

STAFF REPORT:

REPORT TO: Council
MEETING DATE: July 13, 2009
REPORT NO.: SPS.09.04
SUBJECT: Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative
PREPARED BY: Peter Tollefsen, Director of Special Projects (Sustainability)

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report SPS.09.04 dated July 13, 2009 entitled "Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative" for information purposes and;

WHEREAS Council recognizes the need to protect, conserve and restore the Southern Georgian Bay Coast;

NOW THEREFORE Council supports developing an integrated shoreline management plan that would be a tool to enable municipalities to jointly protect our waterfronts;

AND this management plan, which shall be known as the "Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative", will:

- Harmonize human activity with the Southern Georgian Bay ecosystem to clearly demonstrate stewardship and the utmost regard for this region's special environment and quality of life.
- Provide an opportunity to involve communities, agencies, First Nations, and interest groups in the process of shoreline management using a consistent approach to establish regulations for development, building awareness, education and communication.
- Promote an understanding of the coastal environment (e.g. shoreline processes, such as sediment transport and erosion, impact of dredging and alterations, natural environment and ecological importance, water level cycles, environmental, social, economic factors related to land use and water use), and the effects that human activities have on shoreline habitat and water quality.
- Develop a consensus document that provides short and long term direction to resource managers and land use planners by identifying a mission, vision, issues/problems, threats, goals, objectives, strategies, and an implementation plan.

B. Background

A number of municipal, government agency and conservation authority representatives met April 16, 2009 in Wasaga Beach with a common concern regarding the health of the southern Georgian Bay shoreline. Discussed issues such as dredging, vegetation removal, water quality, invasive species and habitat destruction with government approvals that lack coordination and enforcement.

An integrated shoreline management plan would be a tool to enable municipalities to jointly protect their waterfronts.

A second meeting was held June 30, 2009 in The Blue Mountains, a copy of the Minutes are attached. There was discussion on what an integrated coastal management plan might look like, the geographic scope, content, who should be involved and possible funding sources. Interim leads have been suggested as Mayors Ellen Anderson and Cal Patterson. Work took place on a terms of reference for the management plan. The next meeting has been set for September 29, 2009.

The group has defined itself as an interest group with the intent of recruiting additional members. As such a letter has been prepared from the two co-chairs to organizations and municipalities in the study area asking for support and attendance at the next meeting. We attach a copy of this letter for Council's information.

Staff support this initiative and would suggest Council adopt the resolution proposed in the letter from the two co-chairs being circulated to area municipalities. Councillor Michael Martin has attended the last meeting of this Coastal Initiative and may have additional comments.

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

Participating in the Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative is aligned with the goal of – *Preserving and enhancing natural and environmental features, and cultural heritage of the community.*

D. Environmental Impacts

An effective integrated shoreline management plan will improve the environment.

E. Budget Impact

The Blue Mountains' increased role in promoting and protecting Georgian Bay is a critical part of our commitment to sustainable planning. An increasing amount of Staff time will be needed to drive several Great Lakes initiatives. Staff is determined to support these Initiatives and are investigating new sources to help fund this work.

F. Attached

- Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative meeting minutes of June 30, 2009.
- Letter from Mayors Ellen Anderson and Cal Patterson to area municipalities requesting support with a suggested resolution.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Tollefsen
Director of Special Projects (Sustainability)

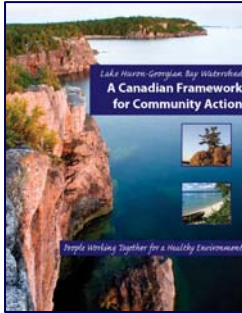
For more information, please contact:
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Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative

Thornbury Fire Hall, 496916 Grey Road 2

Tuesday June 30th, 2009

MINUTES



Attendees:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. Janette Anderson | Environment Canada |
| 2. Greg Mayne | Environment Canada |
| 3. David Reid | Ministry of Natural Resources |
| 4. Stewart Sweeney | Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs |
| 5. Brent Valere | Department of Fisheries and Oceans |
| 6. Ellen Anderson | Mayor of the Town of the Blue Mountains |
| 7. Randy French | Lake Huron Framework for Community Action Facilitator |
| 8. Arunas Liskauskas | Ministry of Natural Resources |
| 9. Pete Tollefsen | Town of the Blue Mountains |
| 10. Michael Martin | Town of the Blue Mountains |

Regrets

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Fred Dobbs | Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority |
| Ted Briggs | Ministry of the Environment |

~ Confirming Next Steps ~

Introductions and Purpose of the Meeting

Review the purpose of the meeting and provide focus for our discussions. Review agenda and build in ideas and comments.

- Janette Anderson welcomed everyone and reiterated that there is a clear interest in developing the 'Initiative'. The Initiative is still a concept or idea at this stage; nonetheless, mayors and councillors have given their support in principle at the Wasaga Beach meeting.
- Janette explained activities in Lake Huron e.g., Community Framework for Action.
- We defined ourselves as an interest group with the intent of recruiting additional members to pursue important activities for this Initiative. Everyone recognized this Initiative as an opportunity to protect, conserve and restore the southern Georgian Bay coast.
- Mayor Anderson reviewed the outcome of the last meeting. Brent Valere's message of conservation was emphasized.
- There is no funding as of yet as we first need to understand what we need to do before we request funding.

Scoping Session 1 – What is the SGB Coastal Management Plan

*Discuss what an Integrated Coastal Management Plan might look like:
What does it do?*

General Consensus:

It harmonizes human activity with the Southern Georgian Bay ecosystem to clearly demonstrate stewardship and the utmost regard for this region's special environment and quality of life.

It provides an opportunity to involve communities, First Nations, agencies, and interest groups in the process of shoreline management.

It promotes an understanding of the coastal environment (e.g., shoreline processes, such as sediment transport and erosion, impact of dredging and alterations, natural environment and ecological importance, water level cycles, environmental, social,

economic factors related to land use and water use), the effects that human activities have on shoreline habitat and water quality.

It is a consensus document that provides short and long term direction to resource managers and land use planners by identifying a mission, vision, issues/problems, threats, goals, objectives, strategies, and an implementation plan.

Other Points

- Mayor Anderson: Brings communities together who are concerned about the waterfront and the effects of dredging and habitat degradation.
- Dave: A consistent approach to establish regulations for development, building awareness, education, communication
- Pete: an opportunity to address current problems such as dredging, vegetation removal, water quality, invasive species, habitat destruction (both aquatic and nearshore).
- Greg: Provides short and long term direction to resource managers and land use planners. Provides an opportunity to involve public in process of shoreline management. It promotes an understanding of the coastal environment (physical and biological processes) and its link with the watershed. It identifies issues/problems, threats, strategies, implementation plan, (e.g., shoreline processes, such as sediment transport and erosion, impact of dredging and alterations, natural environment and ecological importance, water level cycles, environmental, social, economic factors related to land use and water use).
- Consensus document involving appropriate partners to act on issues via actions, recommendations & strategies
- Michael: We have sufficient regulations; however, we need integration of all regulators across multiple agencies.
- Brent: It illustrates the benefit of doing all work up front and obtaining regulatory consensus so that there is no need to wait for separate regulatory bodies to approve projects.
- Integrates the interests of First Nations
- Need to change sense of entitlement of shoreline, creating a new norm and a new paradigm.

What is the geographic scope?

General Consensus:

Based on feedback from last meeting, it encompasses the area between Tobermory and Penetanguishene. Mayor Anderson restated interest and support from various municipal councillors from the Tobermory area. The membership and energy is due in part to Great Lakes St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and there is political will. We need to start at the shoreline, but the initiative will integrate watershed with shoreline to garner interest from multiple agencies and interest groups. It will be an iterative process.

Offshore is of less importance.

Additional Thoughts:

- Stewart: Tobermory to Severn Sound. Build on Severn Sound work
- Janette: Has had conversations with Keith Sherman (Severn Sound Environmental Association) who wishes to be involved in the larger process so as to involve Severn Sound. It may then stop at the boundary for the Eastern Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve (just north of Severn Sound). Parks Canada in Tobermory have expressed interest.
- All: We do not want to make it too large and difficult. Need to establish criteria.
- Greg: Need criteria based on political will, social, ecological and function processes as well as active partners. Need to define littoral cells to capture natural physical processes (erosion and depositional zones of interest
- Arunas: Consider using approach like Lake Huron Biodiversity Conservation Strategy e.g., look at eco-reaches.

- Stewart – At this early stage, we need to look at four counties, two CAs, component municipalities. OMAFRA vested in quality of life within the watershed and farmers stake. Incorporate the two CAs using watershed divide.
- Brent and Dave: Consider the shoreline but use a phased approach as shoreline alteration is the most pressing issue.
- Janette: Also consider watershed threats and impacts to the lake. That way we can address E.Coli and Phosphorus and gain the support from multiple agencies and interest groups.
- Dave: Sees this Initiative as a step wise approach and we should address shoreline first. Shoreline impacts and activities are most visible to everyone who lives on the coast.
- Mayor Anderson: Cautioned that we need to take a simple approach so people can understand the impacts of dredging, digging, blasting and other problems. As soon as we go inland, we start to address land use planning issues.
- Mayor Anderson recommends involving National Defence. (Post Meeting Note: Mayor Anderson has contacted Land Force Central Area Training Centre and has spoken with Lieutenant - Colonel Darryl A. Mills and he has agreed to send their Environmental Officer to participate.)

What is the content scope?

- Vision, Mission, Purpose
- Geographic Scope
- Problem Definition: type and extent of shoreline alteration, biological and physical compatibility, loss of habitat, ineffective use of planning controls by municipalities, water level fluctuation, social views, awareness/education,) and impacts
- Broad Goals, Specific Objectives, Recommended Strategies
- Public Participation
- Existing and Harmonized Policies, Mapping Products
- Baseline information against which we measure success
- Existing policies, gaps and opportunities to harmonize regulations and enforcement
- Broad and specific goals/objectives,
- Mapping layers: consolidate existing information on wetlands, known spawning sites, nursery and migration routes, slope, substrate, type and extent of shoreline alterations etc

Who will be involved?

- Local stakeholder representatives, governments, First Nations (Beausoleil, Saugeen Ojibway (Nawash & Saugeen)), Department of National Defence, DFO, OMAFRA, Parks Canada, EC, MNR, MOE, CAs., Provincial Parks, Municipalities. ENGOS (fish and game clubs, land trusts), cottage association, Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve

Stewart: We should celebrate existence of entities like Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve. This will feed some of the inland initiatives and enables synergy.

How do we implement it?

- Via existing regulations, communications (awareness/education), active participation.
- Federal/provincial regulations already in place
- From a municipal regulatory aspect, there are inconsistencies.
- All CAs have similar regs via fill regulations.
- Need to create public awareness of regulations
- Need integration of policies, regulations (see Cornwall Sediment Strategy)
- By ensuring every municipality has the necessary capacity in the sense of training, regulatory staff etc
- By developing an implementation plan

Possible funding sources.

- Need money for plan development (initial seed money) and actions to implement
- Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure funding from MNR

- COA funding
- Great Lakes Action Plan- Federal Eco—Action; Environmental Damage Fund
- Provincial governments (MOE, OMAFRA, MNR)
- In-kind from staff involvement
- CAs – money and in-kind
- Municipalities – money and in-kind
- Community fish and wildlife involvement program
- Trillium Foundation
- Corporate donations

11:30 Scoping Session 2 – How do we do it?

See results chain established through LHBCS. Janette provided broad overview.

Discuss the steps to prepare and adopt the SGB Plan:

Who will drive the process? (e.g. governance)

General Consensus:

Interim Leads: Mayor Anderson and Cal Patterson (Mayor of Wasaga Beach) will co-chair

Michael will be political representative, Peter will have role. This puts the Initiative into the municipal realm and a bottom-up approach. Once we get through early stage, a new lead can be established on a rotational basis.

Success will only be achieved via collaboration with federal and provincial agencies along with Mayors and municipalities.

Interim Steering committee consists of this group plus CA representatives, First Nation representatives (after next meeting). Mayor Anderson will raise this with First Nations including Beausoleil and Saugeen/ Nawash.

We need a public representative that is not elected.

Ask each county to appoint a person, Grey, Bruce and Simcoe?

Capture various interests and invite to provide input to process. Periodically report back in an iterative consultation process.

Janette: EC supports this type of work and will provide a coordination role.

Dave and Arunas: MNR interest via fish management

Brent: DFO/EC interest via Fisheries Act (Brent – will represent DFO on a steering committee but needs a Terms of Reference)

Need to appreciate that there must be components that align with each agency interest e.g., OMAFRA: water quality; EC: integration of physical, chemical, biological aspects of water as well as habitat; DFO: aquatic habitat, MNR: fisheries; MOE: water quality etc.

Governance Framework: Steering Committee and Working Group, Constitution

Ellen, GLSLCI - Great Lakes St. Lawrence Cities Initiative – Steering Committee identified five areas of collaboration in their recent Action Plan “At the Shoreline”. There is a need to keep it simple in a few well defined objectives.

Roles: establish meeting dates and times, design process, determine, Keep it simple, establish wider membership group, outreach to other partners to reinforce

Steering Committee: establishes a vision, scope, goals, objectives, Terms of Reference to ensure that it is adopted by each Council.

Small group of visionaries that establish Terms of Reference, vision, goals, objectives,

Working Group: Are the doers, advice, technical, writers,

What are the steps?

IDEAS:

Peter: SWOT analysis,

Janette: Results Chain (as in Lake Huron Biodiversity Conservation Strategy)

Michael: careful not to get lost in the process. First need to start with a constitution (need to establish who we are to the public and some legitimacy based on members) founding members. Build on who you want involved in the process and define this through an overview document.

1. General information: Background information, Synthesize baseline information, Mapping products identified and developed
2. Policy and Planning: Identify existing management, policy framework and compare across municipalities to identify commonalities, weaknesses, opportunities
3. Current issues and problems
4. Public outreach/education plan
- 5.

How do we get started? **Deferred**

What information should be gathered **Deferred**

Who writes the plan? **Deferred**

When do we go to the public? How? **Deferred**

How does the plan get approved? (e.g. official status)

General Consensus:

Suggestion to review the Cornwall Strategy Accord and Protocol as an example of how 7 agencies and organizations have signed on to streamline and aligns the permitting and approvals of activities along the waterfront. The accord includes signatories at a high level within all participating agencies, the City, Conservation Authority and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne.

- Peter: Proposed that Ministers approve plan with signatories from municipalities.
- Michael: Need to first get project off ground
- Michael: Protocols that everyone signs. Identify who is not living up to agreement, identify reasons.
- Randy: Consensus document with MOU/Accord with all agencies signed on to it. Doesn't have legal status. Similar to FC, but it is not binding.
- Randy: What acts can be incorporated?

Identifying Urgent and Long Term Needs

Discuss

What are the urgent top priority issues that we can take action on now?

- Shoreline alterations: shoreline armouring, blasting, fill/dredging, groins, beach grooming and inappropriate attempts to eradicate invasive species like phragmites, inappropriate dock construction, aquatic vegetation removal, breakwater construction, other actions that impact to coastal processes that create and maintain habitat, activities that impact on fish and wildlife habitat and the communities that depend on intact habitat. Issue is the impact on processes, habitat,see environmental objectives, public, water quality, coastal processes
- These shoreline alterations destroy and/or interrupt physical processes that create and maintain aquatic habitat and support diverse biological communities.
- Alterations eventually result in great expenditures by municipalities.
- Big issues also lack of awareness of impacts of shoreline alterations, so education, and enforcement.

What are the issues that the plan must address?

Three main issues and the cumulative impacts associated with these actions:

1. Dredging: most visible
2. Filling:
3. Habitat destruction – both riparian and littoral

Secondary importance:

1. Water Quality
2. Farm management
3. Water conservation
4. Hydrological alterations such as barriers
5. Tributary degradation

Janette: perhaps consider a think tank in the fall to garner more support and participation.

Confirming Roles and Responsibilities, Next Steps and Timing

Discuss

- *Roles and responsibilities. Who can do what?*
- *Next steps and timing*

Next steps for next meeting:

- Draft a Terms of Reference with vision, mission, goals, objectives, governance, benefits, rationale, membership
- Request that Stewart Sweeney write a letter that indicates need for SWOOP to incorporate shoreline geographic scope, include Grey Bruce contact
- Mayor Anderson will inform other participating municipalities
- Greg will provide draft minutes by July 3, Janette will finalize for July 8.
- Peter will write a report for the Town of the Blue Mountains Council
- Caring for our Beaches on July 10th in Midland – Mayor Anderson has given approval to mention this initiative and Greg will answer questions relative to shoreline concerns and direct some individuals to Mayor Anderson
- Incorporate the integrated aspect in terms of reference
- Develop a list of real funding sources, when, who, how to apply.
 - *EC, MNR, MOE, OMAFRA will put this into annual work plan and fund request,*
- Need to obtain baseline information on shoreline maps – in-kind from CAs, French Planning has access to geospatial information
- Brent: Request that each agency provide some up front money e.g., \$5000 from each. Use money to coordinate initiative, develop outreach materials for members.
- Develop mapping layers such as shoreline baseline, use new aerial photography information, develop political boundary map.

Name of Initiative: **Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative**
(will be called “The Initiative” for short rather than by an acronym “SGBCI”)

Next Meeting: September 29th, 2009

Location: Potentially Grey Sauble Conservation Authority in Owen Sound (Dave will request)

Includes these members plus additional members

Future needs

- dredge and filling: need to know everyone’s concerns from each agency perspectives
- shoreline conservation plan based on geology, topography and long term maintenance
- summary document of impact statement of different types of alterations
- benchmark via aerial images of shoreline alterations
- rationale to prevent additional alterations based on science
- policy framework
- coastal engineer to identify threshold, tipping point, see Baird work on Leamington.
- Funds to do the science to outline problem definition, experts will identify littoral cell erosional and depositional areas.

Additional thoughts:

Randy: consider balancing science needs with urgency of a unified need to conserve nearshore?

The precautionary principle can be considered yet we also need science to prove that activities are having a cumulative effect.

ACTIONS:

1. Stewart to write letter to SWOOP coordinators to ensure our geographic scope is incorporated in flyovers. This is an opportunity to get detailed imagery incorporated into GIS format. Presently, planning from Tobermory to SW Ontario. 20 cm resolution, availability of 10cm in urban areas. 2006 does not include all our focus areas. Stewart will suggest that stakeholders approach SWOOP committee and request Simcoe county area be included.
2. Stewart to provide Mayor Anderson with a copy of the letter so she and Mayor Patterson can forward it on behalf of the municipalities in the geographic scope.
3. Greg: Contact Fred Dobbs and Jim Maincon or Dough Hill of the Grey Sauble CA and ask for list of stakeholders.
4. Greg will shape today's minutes and Janette will polish to send to Mayor Anderson along with a short summary. Mayor Anderson to draft a letter to Mayors updating them on this meeting by Tuesday, July 7th and attaching the summary (a one-two pager of highlights of today's meeting).
5. Everyone to come prepared to discuss funding ideas and/or commitments to establish seed money and in-kind services at the next meeting.
6. Greg will provide a template for the terms of reference with vision, mission, goals, objectives, governance, benefits, rationale, membership. Janette will circulate the draft for input and discussion at the next meeting.
7. Develop a list of mapping information needs for next meeting
8. Mayor Anderson to contact the First Nations to advise them of meetings and outcomes to date.

Draft Minutes prepared by: Greg Mayne July 2, 2009
Final Minutes: July 6, 2009



Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative

Dear Mayor & Members of Council:

Re: Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative

As municipalities on the shores of southern Georgian Bay, we all have a common interest. We have all wrestled with problems such as dredging, vegetation removal, water quality, invasive species and habitat destruction with government approvals that lack coordination and enforcement.

A number of stakeholder municipalities, government agencies and conservation authority representatives came together in April to talk about these issues. It was agreed that an integrated shoreline management plan would be a tool to enable municipalities to jointly protect their waterfronts.

The scope of the Initiative encompasses the coastline between Penetanguishene and Tobermory. Initially the focus will be on the shoreline, but the Initiative will integrate watershed issues impacting the coastal shore. It will be an iterative process.

We met again in June and the Minutes of that meeting are attached for your information. As you can see from the attendees, we have good representation from various levels of government. We are discussing what an integrated coastal management plan might look like, the content and scope, who will be involved and possible funding sources. Mayors Ellen Anderson (The Blue Mountains) and Cal Patterson (Town of Wasaga Beach) will act as interim leads.

We need your help, which is the purpose of this letter. It is requested that you consider adopting the attached resolution of support. Details of the next meeting, set for September 29, 2009, will be forthcoming and we invite you to consider participating in this initiative.

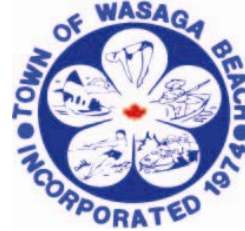
Thank you for your attention,

Yours truly,

Town of The Blue Mountains



Town of Wasaga Beach



Ellen Anderson
Mayor

Cal Patterson
Mayor

cc: Mayors and Council, as per the attached distribution list

Attachments:

1. Minutes of June 30, 2009 Meeting
2. Draft Resolution

Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative
Municipalities Penetanguishene to Tobermory

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RESOLUTION

WHEREAS Council recognizes the need to protect, conserve and restore the Southern Georgian Bay Coast;

NOW THEREFORE Council supports developing an integrated shoreline management plan that would be a tool to enable municipalities to jointly protect our waterfronts;

AND this management plan, which shall be known as the “Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative”, will:

- Harmonize human activity with the Southern Georgian Bay ecosystem to clearly demonstrate stewardship and the utmost regard for this region’s special environment and quality of life.
- Provide an opportunity to involve communities, agencies, First Nations, and interest groups in the process of shoreline management using a consistent approach to establish regulations for development, building awareness, education and communication.
- Promote an understanding of the coastal environment (e.g. shoreline processes, such as sediment transport and erosion, impact of dredging and alterations, natural environment and ecological importance, water level cycles, environmental, social, economic factors related to land use and water use), and the effects that human activities have on shoreline habitat and water quality.
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