

**The Friends of Mt. Douglas Park  
Society**

**General Meeting**

**7:30pm, February 12, 1992**

at

**Claremont Senior Secondary  
School Cafeteria  
4980 Wesley Road**

**Agenda**

**A Vision for Mt. Douglas Park**

*Does Mt. Douglas Park have anything worth preserving?*

**Guest Speakers**

**Subject Experts Concerning the Park  
Shorline, Forests and Hydrology**

**Reports**

**Cordova Bay Road  
Transmitter Site  
Trust and Park Transfer  
Park Trails**

# The Friends of Mt. Douglas Park Society

February 1992 Newsletter

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## 1 A Vision for Mt. Douglas Park

The transfer of Mt. Douglas Park to the municipality of Saanich appears to be imminent. At the same time, there are several pressures which are having, or will have, a serious impact on the character of the Park. These include the Trust, any subdivisions from the Park, the transmitter site, changes in Cordova Bay Road, dumping rip-rap on the beach and changes to the Park trails. The pressures for these character changes are coming from different areas, each with different priorities and interests to serve.

Your Society's executive feels the horse should be put back in front of the cart! **Now is the time to form a vision for what kind of park this should be**, before all of these opposing forces define the park by what is left! Does Mt. Douglas Park have anything worth preserving? What should the future of this park be? Only after such questions have been answered, and a clear view for the future of this park is formulated, should questions like trails, beach rip-rap and so on be considered. Then this clear park vision or definition should provide a framework for finding solutions to these questions.

Here again is a list of some of the forces or events which we fear will jeopardize the park character:

- Changes to the Trust
- Subdivision of land from the Park
- Plans by the Saanich Engineering Department to put Cordova Bay Road through an especially beautiful, natural section of the park.
- Plans by the Saanich Engineering Department to dump rip-rap on the Park beach (Saanich has already applied to the Provincial government for funds to do this.)
- Plans by the Saanich Parks Department to change the trail widths and surfaces:
  - **3.0 meters wide** for all trails accommodating pedestrians, equestrians, and cyclists. **Crushed gravel surface** the entire length.
  - **2.0 meters wide** for trails accommodating pedestrians and equestrians. **Hog fuel surface** the entire length.

- 1.5 meters wide for pedestrian trails, surfaced with hog fuel the entire length.

- Fortunately the transmitter site building has been moved from the top of the eastern summit to under the parking lot. Construction has begun; go take a look at how big it is!

We have attempted to put together some components for such a vision, but want you as a member to comment on what we have done and to add your own thoughts. In preparation for the meeting, you might think about the park features that you value most, and let us know.

## 2 Society Goals for 1992

We have established the following goals for 1992:

1. Develop a **Vision for Mt. Douglas Park** which clearly expresses how our Society feels the Park should be preserved for future generations. This vision should detail the unique and valued aspects of the park and how they should be preserved.
2. Consult with surrounding community groups concerning this vision, with the objective of incorporating Mt. Douglas Park within each of the local area plans. This is especially timely, since the park is about to be transferred to Saanich, it currently is not represented within the plans and each of the local area plans are under review this year.
3. Address the many issues currently threatening the park. We intend to address these issues, such as the trails plan, various aspects of the road, and a management plan for the park itself using this vision of the park for guidance.

## 3 December, 1991 AGM Report

Our December annual general meeting dealt with the CRD Regional Transportation Plan. The two guest speakers, Mayor Murray Coell and CRD Regional Transportation Strategy Project Manager Gerard Farry explained the CRD's transportation study and the process that will be used. Our Society is particularly interested in the study and

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strategy development. We have always felt and requested that the Cordova Bay Road through Mt. Douglas Park problem not be dealt with in isolation as a quick engineering fix, but since any solution will have a significant impact on the surrounding communities, the park, the beaches and the environment, the problem should be solved within this wider scope.

(We have recently written to Mayor Coell and Saanich Council asking them to establish the public process which will be used to resolve this road issue. We are waiting for their response.)

The question period developed into a very lively session when questions about the project goals were raised. The audience asked about goals for this strategy which might result in a reduction in automobile traffic, or target specific areas like the University and Camosun College, or might affect land use or the environment. We are waiting to see the project goals.

Many members commented on the difficulty of parking at Camosun College. The comments were well founded; the next meeting will be back at Claremont School!

#### 4 Trust and Subdivision

As in our last newsletter, we can again say that in some ways a considerable amount has occurred concerning the transfer of the Trust, and yet nothing has really been settled yet. We understand further discussions have taken place between the local MLA's and Saanich Council concerning the Trust and the transfer. The prospect of a more satisfactory solution without the Park subdivisions is still alive. We hope that there will be an official announcement soon.

#### 5 Transmitter Site

Construction has begun on the new transmitter building. As you know, through the efforts of The Friends of Mt. Douglas Park Society, the building site has been relocated from the top of the eastern summit to under the summit parking lot. At the last moment, in an effort to locate the building so that no trees would be affected, the building was shifted approximately ten feet further south than originally planned. In our opinion, the Saanich Lands Commissioner, Wayne Randal, is doing a super job of planning this building so that it has the least impact on the park. From the road approach to the

summit parking lot, the building roof line is below the parking lot level and should not be visible. The building is nestled in the parking lot valley and should be hidden from the south by existing oak trees. But the building is big! Go have a look! If they had proceeded with the earlier plans of locating it on the summit, it would have been visible from most of Saanich!

## 6 Cordova Bay Road Update

The Cordova Bay Road issue is now with us. At their December 23 meeting, Saanich Council approved a funding application to the Ministry of Highways for cost sharing to dump rip-rap on the Mt. Douglas Park beach below Cordova Bay Road. This was billed only as Major Roads improvements in the newspaper and in the council agenda. We saw it only at the last moment buried within the detailed agenda description. Although Council did allow this funding application to proceed, they made it clear that they were not granting approval for the project itself, but would consider it at a later date.

The Saanich engineer partially closed Cordova Bay Road through the park during a heavy rain period in late January.

Perhaps you have noticed the drilling equipment working along the road. We understand they are looking for bedrock (only a couple of meters down in some locations, none found in twenty meter holes in other areas.) Evidently they have found super saturated sand in those places without bedrock. This is consistent with what previous engineering studies have said. The underground water contributes to the erosion of the cliff from the top. Residents have said this for years; we wonder if the open drainage ditches also contribute to the problem.

There are a lot of views about what should be done with this road, and there are those that want to see it left open, if not expanded. Their reasoning is simple, if it is closed or restricted, they fear there will be more traffic in their area. The true message which everybody is voicing and the message which should be heard by Council and other authorities is **"We already have too much traffic, we do not want more roads, we do not want wider roads, but instead we want an overall strategy which will substantially reduce existing automobile traffic within the municipality."** The alternative is simple. traffic and asphalt everywhere!

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## 7 New Society Directors

The election of new Society directors took place at our December annual general meeting. We welcome our two new directors, Steve Taylor and Bob Bridgeman. Also, many thanks to out-going directors Paul de Goutiere, Kerry Schultz and Ed Life.

President            Darrell Wick            477-9291  
1491 Edgemont Road  
Victoria, BC V8N 4P7

Vice-President      Claude Maurice        382-3821  
2200 Lorne Terrace  
Victoria, BC V8S 2H8

Secretary-Treasurer   Graham Shorthill      658-5873  
4623 Cordova Bay Road  
Victoria, BC V8X 3V6

Historian            Pam Lewis              658-5039  
4626 Cordova Bay Road  
Victoria, BC V8X 3V7

### Committees

Trails                Ken Rankin              477-8007  
4285 Cedar Hill Road  
Victoria, BC V8N 3C7

Bob Bridgeman        477-7464  
1481 Elnido Road  
Victoria, BC V8N 4Z7

Conservation        Steve Taylor            477-6844  
1522 Edgemont Road  
Victoria, BC V8N 4P9

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## 8 Park Trails

*Last Minute Update:* The Parks and Recreation Department trails proposal was presented to Council at the end of January. Council passed a motion outlawing bicycles everywhere in the park except on the existing fire roads. Council also asked the Parks Department to come back with two reports; a short-term report for remedial trail work, and a long-term plan encompassing a vision for the park. The department trails proposal itself was tabled. Council suggested that another trails proposal might evolve from the long-term park vision.

## 9 Membership

Memberships are on a calendar year basis and most expired in December. The expiry date of your membership is printed on your address label. We hope you will support The Friends for another year; you may send the membership fee using the form below, or drop by the membership desk at the next meeting. If there is no date, or a 'C' on your address label instead of the usual membership expiry date, you have received a complimentary newsletter. We hope you also will be interested to join The Friends of Mt. Douglas Park Society.

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Membership for 1992: Send \$5.00 and this form to  
**The Friends of Mt. Douglas Park Society**  
4635 Cordova Bay Road, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3V6 (658-2200)

Name: .....

Street: .....

Postal Code ..... Phone .....