

**The Friends of Mt. Douglas Park
Society**

Annual General Meeting

7:15pm, December 4, 1991

at

**Camosun College
Young Auditorium (Y-216)
Lansdowne Campus**

Agenda

CRD Regional Transportation Plan

Guest Speakers

Mayor Murray Coell
CRD Transportation Committee Chairman

Gerard Farry
Project Manager,
CRD Regional Transportation Strategy

Reports

Election of Society Directors
(Note call for nominations in this newsletter)

The Friends of Mt. Douglas Park Society

Fall 1991 Newsletter

Contents

1	AGM Format	3
2	Trust and Subdivision Update	3
3	Transmitter Site Update	4
4	Park Trails Update	5
5	Candidates Meeting Report	5
6	Cordova Bay Road Update	6
7	Douglas Creek	6
8	Portland MAX Report	6
9	Call for Nominations	7
10	Membership	7

1 AGM Format

The pressure of external events, in particular the recent election and now the CRD Regional Transportation Plan, have given us full meeting agendas for this year. We are therefore amalgamating our AGM with a meeting addressing these important issues. The business portion of the meeting begins promptly at 7:15 with reports and the election of Society directors (A call for nominations is included in this newsletter; there will be no nominations at the meeting itself.) We hope to introduce the guest speakers at 7:45. Neighboring community groups have also been invited to participate in this meeting and each group will have an opportunity to ask questions of the speakers.

2 Trust and Subdivision Update

In some ways a considerable amount has occurred concerning the transfer of the Trust, and yet nothing has really been settled yet. Here is a summary of the various positions taken by those involved in this transaction.

Ombudsman Some time ago our Society filed a complaint with the Provincial Ombudsman's Office about the process used by the Ministry of Crown Lands to transfer the Park trust from Victoria to Saanich, and in particular the lack of public consultation during this process. We are pleased to report that the Ombudsman upheld our complaint. In their letter of September 23, 1991 to our Society, the Ombudsman's office wrote:

"In the final analysis, it would seem that the procedure followed here for the conveyance of the park is not a model for the future where decisions of major public impact or interest are concerned.

This office stands by its observation that early and extensive public consultation would have avoided conflict and provided the best foundation for long-term decision making."

Saanich Council The present Saanich Council has indicated their concern about the park trust and their dissatisfaction with

the subdivisions and, like our Society, would prefer a better solution for the protection of the park.

Local MLA's During the recent election campaign, the successful candidates from the ridings that adjoin Mt. Douglas Park both indicated they too preferred a better solution for the protection of the park. At our last meeting, they suggested that caveats and leases be used to accommodate the transmitter site and the roads instead of subdivisions.

Crown Lands Recent information from the Ministry of Crown Lands (91.10.21) indicates that they intend to continue as before and transfer the park minus the subdivided lands by means of a standard Crown Grant without any covenants protecting the original park from future changes. They do not seem to have any concern about the fate of the subdivided properties. Unlike previous Provincial administrations, they seem to prefer to rid themselves of any responsibility for the park.

In summary, the park has yet to be transferred to Saanich, and all of the interested parties seem to be in agreement about seeking a better solution both to the transfer process and to the future management of the park. **There does not now appear to be anything preventing them from doing so!**

3 Transmitter Site Update

After many trips to the top of Mt. Douglas with Saanich officials, there is now agreement to construct the new building under the summit parking lot with an extension to the south. The exposed southern section will not be visible from the lot, and the roof will serve as a small sitting and observation area. A new tower will be located on the eastern summit, just above the parking lot. The present transmitter site and old tower will be removed and the area restored to its natural state. The power line will be buried from the point it first reaches the summit area, and the three existing power poles on the summit will also be removed. Given the fact that we lost the vote in Council to prevent the construction of an expanded facility, we feel this solution is by far the best remaining alternative. We appreciate those within the municipality who offered significant help in achieving this solution.

November 1991

4 Park Trails Update

If you recall, Saanich Parks and Recreation presented a trails proposal for Mt. Douglas Park at our meeting early this year. From the discussions that have taken place since that time, there are areas of agreement and areas of disagreement.

Our Society and Saanich Parks and Recreation are in agreement concerning the following:

- The trails are in extremely poor condition and require improvement and maintenance.
- Mountains bikes and bicycles are causing severe damage to the trail system and should be immediately restricted, with signs, to the existing fire roads.
- The entire trail system should be identified with signs.
- Maps of the trail system and all other trails identification should be erected at appropriate locations.

Saanich Parks and Recreation propose the following with which we disagree:

- Trails widths and surfaces.
 - **3.0 meters wide** for all trails accommodating pedestrians, equestrians, and cyclists. **Crushed gravel surface** the entire length.
 - **2.0 meters wide** for trails accommodating pedestrians and equestrians. **Hog fuel surface** the entire length.
 - **1.5 meters wide** for pedestrian trails, **surfaced with hog fuel** the entire length.

We suspect that Saanich Parks and our Society have fundamentally different views about what constitutes a natural park and what the future role of Mt. Douglas Park within our community should be.

5 Candidates Meeting Report

The attendance at our last meeting filled the Claremont High School Lunchroom. Prospective candidates in the recent election presented their views and responded to questions. Many thanks to

those of you who spent the time to formulate and ask the many excellent questions. It was a very worthwhile evening.

6 Cordova Bay Road Update

Almost one year ago, Saanich Engineering presented a proposal to relocate Cordova Bay Road, moving it behind the motel. We feel this proposal was developed in isolation and neither takes a regional plan into account nor considers the park itself. Environmentally, it would seriously jeopardize the northern sector of the park. In addition, the proposal includes the dumping of rip rap on the beach which will not only disfigure the park beaches, but it will also cut off the supply of sand to the main Cordova Bay Beaches.

Our position is that this road should not be dealt with in isolation, but should be part of the CRD Regional Transportation Plan. We feel the CRD plan will identify alternative routes and modes of transportation which will eliminate the necessity for this proposal.

7 Douglas Creek

Does anybody know the official name for the creek that flows through the park between and parallel to Edgemont Road and Cedar Hill Road? We think it is Douglas Creek, but the name Ash Creek has also been suggested. (If you have any information, call our Society historian, Pam Lewis, at 658-5039.) Those of you who have walked along its banks know it is a real asset to the park, but it needs to be cleaned up and its water protected from pollution. Anybody interested in this project?

8 Portland MAX Report

One of our Society directors, Claude Maurice, was part of the delegation which recently visited Portland to look at their light rail transportation (LRT) system. His report:

As a member of the CRD Environment Roundtable, I recently had the privilege of joining a Greater Victoria Electric Railway Society delegation looking at Portland's MAX; Metropolitan Area Express, A 21st century articulated "street car."

What impressed me? That it is smooth, quiet and clean. That it is comparatively low-tech, and that it seems to fit physically into its community more gently than, say, Calgary's or Vancouver's Rapid Transit Sky Train.

Such a development in Victoria could be the first step towards a LRT system for the Capital Regional District utilizing the many rights-of-way which already exist.

What concerned me? Land use planning should precede the establishment of transit routes; in Portland this has only partially occurred.

The Portland MAX people say that we could do even better. They suggest we start now, plan more boldly and implement gently.

9 Call for Nominations

There are five director positions to fill. Pam Lewis is chairing the nomination committee. If you would like to nominate somebody, please contact her at 658-5039. Nominations close December 1, 1991. Elections will be held at our AGM on December 4.

10 Membership

Memberships are on a calendar year basis and most expire in December. The expiry date of your membership is printed on your address label. We hope you will support The Friends for another year; you may send the membership fee using the form below, or drop by the membership desk at the AGM. If there is no date, or a 'C' on your address label instead of the usual membership expiry date, you have received a complimentary newsletter. We hope you also will be interested to join The Friends of Mt. Douglas Park Society.

Membership for 1992: Send \$5.00 and this form to
The Friends of Mt. Douglas Park Society
 4635 Cordova Bay Road, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3V6 (658-2200)

Name:

Street:

Postal Code Phone

November 1991