

This document can be made available in other accessible formats as soon as practicable and upon request.

STAFF REPORT: ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC WORKS



REPORT TO: Infrastructure & Recreation
 Committee
MEETING DATE: July 10th 2012
REPORT NO.: BRWAC.12.001
SUBJECT: Beaver River Watershed
 Advisory Committee Update
PREPARED BY: Adam McMullin, Environmental
 Initiatives Coordinator

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report BRWAC.12.001 entitled 'Beaver River Watershed Advisory Committee Update', and;

THAT Council approve changing the Committee's name to 'Town of The Blue Mountains' Watershed Advisory Committee"

B. Background

In March 2011, a number of engaged and interested citizens expressed interest in the Beaver River Watershed and requested that Council establish an advisory committee to provide input, advice and recommendations to Staff and Council. With the recommendation of Staff, The Beaver River Watershed Advisory Committee (BRWAC) was established and endorsed by Council in May 2011. The following members were appointed to the committee:

- John Ardiel
- Sean Brady
- Brian Goodings
- Mike Hammond
- Jay Kivell
- Alex Maxwell
- Brian McAteer
- Pat Mc Girr
- Norman Ragetlie
- Bill Remus

The Committee voted Brian Goodings and Brian McAteer as co-chairs. The terms of reference outlined the scope of activities for the Committee, as follows:

- Providing advice, comments and recommendations on issues and concerns relating to the Beaver River Watershed.
- Reviewing and commenting on proposed Official Plan Policy and any Zoning By-law Amendments that affect the Watershed.
- Identifying key issues of concern for the Watershed which can be addressed by municipal government.
- Providing advice, comments and recommendations on economic strategies, development plans or studies dealing with the Watershed and a wide range of other issues.
- Advising Town staff of changes and key issues regarding the Watershed.

- Identifying and recommending programs which encourage public awareness, land stewardship and education of the Watershed.

Committee Vision Statement

The Committee meets monthly and has been working to establish priorities moving forward. As part of this process the committee established the following vision and supporting statements:

“Highest watershed quality as possible” supported by the following statement, “Enhance maintain and monitor water quality” ensuring that water is as cold as possible and to stop where possible degradation of the watercourse.

Committee Priorities 2012

The Committee has identified community engagement and enhancing awareness of watershed issues as one of the key priorities in 2012. To this end, the Committee circulated an information request letter to a variety of agencies, organizations, volunteer groups, requesting information on the threats facing the local watersheds. The Committee felt the letters will establish relationships among the local agencies, raise the profile of the BRWAC and enhance knowledge of the local watersheds.

The letter was circulated to the following agencies:

Local Governments

- Grey Highlands
- Collingwood
- Meaford
- Source Water Protection
- Saugeen First Nation
- Agricultural Advisory Committee

Conservation / Recreational / Environmental Groups

- Georgian Triangle Anglers Association
- Trouts Unlimited Canada
- Blue Mountain Watershed Trust
- Ladies of the lake
- Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy
- Bruce Trail Conservancy
- Blue Ridge Sportsman Club
- Georgian Bay Forever
- Environmental Defence
- Ducks Unlimited Canada

Government Agencies

- Department of Fisheries and Oceans
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- Ministry of the Environment
- Grey Sauble Conservation Authority
- Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority
- Grey County Federation of Agriculture
- OMAFRA
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- Ministry of the Environment
- Niagara Escarpment Commission
- Grey County Soil and Crop Improvement Association

The Committee receive responses from seven agencies/individuals.

The Committee intends to leverage the newly established relationships to host a public discussion forum, focused on the current and future threats facing local watersheds and some of the activities and conservation work currently ongoing. The Committee plans to invite speakers to attend a discussion forum tentatively located at the Marsh Street Centre. This discussion forum will be open to the public and will act to engage the community and improve an understanding of the local watershed.

After reviewing the responses from the information request letter, the Committee concluded that its focus should not be limited to one particular stream or river but must focus holistically on all of the watersheds within The Blue Mountains. Therefore, the Committee is requesting to changes its name to 'The Blue Mountain's Watershed Advisory Committee'.

Moving forward the Committee intends to provide comment on the Official Plan Five Year Review and work with other community partners to investigate establishing a speaker series for 2013.

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

The BRWAC mandate furthers a number of goals and strategic actions including the following:

- Involve the community business sector, developers, public partners, and others in the ongoing work of the Municipality
- Supporting the development of social and recreational programs that meet the broad range of needs in the community.
- Preserving and enhancing natural and environmental features and cultural heritage of the community.
- Implement policies in the Official Plan related to shoreline areas, preservation of the rural area and Natural Heritage Systems

D. Environmental Impacts

The scope of the committee activities as included in the BRWAC terms of reference promotes preservation, conservation and land stewardship within the watersheds of The Blue Mountains.

E. Financial Impact

None.

F. In Consultation With

Beaver River Watershed Advisory Committee

G. Attached

1. Informational Request Letter

Respectfully submitted,

Adam McMullin
Adam McMullin
Environmental Initiatives Coordinator
Works

Reg Russwurm
Reg Russwurm
Director of Engineering & Public
Works

For more information, please contact:
Adam McMullin
amcmullin@thebluemountains.ca
(519) 599-3131 x264



Town of The Blue Mountains
P.O. Box 310, 32 Mill Street
Thornbury, ON N0H 2P0

BRWAC.12.001
Attachment # 1

Tel: (519) 599-3131 / Fax (519) 599-7723
Email: amcmullin@thebluemountains.ca
Website: www.thebluemountains.ca

November 25th, 2011

To Whom It May Concern,

The Beaver River Watershed Advisory Committee is a recently formed community group, appointed by The Blue Mountains Council and is focused on enhancing local water quality. We are approaching local institutions and agencies to gain insight into the current health of The Beaver River and surrounding watersheds. Our goal is to better understand the threats and concerns facing the watershed(s) and identify and / or propose positive action to help protect and preserve these systems.

We are requesting that your organization provide a short background paper outlining current and future threats and issues facing watersheds in the Town of The Blue Mountains, with specific focus on the following rivers and their associated tributaries:

- Beaver River
- Indian Brook
- Little Beaver River
- Silver Creek
- Black Ash Creek
- Pretty River

We are concerned with issues surrounding water quality and quantity, bio-diversity, riparian habitat and invasive species. Please note any restoration, monitoring and educational activities that your organization is undertaking directly related to the Watershed(s). The committee may request to meet and discuss these issues. Any further description of the related database(s) you may have that might eventually be shared or which might be suitable for use in a Town geographic information system would be greatly appreciated.

We appreciate any assistance that you can offer. A response by January 15th, 2011 would be appreciated. If you have any questions feel free to contact Adam McMullin, the committee coordinator, by phone 519-599-3131 x.264 or email amcmullin@thebluemountains.ca.

Sincerely,

Brian Goodings & Brian McAteer
Co-Chairs, Beaver River Watershed Advisory Committee

The Blue Mountains will be a progressive four season community, building on its agricultural and recreational features, offering a healthy and supportive lifestyle to a diverse range of residents, businesses and visitors.