April 24, 2005;
22. Gail Rooney, 2033 Courser Drive, April 28, 2005;
23. Maureen Heal, 7565 Tomlinson Road, April 29, 2005;
24. Elizabeth Kidd, 1603 Hovey Road, May 1, 2005;
25. Jill Yonge, 1600 White Road, May 8, 2005;
26. Bethany Kyle, 724 Mt. Newton Cross Road, May 11, 2005;
27. Rowan Holland, 1543 Stelly's Cross Road, May 11, 2005;

28. Jane Morrison, 1487 Stelly's Cross Road, May 9, 2005;
29. Elizabeth Smith, 1520 Hovey Road, May 11, 2005;
30. Jennifer Miller, 1806 Midgard Avenue, May 13, 2005;
31. Jim Gibson, 1832 Valencia Place, May 4, 2005;
32. Christine Leach, 10804 Madrona Drive, May 10, 2005;
33. Janet Andreae, 3655 Beach Drive, May 12, 2005;
34. Dawn Ruthven, 7796 West Saanich Road, May 15, 2005;
35. Susan Evans, 1742 Prosser Road, May 12, 2005;
36. D J Freethy, 1641 Newton Heights, May 19, 2005;
37. Tony Yonge, 1600 White Road, May 24, 2005;
38. Maureen Shenton, 1584 White Road, May 17, 2005;
39. Jane Biggs, 7344 Seabrook Road, May 25, 2005;
40. Karen Harris, 849 Mt. Newton Cross Road, May 24, 2005;
41. Shelley Dunsmuir, 2294 Shady Creek, May 26, 2005;
42. Lee Hardy, 6309 Old East Saanich Road, May 25, 2005;
43. Frances Pugh, 6963 West Saanich Road, May 26, 2005;
44. Shellie Fyfe, 347 Ivor Road, April 21, 2005;
45. Laurie Joslin, 1439 Stelly's Cross Road, June 3, 2005;
46. Anne Waterhouse, 7810 Malcolm Road (received June 6, 2005);
47. David Harris, 849 Mt. Newton Cross Road, May 31, 2005;
48. Janette Ellis, 1730 Stelly's Cross Road, May 31, 2005;
49. Beverly Marley, 1831 Mt. Newton Cross Road, June 8, 2005;
50. Marlene Watson, 7330 Holm Road, June 6, 2005;
51. Darlene & Bill Brain, 7290 Chatwell Drive, June 3, 2005;
52. Tanya Harding, 6805 Pat Bay Highway, May 26, 2005;
53. Nancy Hardman, 6864 East Saanich Road, June 8, 2005;
54. Jennifer Oakes, 2013 Govenlock Place, June 9, 2005;
55. Glynis Schultz, 1122 Clarke Road, June 7, 2005;
56. Cathy Totten, 6328 Bryn Road, June 8, 2005;
57. Petition (18 signatories), June 10, 2005;

b) Copies of the following additional letters pertaining to this issue which were previously received by Council prior to the May 2nd, 2005 Regular Council Meeting:

58. Val Hughes, 1339 Hovey Road, March 11, 2005;
59. Laurie Joslin, 1439 Stelly's Cross Road, March 1, 2005;
60. Val Hughes, 1339 Hovey Road, March 1, 2004;

c) Staff Memorandum dated June 8, 2005 from Bonnie McKenzie, Manager of Community Services Re: Central Saanich Horse Owners' Association Request for an Equestrian Facility.

The Administrator gave some brief introductory remarks in regards to the history of this issue.

The Manager of Community Services, Ms. Bonnie McKenzie, gave a comprehensive overview of the Staff Memorandum which provided an outline of other municipally-owned and operated equestrian facilities in the Capital Region, the possible use of the equestrian facilities that are located on the Fairgrounds property, as well as information on past improvements that have been undertaken by the District to various trails, pathways and bridges that are used by the equestrians.

The Chair opened the floor for additional comments from the various letter writers.

1. Carol Lewis, 6681 Tamany Drive
 - advised that she is a new member of the Central Saanich Horse Owners Association (CSHOA), and that she is an active road rider
 - stated that she prefers to not trailer her horse, and feels that a public equestrian facility in the community would be well used
 - advised that young kids and young horses are easily agitated, and an equestrian riding facility would provide a safer environment vs. riding on the road
 - requested that Council support a safe environment for horse riders
2. Isobel Doyle, 2367 Tanner Ridge Place
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence

3. Maureen Nelms, 1851 Haldon Road
 - stated that Thompson Road once had a trail leading to Haldon Park that was suitable to horses, but it has never had any upkeep or improvements over time and is unusable as it cannot be seen anymore
4. Louise C. Wesley, 1470 McTavish Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
5. Tony Yonge, 1600 White Road
 - advised that the trail on Mt. Newton Cross Road is not adequately maintained and requires proper attention to make it easier to ride
 - advised that an agreement similar to the one between the Elk/Beaver Lake equestrian group and the CRD would not be practical in Central Saanich
 - stated that as a riding ring already exists at the Fairgrounds, the CSHOA would be willing to contribute time and money to assist with the maintenance as long as the Association could have use of the facilities
6. Caroline Gaiger, 7260 Kristin Place
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
7. Valerie Hughes, 1339 Hovey Road
 - advised that she wrote to the North and South Saanich Agricultural Fairgrounds to introduce the CSHOA to them but had not heard back from them
 - advised that she phoned the Fairgrounds office but could not get anyone to return her calls
 - advised that the Elk/Beaver Lake equestrian group has 15 shows per year; \$125 per day for 100 kids; and lessons are free
 - Thompson Place trail is dangerous to ride
8. Mr. Ken Travis, President of the North and South Saanich Agricultural Society
 - advised that the Fairgrounds are privately owned and the Society pays nearly \$50,000 annually in property taxes
 - noted that, as numerous community functions are held at the Fairgrounds, it is difficult to commit regular use of any of the facilities to a single user group
 - confirmed that the riding ring is too wet to use during the winter months
 - confirmed that he wouldn't answer Ms. Hughes call because the Board wants to deal with one person only
 - stated the Fairgrounds would not be prepared to enter into an agreement with the Horse Owners Association as the ring is rented throughout the year
 - noted that the fee is \$15 per hour for up to 3 people to use the ring; that a "drop in" policy does not work
 - received Ms. Hughes letter at their Board Meeting and responded to Councillor Haddon
 - agreed to have the Board meet with the Horse Owners Association
9. Terry Eade, 1486 Newton Heights
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
10. Hugh and Maureen Spoor, 1400 Hovey Road
 - advised that a safe riding area is their main concern
 - stated that riding on roads is very dangerous, especially for young riders and young horses; listed various injuries caused from accidents
 - requested that the District make a plan; project ahead a few years (10); do a few feet every year
 - suggested that an agreement between the general public and a private society will never work
11. Audrey McClellan, 1490 Thurlow Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence

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12. Joyce Wallbridge, 5739 Old West Saanich Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 13. Terry Forsyth, 1511 Hovey Road
 - apologized to Council for the Horse Owners Association letter writers who were unable to attend this evening's meeting due to the "Sandown Raceway presentation" that is being held this evening in North Saanich
 - brought to Council's attention the commitments from 1985 which have not been carried out, and advised that the Association is not asking for anything new
 - requested that Council assist with the development of an equestrian riding facility
 14. Jill Yonge, 1600 White Road
 - expressed appreciation for the work that has been done on the trail
 - asked that the District focus on working on those trail areas that are in need of upkeep rather than ignoring the maintenance that is required to keep those trails accessible
 - questioned how the local equestrians can safely travel from Dean Park to Gowlland-Tod Park
 15. Elizabeth Smith, 1520 Hovey Road
 - suggested that the municipality undertake planning, a bit at a time, rather than trying to take on too much at one time
 - a facility of this type would not only benefit the horse community but could be enjoyed by everyone
 - an equestrian facility would create other opportunities ie. employment for young people
 16. Dan Pedrick, 596 Toronto Street
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 17. Shannon Chelsea, 6681 Tamany Drive (Carol Lewis spoke on her behalf)
 - advised that she used to ride Ms. Lewis' horse
 - stated that there are not enough connecting trails throughout the community
 - advised that it does not matter where the facility is located as long as there are connecting trails to allow for safe passage of horses and riders
 18. Cindy Lebel, 9511 Maryland Drive
 - thanked Council for listening to the members of the CSHOA
 - suggested that the local horse community is being squeezed out by urban sprawl
 - stated the importance of thinking about and planning for the future of this community; does not want to see the trails forgotten
 19. Adam Buick
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address his correspondence
 20. Meagan Blake, 6271 Central Saanich Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 21. Nadine Mitchell, 2170 Stelly's Cross Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 22. Nikita Lee, 8165 Woodwyn Terrace
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 23. Gail Rooney, 2033 Courser Drive
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence

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24. Maureen Heal, 7565 Tomlinson Road (a friend spoke on her behalf)
 - addressed the contents of her correspondence and expressed the need for a safe place to ride
 25. Elizabeth Kidd, 1603 Hovey Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence.
 26. Bethany Kyle, 724 Mt. Newton Cross Road
 - advised that she had no further comments to offer
 27. Rowan Holland, 1543 Stelly's Cross Road (her mother, Dawn Holland, spoke on her behalf)
 - advised that the safety of her daughter and the horse is the top priority
 - advised that as her daughter is a new road rider, she would feel more comfortable if her daughter had an enclosed riding facility to take her horse
 28. Jane Morrison, 1487 Stelly's Cross Road
 - emphasized that trails and a public riding ring are two different things
 - stated that the surface of the trails are not horse-friendly at all
 - requested that a public riding ring is a necessity for the equestrian community, as there are no available facilities to practise for shows
 - stated that facility use must be free to the users
 - welcomed further discussions between the Horse Owners Association and the Fairgrounds Board Members
 29. Elizabeth Smith, 1520 Hovey Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 30. Jennifer Miller, 1806 Midgard Avenue
 - thanked Council for listening to the concerns and requests from the members of the Horse Owners Association
 - stated that a public equestrian riding facility is a definite requirement for the equestrian community
 - stated that in her opinion there are no safe trails in the District, and that safety is a top priority to all riders
 31. Jim Gibson, 1832 Valencia Place
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 32. Christine Leach, 10804 Madrona Drive
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 33. Janet Andreae, 3655 Beach Drive
 - gave some background information on trail usage at other locations she has lived and the compatibility of residents and equestrians
 - suggested that equestrians should be permitted to travel anywhere as is the case in Switzerland
 - stated that in her opinion it is ridiculous that the CSHOA and the North and South Saanich Agricultural Society cannot work this out, and that the District is not supporting this aspect of agricultural activity
 34. Dawn Ruthven, 7796 West Saanich Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 35. Susan Evans, 1742 Prosser Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence

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36. D J Freethy, 1641 Newton Heights
 - advised that she has enjoyed the use of the old Fairgrounds
 - advised that people in the horse community are willing to donate time and energy toward the maintenance of the trail system
 - read aloud an article on agriculture about horses
 - suggested that the roads are not safe to ride on, especially in regards to the frequent bicycle races that have been permitted to occur on local roadways
 37. Tony Yonge, 1600 White Road
 - briefly overviewed the contents of his correspondence
 38. Maureen Shenton, 1584 White Road
 - advised that she owns nine horses, and that her four grandchildren ride
 - stated that a public riding ring would be a welcome addition to this community
 - further stated that a safe place to ride is a top priority to her
 39. Jane Biggs, 7344 Seabrook Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 40. Karen Harris, 849 Mt. Newton Cross Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 41. Shelley Dunsmuir, 2294 Shady Creek
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 42. Lee Hardy, 6309 Old East Saanich Road
 - advised that the trails are very dangerous in some places and requested that the District consider upgrading and maintaining the trail network
 - expressed concern about legal insurance for the District in the event of accidents on the trails
 - stated that it would be better to fix the trails than be involved in an injury lawsuit
 43. Frances Pugh, 6963 West Saanich Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 44. Shellie Fyfe, 347 Ivor Road
 - briefly overviewed the contents of her correspondence
 45. Laurie Joslin, 1439 Stelly's Cross Road
 - advised that she would like to ride her horse via the trail network to an equestrian facility
 - stated that the most central area for an equestrian facility is the Oakes Park
 - further stated that most of the riding ring users would be youth
 - noted that there are currently 28 indoor private riding rings on the Peninsula, and that the people who need these facilities are those who do not have access to them
 46. Anne Waterhouse, 7810 Malcolm Road
 - advised that she had no further comments to add to her correspondence
 - briefly commented on the construction of her own equestrian riding facility, including the building code requirements and the public use limitations
 - questioned if the Oakes property is being considered as a potential location for a riding facility
 49. David Harris, 849 Mt. Newton Cross Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
 50. Janette Ellis, 1730 Stelly's Cross Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence

51. Beverly Marley, 1831 Mt. Newton Cross Road
 - stated that the community needs an independent equestrian riding facility
 - advised that she supports the development of additional trails in the community, as well as the maintenance of existing trails
 - encouraged educating local residents with respect to local “road riders”
 - advised that she is hopeful that a resolution to this issue can be accomplished in a non-confrontational way
 - thanked Council for listening to the needs of the horse community
52. Marlene Watson, 7330 Holm Road
 - advised of her support for an equestrian riding facility
53. Darlene (and Bill) Brain, 7290 Chatwell Drive
 - advised of her support for a riding ring and safe trails
54. Tanya Harding, 6805 Pat Bay Highway
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
55. Nancy Hardman, 6864 East Saanich Road
 - thanked Council for the improvements to the Willoway Bridge
 - advised that having an equestrian riding ring in Centennial Park would provide a safe environment for young riders
56. Jennifer Oakes, 2013 Govenlock Place
 - spoke to her letter which explained her family’s wishes to retain the “Oakes Farm” in its present form to allow other families to experience the and enjoy the natural state of the property
57. Glynis Schultz, 1122 Clarke Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
58. Cathy Totten, 6328 Bryn Road
 - the letter writer was not in attendance at the meeting to address her correspondence
60. Petition (18 signatories).
 - that the petitioners were not in attendance at the meeting to address their correspondence
61. Val Hughes, 1339 Hovey Road
 - advised that she had no further comments to add to her correspondence
 - encouraged better communication between all parties
62. Mr. Jack Mar, Board Member of the North and South Saanich Agricultural Society Board
 - advised that residents south of the Oakes property have complained about noise from Centennial Park
 - questioned how other independent equestrian riding/training businesses in the community who offer their facilities to the public would feel if the District proceed with developing an equestrian riding on the Oakes property
 - stated that there is little room on the Oakes property to accommodate the number of trucks and trailers that would attend the property
 - advised that he is hopeful something can be worked out between the Horse Owners Association and the Fairgrounds Board

During a lengthy discussion around the table, the following points were noted:

- concerns were expressed that members of the Horse Owners Association have lost sight of the significant contributions that the North and South Saanich Agricultural Society have made to the community
- the question was raised as to whether the North and South Saanich Agricultural Society could give consideration to expanding its current facilities to include an additional equestrian riding ring

- concerns were expressed that the Horse Owners Association have not adequately clarified its priorities (i.e. riding trails or riding ring)
- concerns were expressed about the statements made by members of the Horse Owners Association that the District has not fulfilled its obligations on this issue, notwithstanding the contents of the Official Community Plan
- support was expressed for continued discussions with the Horse Owners Association
- support was expressed for the position of the North and South Saanich Agricultural Society
- Centennial Park, in its present state, may not be able to accommodate further development, notwithstanding the competing priorities with other local sports/special interest groups

790.05 MOVED BY COUNCILLOR MASON
NO SECONDER

That It Be Recommended To Council:

That the Central Saanich Horse Owners Association be requested to designate a maximum of two to three individuals to represent the Association in further discussions with the District in regards to issues related to maintenance of trails, equestrian facility planning, and possible further liaison and discussions with the North and South Saanich Agricultural Society on associated matters.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

791.05 MOVED BY MAYOR HABKIRK
NO SECONDER

That It Be Recommended To Council:

That the Chair of the Parks and Facilities Committee and the Mayor be requested to initiate a process of discussion with the Board of Directors of the North and South Saanich Agricultural Society related to some of the issues and concerns which have been raised by the various letter writers, and to explore potential options for affording more open, flexible and less costly access to the Society's equestrian facilities by the members of the Association.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

792.05 MOVED BY COUNCILLOR THOMPSON
NO SECONDER

That It Be Recommended To Council:

That the development of a mixed use, multi-purpose linked trail network to accommodate improved access for a broad range of trail users (equestrians, cyclists and pedestrians) be referred to the next Official Community Plan Update/Review process.

BEFORE THE QUESTION WAS CALLED, it was

793.05 AMENDMENT
MOVED BY MAYOR HABKIRK

That It Be Recommended To Council:

That the foregoing motion be amended by deleting the words "development of a" and substituting the words "refinement of the" therefor.

THE QUESTION WAS CALLED ON THE AMENDING MOTION
THE AMENDING MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

THE QUESTION WAS THEN CALLED ON THE MAIN MOTION, AS AMENDED
THE MAIN MOTION, AS AMENDED, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

794.05 MOVED BY COUNCILLOR THOMPSON

NO SECONDER

That It Be Recommended To Council:

That the concept of establishing a permanent Equestrian Advisory Standing Committee be referred to an upcoming meeting of the Parks and Facilities Committee for further discussion.

CARRIED

OPPOSED: MAYOR HABKIRK AND COUNCILLOR MASON

795.05 MOVED BY MAYOR HABKIRK

NO SECONDER

That It Be Recommended To Council:

That the request of the Central Saanich Horse Owners Association to formally designate the Oakes Property as the site of a future public equestrian facility be referred to the upcoming Centennial Park Master Plan process for further discussion and consideration.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

796.05 MOVED BY COUNCILLOR KOROL

NO SECONDER

That It Be Recommended To Council:

That an article be included in the upcoming edition of the Community Focus Newsletter offering safety tips and information to motorists and other non-equestrian users designed to promote improved road sharing and safety for equestrians when utilizing roadways and multi-purpose trails in the community.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Chair thanked the members of the Central Saanich Horse Owners Association and the representatives from the North & South Saanich Agricultural Society for attending this evening's meeting.

Mr. Terry Forsyth thanked Council for listening to the needs of the horse community.

Ms. D.J. Freethy expressed appreciation to Council for its interest in solving this issue for the equestrian community.

ADJOURNMENT:

On motion, the Parks & Facilities Committee Meeting held on June 13, 2005 adjourned at 9:50 pm.

Recorded By: Trish Flanders
Municipal Clerk