

Association for the Protection of Rural Metchosin (www.aprm.ca)  
**Spring 2010 NEWSLETTER**

Dear Fellow APRMer,

**How can the Capital Region become an even better place to live?**

Please mark your calendar for **7:00 pm Wednesday 21 April**. APRM is sponsoring a public discussion at **Metchosin Community House** with CRD planning staff responsible for drafting updates to the CRD **Regional Growth Strategy (RGS)** and transforming it to a Regional Sustainability Strategy.

The initial RGS reflected two major concerns raised by Metchosinites -- regional urban containment, and affordable housing. What improvements are needed? And what do we recommend on transit, use of the (former) western resource lands, meeting climate change GHG targets, better cross/border consultation on plans, etc.? Can Metchosin beat our performance during the original RGS process when the Metchosin community meeting (also sponsored by APRM) had a larger turnout than any other CRD community meeting? Please plan to come. Bring the neighbours! More background at <http://www.crd.bc.ca/regionalplanning/>

**Annual General Meeting (June 16):**  
Stay posted, Program tba.

**Detached Second Dwellings:** Five members of the "Detached Secondary Suites Committee" (DSSC) resigned in mid-February. The DSSC had been charged with attempting to reach a consensus on detached second dwellings. On March 28, Council met the remaining members who suggested the DSSC continue to meet, not to make any specific recommendation, but instead to prepare a report which clarified options for Council. At its April 12 meeting, Council

will decide whether to continue the DSSC.

The APRM position is clear. We support the Community Plan (OCP) which permits attached second dwellings (within the primary dwelling footprint). We oppose changing the OCP to allow detached second dwellings. They offer no benefits to the *community* over those provided by attached suites – and have several environmental disadvantages. Following the March APRM meeting, I wrote to council recommending that it:

1. enforce the existing rules against detached second dwellings,
2. adopt measures to meet compassionate needs of tenants,
3. recover enforcement costs from owners of detached dwellings rather than the public at large, and
4. begin implementation before the end of 2010.

(Details on APRM's proposals can be found under "issues" at [aprm.ca](http://www.aprm.ca).)

Many Metchosin residents are disturbed at the numerous "workshops" and "studios" capable of residential conversion, to say nothing of the number already illegally occupied. Fairness to all demands Council act quickly on this hot button issue. Let your voice be heard by writing to Council<sup>1</sup> and making your views known in person at its April 12 meeting.

**Property Assessment:** The APRM has recommended Council ask BC Assessment to undertake a

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<sup>1</sup> [mayorandcouncil@metchosin.ca](mailto:mayorandcouncil@metchosin.ca), or leave letters at the drop box at municipal hall or post to 4450 HappyValley Road, Victoria V9C3Z3.

comprehensive reassessment (the last was in the 1980's). This would help get a handle on the number of detached dwellings as well as tax fairness issues related to assessments.

**Village Centre Plan:** The final bylaw reflected the APRM recommendation to reduce the area within the Village Centre along Happy Valley Road. Unfortunately, it also extended the Village Centre to two more properties on Metchosin/William Head Road. Win some, lose some.

**By-Law Enforcement:** By-law enforcement in general (not just against detached second dwellings) is lax, partly due to loopholes in some bylaws, partly because of "soft" enforcement. We believe the District should review its bylaws to ensure they reflect residents' expectations of standards to be upheld (e.g. soil deposit, tree cutting, noise and nuisance, etc.).

There is room for the District to tighten up enforcement of items which most concern residents. APRM's research finds that the enforcement policies and practices of

other municipalities cover a range. Cities tend to delegate enforcement to specialist staff with minimal involvement by elected officials. Small communities tend to rely more on elected officials and non-specialised staff. We believe Metchosin can remain "rural" and still have more consistent, professional and transparent enforcement.

**Metchosin Budget: 2010:** Metchosin's proposed budget for 2010 was the subject of an Open House March 22. Some highlights: a 2.6% increase in property taxes and a shortfall of \$54,019. This equals the 2009 enforcement deficit (when municipality spent \$54,278 on enforcement, and received only \$620 in fines). Does Metchosin have the opportunity for a "two-fer" – improved bylaw enforcement and recovery of more enforcement costs through fees and fines?

#### **East Sooke-Metchosin**

**Amalgamation:** The Phase 2 study was postponed on grounds that it should reflect the outcome of First Nations Treaty discussions (no timetable available).

Hope to see you at the 21 April RGS/APRM meeting.

Derek Wulff, President<sup>2</sup>

PS. 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!*

PPS. Memberships renewed now will be good to June 30, **2011.** (Form attached)

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<sup>2</sup> derekwulff@shaw.ca 478-2677; Other Executive Members: Margaret Frisby --370-1950; Jim MacPherson-- 474-9793; Ken Farquharson – 478-1197; Sally Garcelon – 478-6480; Frank Mitchell – 478-1671

**The Association for the Protection of Rural Metchosin (APRM)** is a registered non-profit society established in 1993 dedicated to preserving the quality of rural life and peaceful co-existence of homes, farmlands, diverse livelihoods, forests, natural habitats and trails in our community. Our membership includes both resident and non-resident friends of rural Metchosin.

According to our **Constitution, the Association shall:**

- recognise Metchosin as a fragile environment that must be nurtured, protected and preserved for future generations.
- recognise that support of the public and elected representatives is essential for the protection of rural Metchosin.
- foster open communication with elected representatives, other rural groups and the public.
- encourage awareness of the consequences of growth and work to maintain low population densities in our rural community.
- recognise the uniqueness of Metchosin as a residential community and recreational greenspace and work to ensure only limited development occurs on non-agricultural rural and uplands lands.
- recognise the Agricultural Land Reserve as the core of our rural community, and support and initiate policies that preserve ALR land.

*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!*

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### **APRM MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM**

(All memberships are annual and run to June 30)

**N**ame (Names, if Family Membership): \_\_\_\_\_

**A**ddress: \_\_\_\_\_ **P**ostal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**P**hone: \_\_\_\_\_ **E**mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership: (√):  Individual-\$5.00  Family-\$10.00  Sustaining-\$20.00

**D**onation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **T**otal Remitted: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**D**eclaration: I declare that I support the objectives set out in the APRM Constitution.

**S**ignature: \_\_\_\_\_ **D**ate: \_\_\_\_\_

**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).