

**Rideau Corridor Landscape Strategy
Steering Committee Meeting #12
March 2nd, 2012
Youth Arena Hall, Smith Falls**

Steering Committee Members in Attendance: Doug Struthers, Dennis Staples, Susan Freeman, Steve Knetchel, Aubrey Churchill, Sandra Candow, Phil Gerrard, Michael Dwyer, Doug Thompson, Bill Thake, Lynn Clouthier, Judy Brown, David Jones, Dan Grunig, Randy Malcolm, Bill Dobson, Don Marrin

Planners Technical Advisory Group (some appear above): Noelle Reeve, Mary Kirkham, Don Morse, Lorraine Stevens, Elaine Mallory, Karl Grenke, Nelson Edwards, Peter Young, Sally Coutts, Philip Costa, Eric Cosens, Christie MacIsaac

Secretariat: Pam Buell, Susan Millar, Heather Thomson

Observers: Peter Au

Regrets: David Chernushenko, Jim Neill, Cliff Meness, Karen Currie, Sonya Bolton

1. **Welcome** from the Town of Smiths Falls, Mayor Dennis Staples

2. **Approval of November 18, 2011 meeting minutes**

a. **MOVED** by Bill Thake b. **SECONDED** by Aubrey Churchill **CARRIED.**

3. **Business Arising from November 18, 2011 meeting minutes.**

None.

4. **Update on Public Education / Awareness Proposals**

Bill Dobson

The RVCA has done some mapping and photography work between 2002-2004, mapping from Hogs Back to Poonamalie Lockstation; some by students hired in the summer months, taking photos of the landscapes and database work.

5. **Tri-Valley Conservation Awards Program**

Charles Billington, Executive Director, Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation

The Tri-Valley Conservation Awards Program, developed by partners Mississippi Valley, Rideau Valley and the South Nation Conservation Authorities, has been running for 15 years, providing encouragement and recognition to volunteer environmental work. Nominations come from the townships and municipalities who are members of one of the CAs, and the awards gala rotates through each of the CAs. Awards fall into eight categories, with "Lifetime Achievement" the most recent addition. Nominations start in October, with awards given out during National Volunteer Week in mid April. Nominations are consistent from one year to the next, with 30-35 nominations per year across all categories.

Charles noted concern about conservation nomination fatigue as many organizations offer them; it may be beneficial to amalgamate awards ceremonies for collective recognition of environmental work.

Bill Dobson asked if there could be a separate category for work just along the Rideau.

Charles felt this was a good suggestion, better than starting own award program.

The CRCA has its own awards program along the watershed, and perhaps it could join the Tri-Valley for nominations along the Rideau system.

Charles will speak with the CRCA with respect to joining the Tri-Valley Conservation Awards program to the CRCA awards program for recognition of environmental work along the Rideau Canal.

6. Presentation on Landscape Character Assessment project

Caroline Marshall, Alex Zeller of Dillon Consulting

Dillon Consulting provided an update on progress made to-date on the landscape character assessment project, and an overview of the upcoming public consultation workshops.

Thus far, the project team has explored what information is already available to properly complete the assessment, and is presently researching past character descriptions documenting the land use, cultural features, natural conditions, policy areas, and special visual resources in the Rideau Corridor. This preliminary work, which includes draft viewshed analysis and GIS mapping, has resulted in the identification of four draft geographic sectors and nine draft landscape character areas along the corridor, based on the watershed divide, the evolution of the canal and landscape characteristics. This preliminary information will be shared at the upcoming public workshops to gather the public's feedback and enhance and refine the preliminary research.

The public consultation workshops are being held March 6-8 along the corridor. InfoBulletins, the RCLS and Parks Canada websites, newspaper ads and emails have shared this information widely. The workshops will include a presentation consisting of an introduction, an overview of the study process and a discussion on the preliminary landscape character assessment completed so far. This will be followed by a Q & A period and an interactive workshop.

Feedback from the Steering Committee:

Susan Freeman – Happy to see Tay Canal is included in the project

Bill Dobson – Agriculture is prominent in the corridor and needs to be highlighted.

Dillon Consulting – Agriculture/farmland is one of the cultural landscape types identified and has its own map layer, which will be on display at the workshops

Nelson Edwards – Suggests breaking down the cultural and natural areas, into a finer level of detail, such as community settlement, rural, and natural. For example, from Hogs Back to Long Island the urban development is set back, and naturalized along shoreline, while moving south the housing is more dominant, with manicured landscape despite being located in the 'rural area'

Dillon Consulting - Discusses in more depth the viewshed analysis. They will be refining the extent of views with respect to vegetation and are also analyzing the frequency of seeing a particular landscape feature [for example Westport and Foley Mountain]

Lynn Clouthier - Who is going to hold and update the information after this PCA contract is done? What group/organization has the capacity to handle and manage this information?

Dennis Staples – With respect to Parks Canada reporting back to the World Heritage Committee as required under the six-year reporting framework, it would be good to include what others are doing in support of the WHS nomination, such as the Leeds County Community Improvement Program

David Jones - Have we thought about the marketability /commercial aspects of this project after this is finished, such as the aerial photographs/video?

Bill Dobson – Historical stories using local historians could be incorporated into the Google maps program he is interested in – RHRTA has already highlighted places, stories along the corridor

Peter Au – the project should also highlight exemplary shoreline work, buildings etc for the encouragement of future development

Dillon Consulting will meet with the Planners Group in April or May once the public consultation information is incorporated into the existing data

ACTION SECRETARIAT: Share presentation with Steering Committee and Planners Technical Advisory Group

7. Correspondence

None

8. Roundtable

- a. Municipal World Magazine, page 16 – highlights using GIS for sustainable communities

9. Next meeting:

The next meeting is TO BE DETERMINED based on progress of the landscape character assessment project, and subsequent to Dillon Consulting meeting with the Planners Technical Advisory Group.