

## WSCA Newsletter Summer 2022



Hello, WSCA members! Summer finally arrived and we hope you are enjoying it! Your community association is sending this newsletter to bring you up to date on WSCA activities during the summer months and gather your opinions on the problems and needs in West Sechelt. Your input matters.

### **DOS Wish List**

Please let us know your concerns about West Sechelt. We are again gathering input from residents for our annual “wish list” of capital improvements for West Sechelt to the District of Sechelt (DOS). What do you think are the most important projects that the DOS should undertake in West Sechelt next year, 2023?

Safety remains a concern including more sidewalks, pedestrian controlled crossings and speed control. The District of Sechelt (DOS) has engaged an expert to prepare a 20 year “Transportation Master Plan” (TMP) to assist in improving roads, pathways, traffic and parking. An initial open house requesting public input for the TMP was held earlier this year. The DOS website has an interactive program permitting the public to advise of problem areas and provide suggestions. This interactive program will be available for another two weeks. Comments may be sent to “communications@sechelt.ca or Lvickers@sechelt.ca. WSCA was invited to attend a stakeholder meeting. Other community association representatives, the Downtown Business Association, the Seniors Planning Table and Community Resources also attended and discussed problems and solutions for specific areas. We will keep pushing for resolution of West Sechelt problem areas. Please email your concerns or engage with the interactive program to let DOS what you think.

### **Beach Accesses and Trails**

Another area of concern is neglected beach accesses. As set out in the attached report by intrepid WSCA watchdogs, West Sechelt has 11 beach accesses. Unfortunately, some have been neglected, some have become unsafe and some have been taken over by neighbouring properties. A continuing problem is bad signage and lack of parking. WSCA plans to draw

attention to the encroachment and safety issues during the capital improvement consultation for 2023.

Please let us know what you would like to see improved in your area to the WSCA by email to [contactwsca@gmail.com](mailto:contactwsca@gmail.com).

### **Meetings with other associations and DOS on June 16 and July 20 2d reading of Zoning Bylaw 580**

The Sunshine Coast Association Forum (SCAF) met with council and staff in June to discuss concerns and questions from the communities about the new Zoning Bylaw 580. Each area presented specific concerns and questions in advance of the meeting. None of the associations' questions were addressed at the meeting, especially the apparent "need for speed" to approve this complex and far-reaching law.

In the agenda for the July 20 council meeting, WSCA was advised that the only responses it could anticipate were in the FAQ section of the DOS website. WSCA thanks the 10 members who attended the July 20 council meeting as a show of interest and support for the neighbourhood concerns. The public is not permitted to make statements or pose questions during a council meeting; public questions may be taken after adjournment. WSCA wanted to attend to discover the factors that seem to be driving the speedy approval of new zoning and to hear what the councillors had to say, and not just the Planning Department. We came away with 3 main points: 1) although admitting the Official Community Plan of 2011 is outdated, DOS insists on implementing it with the new zoning bylaw instead of updating the OCP and zoning together; 2) the DOS policy is "pass asap, tinker later" even though serious repercussions may affect citizens before any "tinkering" occurs; and 3) short term rentals creating density in sewerred areas like West Sechelt will cure the lack of housing problem on the Coast. Zoning Bylaw 580 had its 2nd reading-not a surprise.

WSCA will prepare to address these issues at the September 8 public hearing which is a public forum and a legal process required by the province. A public hearing has much more legal importance than any other consultative process because all members of the public who wish to speak must be given the opportunity to do so. Council may pose questions to speakers. Most important is to consider that while it is one thing for council to go against or ignore the result of consultations, it is another thing for council to go against or ignore the same result from a public hearing, especially when the majority of the speakers are against the action being proposed. It's unwise to be seen to ignore the public before an election. WSCA members are encouraged to attend and speak their minds. More details about the public hearing will follow as they are announced.

### **Concerns about development in West Sechelt**

WSCA continues to be concerned about development proceeding without water catchment requirements and other infrastructure. Many studies have shown that density will not address the lack of affordable housing. Further, the Coast needs long term housing for housing for employees, hospital staff and other needed service employees on the Sunshine Coast.

Especially troublesome are the STR's where no owner resides, there is no supervision or oversight to ensure tenants abide by fire rules, noise bylaws and which often leave the cost of garbage cleanup to the taxpayers. Please advise Director Pat Rothernbush of problems with these types of STR's in your area by emailing: [contactwsca@gmail.com](mailto:contactwsca@gmail.com)

### **AGM**

Our AGM was moved to May due to complaints about darkness on Mason Rd. and bad weather. Attendance at the Seaside Centre was good. (The Botanical Gardens was not selected due to a lack of A/V equipment). After the business was concluded, members were divided into discussion groups to gather concerns and ideas about Short Term Rentals, Zoning, Beach Accesses and Trails and Water issues. More details may be found on the WSCA website. Please let us know your ideas about future venues for the AGM and format.

### **All Candidates Meeting**

There is an election in October and candidates must declare between August 30 and September 9. Once we know who the candidates are, we plan to organize an all candidates meeting to answer questions specifically related to West Sechelt and our concerns, plus an open forum for questions. More details to come.

### **Artists in our Midst**

Do you know that West Sechelt abounds with artists? Janis Magnusson who lives on Kevins is an art quilter. She makes beautiful quilts and art pieces that are intricate combinations of paint, fabric and thread work. Contact her at: [janismag899@gmail.com](mailto:janismag899@gmail.com) for more information.



### **Calling all Carpenters!**

WSCA's bulletin board at the Mason Rd. Store was vandalized and the door ripped off. Notices are now exposed to the weather. We are in need of a diagnosis! If you can repair it, please send an estimate of cost to: [contactwsca@gmail.com](mailto:contactwsca@gmail.com).

### **What Can You Do?**

The WSCA needs members to enlist their neighbours who are not members to join. Only \$10/household/year! And for members, please go to the website for information on paying your dues. We still have some outstanding dues. And finally, please let us know what is going on in your area of West Sechelt!

### **Beach Access Report (long but worth the read)**

WSCA. Report on Beach Accesses in West Sechelt, June 2022.

Paddy Blenkinsop and Sieg Lehmann

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#### **Summary**

There are 11 Beach Accesses in West Sechelt and 1 Lookout. They are a potential asset to both residents and visitors to the Coast but are presently under-used, and this is, at least in part, because they are undervalued and neglected. As the Sechelt population grows then the need for more facilities, such as beaches, will increase. Upgrading these attractive seaside spots can only improve our enjoyment of living here.

Most Beach Accesses are along the Highway, but the two most western are on side roads. Signage is tasteful but not always easy to see, and the paths leading to the beach are in most cases in need of tidying and repairs (e.g. bushes trimmed and steps that need refilling with gravel). Annex needs major repairs. Another problem is accessibility; at many accesses huge logs block the entrance to the beach, thus excluding older and infirm people. This is a difficult problem but an important one to solve. Parking is also a problem, sometimes a very serious problem (See Silverstone), and dedicated parking spots should be provided.

As for improvements, several of the Accesses would benefit immediately from the addition of a bench or picnic table. At present there is only one wooden bench and one picnic table. The two Beach Park should be a priority; the paths should be accessible for people with mobility issues, and benches and picnic tables should be installed. The more attractive our Beach Accesses, the more people will come.

#### **Beach Accesses, West to East**

N.B. M and I = Maintenance and Improvement.

##### **1. Annex**

Distance to beach: 250m. Access: Difficult. Parking: Roadside.

The start of the access trail to the beach is not obvious, tucked into the tight bend on Annex Road. A very steep, long trail leads down to an attractive rocky cove, a quiet and isolated spot. No sand or pebbled beach. There are 2 sets of steps which are framed in wood and filled with gravel. We suspect this beach is little used. A quiet spot for the fit and agile.

M and I: The path is earth and in places heavily infested with tree roots which makes for bad footing. The steps are high and gravel is needed to refill the frames. The railings, where provided, are rotting and in need of repair. At the bottom of the path, just above the beach, a huge tree root has slipped onto the path and navigating it is not easy. Repairs and maintenance are badly needed here.

## 2. Hill and Dale

Distance to beach: 50m. Access: Moderate. Parking: Roadside.

A short gravel path leads from Hill and Dale Road down to an attractive, rocky cove. The path is in good condition.

M and I: Some steps at the bottom would be useful. The beach is rocky, and access to the waterfront is blocked by driftwood, i.e. large logs.

## 3. Sea Fiddler

Distance to beach: a few metres. Access: Easy. Parking: Best on Highway.

Access is from the bottom of Sea Fiddler Rd., then a few steps will take you to the western end of a long beach of fine pebbles with great views of Trail Bay Islands and across to Vancouver Island.

M and I: A couple of solid steps for less mobile people needed. A bench would be a good addition.

## 4. Trail Island Drive

Distance to beach: 25m. Access: Easy/moderate. Parking: Highway – not good.

A short walk from the highway leads down to that same pebble beach, closer to the Trail Bay Islands.

M and I: The steps could do with some repair and a rail. A small creek beside the steps, probably no problem in dry weather, could be easily contained by a little wall. Again logs are a problem. A bench would enhance this access too..

## 5. Lewarne

Distance to beach: 50m. Access: Easy. Parking on Highway – not good. (N.B. Parking not permitted on Lewarne Road)

Same beach again and no steps. A lovely spot with great views.

M and I; This access calls for a bench and/or a picnic table.

## 6. Lawson

Distance to beach: 50m. Access: Difficult. Parking on Highway – not good.

A staircase of about 50 high steps lead down to the eastern end of the same long beach. This is a nice spot, sheltered by the Trail Bay Islands. But the steps are a serious deterrent to all but the fittest.

#### 7. Wakefield

Distance to beach: a few metres. Access: Easy. Parking: Wakefield Rd. at the beach.

A built platform complete with **picnic table** overlooks the estuary of Wakefield Creek and the Trail Bay Islands. Easy access down to a pebble beach. Fine views and lots of seabirds.

#### 8. Wakefield Park

Distance to beach: 30m. Access: Difficult. Parking: None (There is a kerb and a bike lane)

This access is a footpath that leads down to the waterfront on the east side of Wakefield Creek and along to the Mason Road access. It used to be on the site of the old Wakefield Inn. It is a lovely spot with views up and down the Salish Sea. Again it is a spot that calls for picnic tables and more benches. This could be a delightful little waterfront park for residents and visitors to the Coast.

M and I: Tidying and trimming are needed. The steps are high and need filling with gravel. There should also be handrails. If the path is meant to be Accessible, it is not. There are steps at the western end, and the eastern access from Mason Road is very rough. Benches and picnic tables would make this into a delightful little waterfront park for residents and visitors.

#### 9. Mason Road

Distance to beach: a few metres. Access: Easy. Parking: Mason Road.

This access is situated at the eastern end of the Wakefield Park path. See above.

M and I: Access to the path is rough, ie. it is not accessible. Logs obstruct access to the beach.

#### 10. McCourt

Distance to beach: 50m. Access: Difficult. Parking: Highway – not good.

A long steep descent down about 50 steps with some bad footing on the earth paths, but the steps and rails are in good condition. The beach is stony with good views of the Trail Islands.

M and I: The entrance to the trail from the beach is well-nigh invisible: a sign is needed. A small creek runs beside the path, and in wet weather can overflow onto the path as it runs onto the beach. Logs again a problem.

Comment: This access covers, I believe, a full lot. Most of it is jungle, but there is potential here for an attractive little park with a picnic spot and benches and views over

the sea.

#### 11. Mills Lookout

Distance to Lookout: 20m. Access: Very easy. Parking: Highway.

A short, level path leads to a bench that overlooks the sea and the Island, A pleasant, quiet spot.

Maintenance and Improvement: some trimming and tidying.

#### 12. Silverstone Beach Park

Distance to beach: 30m. Access: Difficult. Parking: None.

As the name suggests, this is small park rather than just an access to the beach. The access is a steep path with 20 or so high steps leading to a good beach with good sea views. Logs obstruct easy access to the beach.

There is also a path, probably Accessible, that runs along beside the highway with fine views through the trees over the Salish Sea. There are three stone benches set in cleared areas along the path. An excellent spot for people who don't want to tackle the steps down to the beach.

M and I: Steps on beach access need refilling with gravel. Trimming and tidying needed. The addition of picnic tables and benches would make this a nice place to stop and sit or have lunch. But the main problem here is parking. This is a busy corner and there is no place to safely park on the highway. A small parking area might be created across the highway on the corner with Norwest Bay Road.