

# BOWEN ISLAND CONSERVANCY

## Minutes of the 2010 Annual General Meeting 20 November 2010

**Venue:** the meeting was held in the Multipurpose Room of the Bowen Island Community School, 1041 Mount Gardiner Road.

Membership fees were paid by all new members.

The meeting was chaired by Peter Drake, President, who welcomed all attendees and outlined the agenda items to be covered.

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 am.

A slide presentation was provided by Peter Drake, which reminded the membership of the natural beauty of Bowen Island, and the need to prevent abuse of the land by dirt bikes and ATVs.

1. **Approval of AGM Agenda**      The 2010 AGM Agenda was approved. Moved by Alan Whitehead (Everhard van Lidth de Jeude). Carried
2. **Approval of Minutes/2009 AGM**      Minutes of the 2009 AGM were accepted. Moved by Andrea Kaufman (Adrian van Lidth de Jeude). Carried
3. **Report from the Chair**      Peter Drake provided a report of activities undertaken, completed, and on-going in the past twelve months.

#### **Fairy Fen:**

- The most important project worked on in the past year.
- Fairy Fen comprises 50 acres of forest and two wetland areas in Crown Block 6, situated in the South West of Bowen Island.
- The project to secure Fairy Fen commenced in 2005, and was completed in the summer of 2010.
- VanCity provided assistance in the form of a \$20,000 grant, to assist with appraisal of the land value, surveying. etc.

#### **Bird house project:**

- This project a great success. It commenced with a public seminar to explain concepts important to bird house construction; this was well attended.
- A competition was then held, with about 50 people building bird houses and submitting them for judging.
- Thanks are due to Josephine Riley (Conservancy Director) who put in a huge amount of work on the project.

#### **OCP update:**

- The Conservancy was closely involved in the OCP update, and participated on the steering committee.
- At the time of First Reading, the Board met to review and provide comments on the Update to Council.

#### **Conservation Covenants project:**

- We are grateful to Josephine Riley, who did a lot of work on the project, together with Margaret Underhill and Brian Buck-

ingham.

- The project commenced a couple of years ago, and is a preliminary step in our objective of proactively working with land owners on covenants—both new and existing.
- Many conservation covenants exist, but it's difficult to know where and what they are. Information is scattered and there is no convenient central database of covenant information.
- The project has put in place a research methodology, and the Municipality has agreed to record all information on conservation covenants as they are established. The next step will be to move to a second phase of the project, with the objective of researching and recording existing conservation covenants in the new format. This step will include working with the Municipality to obtain a grant to hire summer student help, to do the work that is required.
- Monitoring and enforcement is problematic: essentially, it's not done. There is no capacity to handle it at the Municipality. This means that the only time a covenant is reviewed is when a subdivision or building permit application is processed
- Another approach to covenants is to co-hold them. This would mean that, along with the Municipality and the land owner, a third party would be involved as a co-holder. The third party could be, for example, the Islands Trust, possibly with the assistance of the Bowen Island Conservancy as the local eyes and ears. There are very few co-held covenants in place here at present. The Islands Trust does have the capability to co-hold covenants and has done this on other islands. Further work is needed in this area.

**National Park:**

We have ensured that the Conservancy has been involved in the process to date, has attended relevant meetings concerning the National Park Reserve, and participated in the tour of the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve.

**Land Trust Alliance:**

- In the past year we have been involved with the Land Trust Alliance, and they recently conducted a workshop to educate the Board on best practices, and ideas for future work
- Further work in this area will require more expertise, along with staff to execute relevant activities.

**Website:**

- We have had a website in place for a while, but it has been a little cumbersome to use. Currently it is being reorganized and updated.

**4. Financial report**

Everhard van Lidth de Jeude (Treasurer) presented the Financial Report. It was moved by Anne Chollat (Sue Ellen Fast) that the Financial Report be accepted. Carried

## 5. Directors

### **Ratification of Directors appointed during 2010:**

Two new Directors were appointed by the Board in 2010:

- Adrian van Lidth de Jeude
- Owen Plowman.

Andrea Kaufman (Alan Whitehead) moved to ratify their appointment. Carried.

### **Directors at mid-term:**

The following directors are at the mid point of their two-year terms:

- Everhard van Lidth de Jeude
- Josephine Riley
- Wynn Neilsen
- Katy Zaremba (resigning)
- Alan Whitehead: Alan has been awarded a contract to develop the management plan for Fairy Fen, and has therefore asked to be released from his Directorship position for one year.

### **Nominations from the floor:**

Peter Drake called for nominations from the floor for Directors. Up to five positions are available. No new nominations were forthcoming.

### **Election of new and returning Directors:**

Peter Drake and Andrea Kaufman have completed their two year terms. Both indicated their willingness to continue for a further two year term.

Two nominations were made prior to the AGM, by the Board:

- Laura Koch
- Ellen Coburn

New and returning Directors were elected by acclamation.

### **Summary: Conservancy Board of Directors:**

- Ellen Coburn
- Peter Drake, President
- Andrea Kaufman
- Laura Koch
- Wynn Neilsen
- Owen Plowman, Secretary
- Josephine Riley
- Adrian van Lidth de Jeude
- Everhard van Lidth de Jeude, Treasurer

## 6. Discussion of Conservancy's Mission and Purpose

Peter Drake requested input from the members present concerning the wording of the current Mission Statement and Purposes. The question is, does the wording accurately reflect what the Bowen Island Conservancy is about, and what it should be doing?

Sue Ellen Fast noted that the wording in the Mission Statement “... *for present and future enjoyment.*” sounds as though it is oriented at recreation, rather than protection and preservation of ecological services. Andrea Kaufman suggested that some of the wording in the Purposes is more suitable, and should replace the wording in question.

Stephen Foster asked whether it is thought that enough Island residents really understand the value of the green spaces on Bowen Island. Will Husby described the concept of “ecological goods and services” which is now being used by other agencies like the Conservancy. He wondered whether this concept addresses the core of Stephen Foster’s question. Public education needs to be a major component of the Conservancy’s work.

It was pointed out that, in the past, the Conservancy has obtained grant money from agencies such as VanCity, and hired staff specifically for education projects. Peter Drake suggested that this idea should be “parked” and discussed further under agenda item 10 dealing with Plans for 2011.

**Specific suggestions/requests:**

- Katy Zaremba: “restoration” should be a keyword in our Mission/Purposes.
- Laura Koch: “carbon capture” and restoration with respect to climate change is important.
- Will Husby: the wording should be revised to include the word “stewardship”.
- Edna Thomson: respect for the land should be thought about when reworking the Mission/Purposes wording.
- André Chollat: we should take responsibility for ensuring that our principles are respected.
- Bob Turner: do we need a Working Group to focus on this issue?

It was agreed that the Conservancy Board should drive a project to determine updated wording for the Conservancy’s Mission Statement and Purposes, and communicate the recommended changes to the membership.

## 7. National Park on Bowen

Peter Drake opened discussion on this issue by asking that discussion on this topic be limited to ten minutes, and by stating that the Bowen Island Conservancy should speak on the issue of the National Park in terms of the Conservancy’s mandate: that is, members should set aside personal thoughts on the broader social/economic issues, because these are not relevant to the issue of conservation. Stephen Foster interjected that the Conservancy should take on a leadership role with respect to the National Park. Peter responded that this was not at odds with his opening remarks, which imply that, in principle, the Bowen Island Conservancy supports the National Park initiative from the point of view of conservation and protection. At the same time, this does not mean that the Conservancy supports the idea of a “National

Park at all costs”; rather it means a “Bowen-style” solution, and the Bowen Island Conservancy should be at the table to ensure the optimal outcome.

Bill Granger stated that the current National Park vision document, presented to Council, reflects the Conservancy’s principles.

Stephen Foster suggested that, if a National Park is approved, there will be possibly be a set of projects that complement the Conservancy’s activities regarding conservation. Therefore, we should endeavour to obtain suitable grant funding and obtain resources from Parks Canada to assist in our work in this area. This concept was reinforced by Will Husby, who stated that Parks Canada is making a strong move towards partnering with community groups, since they recognize that they are losing mind-share among Canadians, and need to build connections with communities in order to reverse this. Will further stated that Bowen Island has many residents who have close ties to the land, so the Conservancy should ensure that Parks Canada is made aware of these people so that our people resources are matched with their needs. The Conservancy therefore has the opportunity to make major contributions to public education and activities in the National Park context.

Bob Turner stated that the Conservancy Board should go back to the Mission Statement and Purposes, and focus communications about the National Park through them in terms of the need for environmental restoration and protection. The Conservancy should speak directly on the issue of support for the draft Vision that is currently before Council: “Be proactive and lead the discussion”.

The following motion was proposed by Sue Ellen Fast (Allie Drake): The Bowen Island Conservancy should review the draft Parks Canada Vision for the National Park, and provide a formal response to Parks Canada prior to 27 November 2010. Carried.

Andrea Kaufman reiterated that we should focus on conservation in our communication regarding the National Park, and avoid political issues by focusing on the Conservancy’s principles.

Will Husby (Edna Thomson) proposed the following motion: The Board of Directors of the Bowen Island Conservancy will represent the interests of the membership on this issue. Carried.

Will Husby suggested that the response should be made available to the Undercurrent, Bowen Island Ourselves, the Conservancy’s website, and should, in general, be shared with the community.

## **8. Huszar Creek watershed**

Alan Whitehead provided an overview of the watershed, showing its location on a map of southwest Bowen Island. He noted that Fairy Fen is part of this watershed, at which time the members expressed enthusiastic appreciation for Peter Drake's consistent efforts to negotiate governmental waters and accomplish the acquisition of Fairy Fen. Alan noted that work on the Fairy Fen

management plan has been started, and should be completed by June.

Huszar Creek is one of the largest intact watersheds in the Lower Mainland and possesses unique ecological features. The Board is contemplating the launch of a project to achieve conservation of the entire watershed. This could involve:

- Parks Canada, if the National Park concept is approved;
- The Islands Trust Fund;
- Private land ownership, which has to be addressed.

The Board intends to explore various mechanisms to protect the watershed: covenants; easements; outright conservation purchases.

Peter Drake noted that the Conservancy is looking for a team of volunteers to take on this project, if members think it's a worthwhile effort. In particular, people with fund raising and real estate experience would be assets to such a team. Penny Nauldrett mentioned that she would be pleased to assist, and that she has real estate experience.

The members supported the initiative to move ahead with conservation of the Huszar Creek watershed.

## 9. Membership Fees

Peter Drake noted that the current membership fee, which provides for a lifetime membership, does not provide much income to the Conservancy. Changing the membership structure, however, requires advance notice to all Conservancy members, so this item has been raised now purely for information purposes. The membership can expect to hear more on this issue, and it may be raised at next year's Annual General Meeting.

It was pointed out raising membership fees is not a fund raising exercise; that is handled by other means.

## 10. Plans for 2011

Peter Drake listed the initiatives that the Board intends to pursue in the coming year. These include:

- **Fairy Fen:** Once the management plan is completed there will be a need for assistance with trails, boardwalks, signage, fund raising, and restoration of the area.
- **Huszar Creek:** 2011 plans were covered in Agenda item 8.
- **Birdhouses:** expect a repeat of the 2010 project.
- **Conservation covenants:** this project will move to the next stage.
- **Website:** further work to be done.
- **National Park:** Addressed in Agenda item 7.
- **Ongoing maintenance/rehabilitation of existing locations:** for example, Headwaters Park, Quarry Park (Peter expressed his appreciation for the work done by Josephine Riley at this point).
- **Other issues, currently unknown.**

Further discussion ensued.

A question was raised concerning the availability of a map of the existing trails and parks. This is difficult to find. Sue Ellen Fast spoke on this issue, on behalf of the Greenways Committee, which is working to address it. She said that, given the different classifications of trails (for example, open to the general public, open only to area residents, open only to residents in the immediate vicinity) this is a tricky issue. She suggested that interested members call or email her for more information. In response to a question about the locations of the main public trails and parks, Sue Ellen said she will raise this issue at the next meeting of the Greenways Committee.

Owen Plowman said that if there are maps available, he will post them on the Conservancy website. Will Husby agreed to send the relevant maps to Owen.

A question was raised concerning the construction of infrastructure at Quarry Park and Headwaters Park, and so on, should the National Park be approved. Who funds the work? The response was that the most likely outcome would be that Parks Canada will take on the work, working with a local advisory board.

Bob Turner mentioned that it would be important, in order to move the conservation covenant project forward, to ensure that the project and its value are understood by the current interim Municipal CAO, together with the Planning Department, and the Greenways Committee. Everhard van Lidth de Jeude responded that he and Peter Drake have already met with the two Municipal planners and Acting CAO in connection with this issue.

Andrea Kaufman cautioned that trying to drive two fund raising projects in one year, for both Fairy Fen and Huszar Creek, seems like a remarkable task to take on, and added that there is an obvious need to minimize confusion—in the minds of the public—about what’s going on with these two projects.

It was noted that public education should be added to the list of 2010 projects. Andrea Kaufman described the computer simulation game “Quagmire”, which has been donated to the Conservancy, and could be used as an educational tool. Sue Bell, Ellen Coburn, Peter Drake, Will Husby, Andrea Kaufman, and Lyn van Lidth de Jeude agreed to form a working group on education.

## **11. Other business**

Bob Turner asked what collaboration or joint initiatives with other Bowen Island groups was taking place. Peter Drake responded that we will look at this from a Board perspective.

Sue Bell mentioned that she has some experience in fund raising, and will assist where she can in the Conservancy’s efforts in this area.

At 11:49 am the meeting was adjourned. Unfortunately, the scheduled presentation by the “Bog Men” was cancelled since they were unable to travel owing to the weather. Their previous presentation was enjoyable and informative, and it was suggested that they be invited back at a later date as part of an educational initiative.

The door prize (a vine maple) was won by Will Husby and Sue Ellen Fast.

Respectfully submitted,

Bowen Island Conservancy  
Owen Plowman, Secretary