

Association for the Protection of Rural Metchosin (www.aprm.ca)
Winter 2007 NEWSLETTER

Association News

Meeting Schedule: Regular meetings are at 7:00 pm the third Wednesday of the month (except July, August, September, December), at the Metchosin Community House.

Next meeting; Wednesday 21 March: Public Program:
Brief Presentation & Q&A by Metchosin Properties on **Brookside Business Park**.
Main event: **VIDEO OF 1990 BILSTON FLOODS**
(Kym Hill and/or Charles Knighton will answer questions, discuss current status),
Refreshments (public welcome!)
Members' business meeting (members only).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: The Annual General meeting will be on Wednesday, June 20. If you want to nominate someone for the executive, or volunteer yourself, please contact the returning officer, Robert 381-5752

CURRENT ISSUES

Improving the Atmosphere in Council Meetings: If you have ever attended council meetings, then you know that they can be trying and stressful. There is a highly dedicated group of residents (led by four candidates rejected by the voters in 2005) who denounce any suggestions of actions that they feel might endanger their property rights or that smack of environmental activism. They are vocal and their constant negativity and even personal innuendos can be a trial for members of the public and Councillors. The situation is worrisome for local democracy in that good candidates may not be willing to stand for election if they feel they must endure the tone of the criticism.

A few dedicated APRMers attend most meetings, and bring forward recommendations decided by the APRM membership. *But it might be helpful if a few more members of the Metchosin community – YOU!! -- attended from time to time.* (One observer suggested that *occasional* attendance at Council meetings is cheap entertainment!) More public presence might contribute to more civil and respectful discussion and show that many residents want a constructive council.

These observations are not critical of Mayor and Council. Our Mayor has created many more opportunities for the public to speak, and he and other Councillors patiently address many points brought forward.

OCP Review: Has been deferred since the last election. APRM's October and February business meetings passed resolutions recommending Council complete the OCP review and avoid piecemeal changes (such as rezoning for business parks, or major changes in Secondary Housing rules). Letters have been sent. Results are awaited.

Green/Blue Spaces Strategy (G/BSS): Residents had until mid-March to submit their views on material prepared by the G/BSS team. We look forward to hearing the results.

Brookside Business Park: Metchosin Properties (MP) proposes a 36 acre business Park on section 38, beside fish bearing Martin Brook beside Sooke Road. The site is zoned Upland (10-acre lots). This proposal replaces the 2005 proposal for a 15 acre business park which was opposed by the public, and withdrawn by the promoters. This time, MP propose a 26-acre nature park and 11 acres of green borders in hopes these will

compensate for the extensive planned environmental destruction involved in quarrying and levelling moss balds, firs and arbutus (over a period of 1 1/2 to 2 years).

Some questions for MP when they come to APRM on March 21:

- Why does MP oppose the community vision enshrined in our well-supported OCP?
- Why does MP oppose the regional vision of putting commercial, industrial, and transport intensive activities inside the Urban Containment Area?
- What Metchosin businesses want to move to Brookside as claimed by MP?
- If there are such businesses, what prevents them from moving to areas where they are allowed under existing zoning?
- MP claims this project would make Metchosin a "complete community." Does MP also recommend that Metchosin take steps, including rezoning, to get our own law courts, hospitals, theatres, etc., in Metchosin?
- What businesses would NOT welcome? Fast food? Welding? Bank?
- Why is it that most places with larger and more commercial/industrial "tax bases" than Metchosin also tend to have higher residential taxes?
- What are the additional regulatory, monitoring, and enforcement activities (and costs – including fire protection) which Metchosin would need to handle this project?
- What assurance does the track record of Metchosin Properties' owners in following Metchosin's bylaws provide that the Brookside facility would be run responsibly in conformity with regulations?
- If MP wants to develop business parks, why not do so where they are welcome?

*Please come with **your** questions!*

Open Burning: The heavy pall of smoke following the recent storms led the APRM resource group to investigate the issue further. They discovered that particulates from wood smoke are a major health hazard. The February APRM members' meeting rejected a resolution which recommended banning backyard burning of garbage and restricting burning of yard waste to relatively dry times when smoke disperses readily (for example, when Environment Canada's ventilation index is "good") when some proposed more draconian measures (outright ban on all burning, mandating municipal chipping, increasing regulation of wood stoves, etc.). Derek is undertaking more research and he would like ideas from the membership (478-2677).

Disposal of Municipal Ditch Material: Disposal of waste from cleaning roadside ditches is increasingly problematic, as Hartland landfill has dramatically increased its dumping charges. Metchosin Council thought they had a good solution when a large landowner agreed to deposit on its land. This agreement was withdrawn following vociferous opposition by ex-Mayor Watson (who failed to suggest any alternative). MEASC has provided Council with a survey of how this issue is handled in each of the other municipalities. (Collection of Victoria's waste is contracted to a firm, which then barges it to Seattle!) Council continues to struggle with this issue.

Tree Cutting: MEASC prepared a very useful analysis of bylaws elsewhere in CRD. The Planning and Environment Committee on March 12 asked staff to draft an amendment to the Tree Management Bylaw protecting Garry Oak Manzanita, some Arbutus, Pacific Dogwood, Pacific Yew and Cascara.

Amalgamation of East Sooke and Related Issues: The Province has made money available for a restructure study for E. Sooke and Malahat, but details not yet available.

Soil Disposal and Removal: Effluent from toxic waste in Becher Bay is causing our Council to pay more attention to this issue. APRM continues to ask for follow up on Metchosin soil deposits – including monitoring effects of past deposits. No outcomes yet.

Centre Mountain: A new proposal was expected in November, 2006, following an extensive period of public consultations and open houses. Delay may be on account of extensive opposition to the major density increases being proposed.

Malahat Transport Options and Regional Transport Issues: APRM recommended that Metchosin respond to the provincial request for input, and to support the options which emphasised public transport and various minor engineering works as contrasted with creating a new route through the Highlands and Langford and/or bridges across Finlayson Arm. Only two Councillors agreed: the majority, including the Mayor, took the position that this issue doesn't directly affect Metchosin. We understand the Provincial Government gives low priority to major transport expenditures on the island at present. We must nevertheless remain aware of possible actions, as this can have major impacts on "carrying capacity" and quality of life in our region.

Pesticides Bylaw: APRM recommended adoption of the CRD model bylaw, which would ban pesticide use for cosmetic purposes and promote education campaigns for responsible pesticide use. Amazingly, Council rejected the cosmetic ban, approved education, and suggested exploration of means to regulate agricultural use (which was not included in the CRD bylaw).

Budget & Taxes: Council will shortly present the draft 2007 budget and 2007-2011 Finance Plan. Metchosin's population was still below 5,000 in the 2006 Census, so policing costs will be more modest than otherwise (though not zero as in the past).

Missing Issues? Please answer the form overleaf.

Other Events and Activities:

Mapping Metchosin's Special Places: The next session of the Metchosin mapping project will be at 7:00 pm, Wednesday 28 March at the Community House. The main emphasis this time is identifying Metchosin orchards – current and historic. Later sessions will cover soundscapes and spring birds and flowers! For further information, please contact Shelby at the Community House 478-5155, or Derek at 478-2677

RESOURCE GROUP—Opportunity Still Knocks! *If you would like to help APRM tackle issues, join the Resource Group. Our next meeting will be in April – time to be determined. For details, please call Frank, at 478-1671 or email fhm@shaw.ca.*

APRMers and Community Works The APRM work team, initially mobilised by Moralea, and now including many enthusiastic and cheerful volunteers, continues to tend the plantings by Metchosin Corner store and under the Municipal sign on the municipal grounds. (If you would like to join them, please call Moralea at 478-3838)

Membership renewals: APRM membership remains important!! Your membership provides moral support for those who research issues and make presentations, and financial support for mailouts and activities (such as public meetings). If you haven't renewed this year, please consider it (form overleaf). **A secret:** if your renewal form is dated on or after APRIL 1, you will be good standing till 30 June, **2008!!** (What a deal!!)

All Best,

Derek Wulff, President (478-2677)

General Information: Please contact Vice President **Gaert Linnaea** at 381-5752 or linnaea1@telus.net. Also, see www.aprm.ca for copies of letters, announcements, etc..

QUESTIONNAIRE ON APRM PRIORITIES

As guidance for the Executive, Please indicate your views on the importance of the following issues, and on whether you feel APRM should take major initiatives on them. This form can be delivered like (even better, with!) the Membership Renewal Form.

Please indicate your views on issues on a scale of 1 (not important) to 5 (very important) and your view on whether APRM should make them a major focus by circling YES or NO.

| Issue | Importance | Should Be An APRM Focus |
|------------------------------|------------|-------------------------|
| OCP Review | 1-2-3-4-5 | YES – NO |
| Tree Cutting & Protection | 1-2-3-4-5 | YES – NO |
| Soil Deposit/Removal | 1-2-3-4-5 | YES – NO |
| Secondary Housing | 1-2-3-4-5 | YES – NO |
| Regional Transport | 1-2-3-4-5 | YES – NO |
| Protection of ALR | 1-2-3-4-5 | YES – NO |
| Business Parks | 1-2-3-4-5 | YES – NO |
| Open Burning | 1-2-3-4-5 | YES – NO |
| Better Greenspace Protection | 1-2-3-4-5 | YES – NO |
| Other (please specify):..... | | |
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APRM MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

(All memberships are annual and run to June 30)

Name (Names, if Family Membership): _____

Address: _____ PCode: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Type of Membership: (√): Individual-\$5.00 Family-\$8.00 Sustaining-\$20.00

Donation: \$ _____ Total Remitted: \$ _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Please place this form and your cash, cheque or money order payable to APRM in an envelope and return it to: Association for the Protection of Rural Metchosin, #1 – 4401 William Head Road, RR#1, Victoria, B.C. V9C 3Y6 OR leave your envelope at Metchosin Corner Store (APRM box).

Please quote the number 19391 when buying gas or groceries at the Co-op or Save-on Gas and you will contribute to the APRM while shopping!