

**HEART'S DESIRE WEIR
DECOMMISSIONING AND RIPARIAN REHABILITATION PLAN
COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES MEETING**

September 23, 2010

3:00-4:00 pm

RVCA Office 3889 Rideau Valley Dr

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mike Yee, RVCA, welcomed all in attendance. Everyone introduced themselves to the group.

In Attendance:

Myles McDevitt	Stonebridge Community Association
Niel Barrington	Friends of the Jock
Bill Armitage	Stonebridge Community Association
Jenn Lamoureux	RVCA
Tanya McLaurin	Kemptville MNR
Grant Wilson	Heart's Desire Community Association - Land Development Committee
Michael Cotter	Heart's Desire Community Association - Land Development Committee
Mac Prescott	Heart's Desire Community Association - Land Development Committee
Bruce Kilgour	Kilgour and Associates Ltd
Doug Fountain	fd fountain landscape architecture
Heather Martin	fd fountain landscape architecture
Deborah Nizman	Kemptville MNR
Mary Dillon	Kemptville MNR
Jerry Corush	Heart's Desire Community Association
Bruce Reid	RVCA
Mike Yee	RVCA

2. Introduction of Consulting Team

• **Summary of Expertise and Experience**

Bruce Kilgour, Kilgour and Associates Ltd, introduces the consulting team which is comprised of his firm; fd fountain landscape architecture (Doug Fountain and Heather Martin) and Parish Geomorphoc (Josh Weibe).

Kilgour & Associates Ltd.

- In operation since January 2008

- Specialties
 - Fisheries, Water Quality, Environmental Policy, Monitoring, Permitting
- Principal (Bruce Kilgour, PhD)
 - 20 years consulting experience
 - Degrees in fisheries, aquatic ecology, stream ecology

f.d. fountain landscape architecture

- In operation since 2001
- Specialties
 - Park and recreation planning
 - Landscape naturalization / restoration projects
 - Public consultation
- Principal (Doug Fountain, OALA, CSLA, AAPQ)
 - 16 years experience
 - Consultant on over 70 park and recreation projects
 - Extensive experience with public consultation / participatory design
- Team Member (Heather Martin, OALA associate)
 - BSc (Env), Ecosystem Restoration Diploma, MLA
 - Member of Barrhaven Fish Compensation team
 - Member of restoration team for Grassy Brook, Niagara Region
 - High Park Restoration Specialist (Black Oak Savannah), City of Toronto

Parish Geomorphic

- In operation since 1997
- Specialties
 - Fluvial geomorphology
 - Stream restoration and natural channel design
- Team Member (Josh Wiebe, MSc)
 - Fluvial processes, sediment transport, bank stability, bioengineered bank treatments

3. Background to the Project

- **Project Schedule and Milestones**

Tasks	Week															
	06-Sep	13-Sep	20-Sep	27-Sep	04-Oct	11-Oct	18-Oct	25-Oct	01-Nov	08-Nov	15-Nov	22-Nov	29-Nov	06-Dec	13-Dec	20-Dec
0 Kickoff meeting	●															
1 Review background information																
2 Meetings																
Onsite meeting with landowners				●												
Attend meetings with public stakeholder groups					●											
Meeting with RVCA to discuss draft plan												●				
Community information session to present plan																●
3 Site visits																
weir in		●														
weir out									●							
4 Plan Preparation																
draft with costing													●			
final															●	

Table Notes:

- Meetings
- Site visits
- Draft report
- Final Report

• Objective of the Project

To prepare a *Decommissioning and Riparian Rehabilitation Plan* that aims to restore and enhance the bed and banks of the Jock River after decommissioning of the Heart's Desire Weir, while accommodating the needs and desires of the affected riparian landowners and recognize the positive environmental outcomes of removing the weir.

• Scope of the Project

- Accelerate the establishment of healthy streamside vegetation above the new (adjusted) normal high water mark, after weir decommissioning;
- Not contribute to hazardous conditions for canoeists and kayakers at any time of year (while eliminating existing hazards);
- Potentially reduce the rate at which the south (right) bank of the river is being undercut, and adjoining slopes are slumping;
- Support the establishment of a suitable mix of aquatic habitat types, for use by the desirable fish and wildlife species that are indigenous to the area

- Contribute positively to local landscape aesthetics on a year round, all-seasons basis;
- Incorporate all necessary activities to safely decommission the weir and address any issues that would arise from removing the weir and associated structures;
- Be affordable, and seen as a good use of tax-payers dollars
- Develop a cost estimate for two scenarios: (1) sill in; and (2) sill out.

4. Input from Community Representatives

Discussion points that were stated:

- Algal bloom was noted by consultants when canoeing in the head pond of the weir on Sept 17, 2010
- Consultant will assess the extent of erosion and make recommendations about the degree of severity
- Looking for the consultants to provide the good biological rationale for the weir to be removed
- Presently there is still no funding for the weir removal
- It is recognized that there are 11 affected property owners, over 30 years living with the "weir in" scenario
- Heart's Desire Community Association - Land Development Committee will act as a liaison for the consultants and the 11 affected landowners – act a facilitator for the process
- Will meet with landowners during the weir out conditions to look at the affect on their property and document the concerns
- Will scan and create CD of the background information that was given to consultants – this will be provided to each of the community representatives and the Friends of the Jock – to be available end of next week – October 1, 2010
- Question about what the affect that the storm water ponds flows will have on the Jock River at the storm pond outlet – how will the affects of the storm water pond (SWM) be attenuated? What affects will there be after heavy rains?
- It was stated that storm pond out letting into the Jock River would be at the highest level of protection and the standard is to remove 80% total suspended solids (TSS) – the enhanced treatment
- The Jock River can have TSS reading of 100 ppm (part per million) after a storm event and treated storm water is 25 ppm
- The SWM outlet will be left at a higher elevation above the Jock River at weir out water levels – what affect will this have on fish habitat?
- Budget – what is the budget? Part of the consultant's deliverables are to determine viable funding sources
- Concern that the project will be phased – the project is to look at options to complete the project, not implement in phases

- Post-construction monitoring will be a major component to monitor the effectiveness of the restoration and remediate any issues
- MNR has an interest to assess the benefits to the fishery, reptiles/turtles, amphibians and other fauna and flora – the effects to terrestrial and aquatic habitats
- It was stated that the City of Ottawa should have been at the meeting – this oversight will be corrected for future meetings and correspondence – Parks and Recreation Department contact information will be forwarded to RVCA
- The Heart's Desire Community treats the area as a park – especially the 11 affected landowners
- Heart's Desire Land Development Committee is very involved with this issue
- Concern about the impacts to fisheries
- Concern about the broader community and how they will interact with the river in a "weir out" scenario
- Consultant will look at economic, environmental and social aspects
- Concern about the affect on the property values – with the "weir out" scenario - will the property values go up or down?
- MNR – concerns about the property owners rights
- Want the right thing to be done for landowners using the best science and best outcome for landowners
- Friends of the Jock want to help to do what is best for the health of the river, can help with funding, can help with volunteers to do the work and the organization has charitable status
- Some landowners may be concerned with the "weir in" causing their property to be in the floodplain
- Technical aspects need to be addressed
- Neighbours and community consent
- Mattamy Homes should be invited to be involved in the process
- Send out the power point presentation
- Have the before and after pictures of river restoration projects

5. **Wrap-up and Adjournment**

**HEARTS DESIRE WEIR DECOMMISSIONING OPENHOUSE
MEETING NOTES**

December 15, 2010
7 – 9 pm

Attendees: Bruce Kilgour (Kilgour & Associates Ltd.), Heather Martin (F.D. Fountain Landscape Architecture), Rick McCulloch (Kilgour & Associates Ltd.), Charles Pelton (30 Eisenhower Cr.), Tersh Doe (6&10 Eisenhower Cr.), Suzan Ascroft (6&10 Eisenhower Cr.), Jody Alberts (34 Eisenhower Cr.), Jerry Corush (34 Eisenhower Cr.), Steven Challoner (26 Eisenhower Cr.), Elizabeth Joy (26 Eisenhower Cr.), Grant Wilson (32 Barcham Cr.)

Notes

- **Introductions and Opening Comments** (Mike Yee, RVCA)
- **Presentation** (Bruce Kilgour) - not completed due to agenda conflicts.
- **General Discussion** (all)
- **Community Members Main Concerns:**
 - **Information of the Decommissioning:**
 - Members felt that they had not been clearly informed of the decision to decommission the Heart's Desire weir.
 - **Water quality and quantity:** Community members expressed concerns over the current and future quality and quantity.
 - **Quality:** Members wished to know how the upstream Minto stormwater management ponds are affecting flow and water quality, especially during overflow events. Members also were concerned over the potential influence of local golf courses with regards to pesticide runoff. Strandherd used to flow into the River and now is caught by ponds. They wanted further information on the effects of upstream development. Owners feel consultant team mandate should be expanded to include things like impact of stormwater ponds upstream. They felt that a more holistic understanding of the watershed was required to predict the effects of the weir removal.
 - **Quantity:** Community members expressed as their main concern the potential effects of reduced summertime water levels. They would like to be shown what the shoreline and their respective views will look like after the weir is removed.
 - They expressed concerns with regards to future recreational use of the river, specifically swimming and boating. They wanted it to be noted that the current water levels were higher than normal and therefore weren't representative of weir out conditions.
 - The members want to know that they would be able to enjoy a swimming experience in the deep pools after the weir is taken out, assuming good water quality.
 - The members with docks were concerned that docks would have to be moved.
 - It was suggested, by community members, that the local golf courses remove water from the river. Concern over the effects on this during future low flow events was expressed.
 - Bruce Kilgour suggested that if the weir were removed and the cross section at the weir were repaired to its pre-weir condition the water level would be similar to pre-weir levels and that the aesthetics of the river would be minimally affected.
 - **Property Values**
 - Members proposed that more information was required on the impacts such a change would have on property values. They felt that the benefits of the pool created aesthetic value and prevented odour problems during low flows. They felt that these factors would affect their property values.
 - Jerry Corush suggested the need to expand interviews to people to include residents of Goodwood Road.

- **River Ecology**
 - Community members suggested that removing the weir may be detrimental to the ecological health of the weir. They felt that holism was required in the environmental studies to be sure that the weir removal would not have a negative impact on birds (blue herons), fish and wildlife (beavers, muskrats, otters).
 - Members also felt that Rideau Valley Conservation Authority was using fish health as an excuse to remove the weir and financial factors were the actual motivation. Community members also referred to an email by Jake Rice (homeowner down-river of weir, employee of DFO), which said that biodiversity has changed and re-adapted after so many years, suggesting that it may be detrimental to change it now and force it to re-adapt again. Jake Rice suggested that since the local fish would have gone through 3-4 generations under current conditions it may harm these populations to change it.
 - Members feel that removal of the weir won't fix current ecology and water quality issues.
 - Anecdotal information provided by community members told of reduced numbers of snapping turtles, the loss of lily pads over the past 3-5 years and the significant reduction in the local population of frogs. Frog mating calls conspicuously absent in recent breeding season.
 - It was acknowledged that these issues were independent of the weir but community members wanted to know the cause of these changes, feeling that they were pertinent to environmental predictions.
 - Bruce Kilgour said that the recent changes to the ecology were concerning but said that he felt the removal of the weir would positively impact the aquatic habitat allowing more game and bait fish to access the reach..
- **Shoreline Erosion:**
 - A recent, fall 2010, rain event caused the river to turn brown and dramatically increased the water level. Members wanted information on why this has been occurring more frequently and its potential effects if the weir were to be removed. Jerry Corush believed that the weir has no impact on scouring of the south side as it isn't in place during the spring high water period. The consultants suggested that if the weir were not in place riparian vegetation would have more time to take hold, would survive spring freshet and provide more protection from erosional flows.
- **RVCA Reliability:**
 - Community members believed that RVCA had made promises in the past that they hadn't followed up on and that they had told the community that more environmental studies would be carried out prior to the decision whether or not to remove the weir being made. There is a feeling that the RVCA and the Friends of the Jock are working together without the community member's involvement.
 - The Riviera study was a "student" study, and so is not considered reliable or competent. Further, the study did not cover the entire reach. A more thorough characterization of the bathymetry of the reach post "weir-out" is requested by the landowners.
- **City Involvement:**
 - Community members asked about the city's walking path. Suggested that the City should have been involved in the previous September meeting.
- **Pre weir information Provided:**
 - Goodwood community used to bring in sand to create a swimming area.
 - There was a spit in the Bay at 70 Bren Maur that was removed when the weir was installed. Members wanted to know if it would be replaced.
 - Prior to weir construction Steven Challoner said the depth of the river in summer was about 5-6' deep, cold at bottom due to upwelling springs.

- **Requested Actions:**

- Community members were open to the idea of the consulting team visiting their properties to discuss their individual concerns. RVCA to them to schedule meetings.
- Community members want to know what the post-weir scenario will look like. They want to see a cross sectional topography (bathymetry) of river so they will know where there will be pools, where it will be drier. Bathymetry from Riviera study doesn't cover far enough up-river – only as far up as end of Goodwood.
- Heather Martin asked what owners thought of the idea of leaving the weir out for one season to see the effects allowing the locals to see what the "worst case" weir out conditions would be like without making a permanent change. The community members rejected this suggestion as a disruption to the ecology just for experimentation purposes.



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- Shoreline of the bay was modified to compensate for the removal of the spit. I suspect that the spit was moved to the banks.

Property: 26 Eisenhower Cr.

Owner(s): Steve Challoner and Elizabeth Joy

Notes:

- They expect water level could be lowered by 2ft. or more in the summer with the weir removed;
- Ice flows have damaged the shoreline over the years;
- They require access for canoe launch;
- They are concerned about losing trees due to erosion;
- Present bank development was from previous owners (4 years);
- Steve feels the weir removal will cause more erosion. He doesn't want to lose shoreline trees due to scouring. He feels that the higher volume will support the banks and prevent slumping.
- Teenagers use beach on far side; he worries that it will increase if water levels lower and beach gets larger.

Property: 30 Eisenhower Cr.

Owner(s): Charles Pelton

Notes:

- Charles feels that residents on Goodwood Drive should be consulted in similar manner;
- Does not want views to water impeded by vegetation;
- Concerned with boat launching;
- He said that if water levels were similar to pre-weir he would be fine with it. He also suggested that other residents would be satisfied with pre-weir water levels.

Property: 14 Eisenhower Cr.

Owner(s): Marie Helene Larrue

Notes:

- Worried about post-weir water levels; concerned that the level would be too low for recreational use.
- They want to be able to continue to canoe the river;
- Aesthetics are important; they worry that it would be unsightly with low levels;
- She is concerned that property values would decrease;
- She said that there were less fish now, compared to previous years; no more fish;
- They have lived at 14 Eisenhower Cr. 1 year +
- In summer (late) they were unable to canoe to the bay due to shallow water levels (weir in).

Property: 22 Eisenhower Cr.

Owner(s): Bob Shipley and Meg Buckley

Notes: Unavailable for a personal visit; we were granted access to his property for a viewing and photos. We made note of the near shore vegetation and substrate type. I suggested that he email comments to me.

Email correspondence: "Hi Rick.... As per your request here are the issues we have with The Rideau Valley's decision to remove the Heart's Desire weir:

a) The original reason we purchased our property at 22 Eisenhower Cres. was because it backed onto the Jock River. Although not one of the major rivers in the country the appeal of a small river with overhanging trees, plenty of wild life, calming views from our back yard was all it took to fall in love with this property. Last week the river was high and running fast with the spring thaw. Today the river has

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