

**PUBLIC COUNCIL MEETING
RE: BARRINGTON BAY TRAIL**

October 2, 2012

The meeting was called to order by the Warden at 7:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers, in the Administrative Centre, in Barrington, N.S., with the following members present:

- Warden George El-Jakl
 - Deputy Warden Donna LeBlanc-Messenger
 - Councillor Murray Atkinson
 - Councillor Louise Halliday
 - Councillor Shaun Hatfield
 - Councillor Cecil O'Donnell
 - Councillor Cathy Stoddard
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- Brian Holland, Municipal Clerk

Also in attendance were:

- Sherman Embree
- Dana Dares
- Danny Moody, President
- Larry Nickerson
- Lewis Ross
- Paul Crowell

from the Woodland Multi-Use Trail Association.

- Sgt. Deluco, RCMP
- Peter Francis, Department of Natural Resources, Land Administration
- Debby Smith, Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness
- Joel Goreham, President, Shelburne County ATV Association

In addition, there were approximately 70 members of the public in attendance.

Warden El-Jakl introduced members to the public and asked Mr. Embree from the Woodland Multi-Use Trail Association to make a presentation of their request. The Woodland Multi-Use Trail Association is requesting use of the trail from Atwood's Brook to the Cape Sable Island Causeway. The Association wishes to have this portion of the Barrington Bay Trail become a multi-use trail. They have access to property adjacent to the Cape Sable Island Causeway which they will use as a parking area. Off-highway vehicles using the trail will then be able to travel down to and park in this area in order to access the local stores and service stations which are within walking distance.

There then followed much discussion regarding use of the Barrington Bay Trail, both in the Atwood's Brook to the Causeway area, and also from the Causeway through to the end of the trail where the road intersects with Highway #3 at the Horizon Motel.

Mr. Embree emphasized that the Association has education and etiquette programs which advocate respectful use of the trails. The Association has already developed 25 kilometers of trails within the Municipality of Barrington which are currently in use.

Members of the public then brought up various issues in regards to having motorized vehicles on the Barrington Bay Trail. These primarily included lack of etiquette and the abuse of the trails by off-highway vehicle drivers. It was apparent from comments of the public that vehicle drivers frequently drive at excessive speeds which may be dangerous to others using the trail, especially to pedestrian traffic. They emphasized that off-highway vehicle users seem to have very little regard for other users of the trail.

It was suggested that speed limit signs should be placed on the trail and that barriers should be placed on the trail which would reduce the possibility of excessive speeds.

The ATV Association and Trail Association were also concerned with speeders and are continually educating off-highway vehicle owners and policing the trails by the use of trail wardens. Wardens provided by the Association will patrol the trail regularly, will talk to and educate trail users, will take notes of those abusing the trail, and report them to the RCMP and the Department of Natural Resources. When possible they will also pick up litter along the trail.

Concern was expressed that the Barrington Bay Trail is a nature trail and that this is being threatened by the use of off-highway vehicles. The Barrington Bay Trail is seen as more than just a trail, it is also a nature park for those who have no other place to walk in the community. It is often used by local residents and by people from all areas of the Municipality who come there to walk along Barrington Bay.

The question was raised as to what will happen when this trail is shared with 4-wheelers. There will be noise and fumes on the trail that will affect the walkers.

Concern was also expressed about the anonymity of drivers because they wear helmets and frequently do not have license plates on their off-highway vehicles, which makes it impossible to identify them.

It was suggested that an alternative route be developed for motor vehicle traffic.

It was also suggested that vehicles and pedestrians on the same trail do not mix and the Trail Association does not appear to have any significant control over users of the trail.

It was also suggested that in other areas permits are issued to off-highway vehicles for use of trails during specific events, and also it may be possible to designate use of the trail at specific times during the day for off-highway vehicles.

It was suggested that Wireless Road might be a viable alternative, however this alternate route was deemed to be not advisable by the Department of Natural Resources.

It was reiterated that the trail is for all residents of the Municipality and is being used by many residents from all areas of the Municipality.

It was also suggested that the Barrington Bay Trail is not the same as a woodlands trail. This trail is in the downtown and central commercial area of the community and follows Barrington Bay which is an attractive walk for people of all ages.

It was suggested that separate trails are needed for off-highway vehicles. There was some question as to when a decision regarding the use of the trail would be made. There is a municipal election in the very near future and the same councillors who are here this evening may not be present afterwards. When the decision is made is up to the discretion of Council.

It was suggested that one of the conditions for the use of the trail by the off-highway vehicles would be that barriers be included at strategic locations in order to reduce this possible speed of vehicular traffic along the trail.

It was also suggested that the trail be opened for a trial period to off-highway vehicles from Atwood's Brook to the Cape Sable Island Causeway, and if the operation of the trail during this trial period was satisfactory, the rest of the trail could be converted to multi-use trail. The RCMP would be willing to do foot patrols on the trail if it is open for vehicle use.

The meeting was informed by the President of the ATV Association that there will be a Fun Run of off-highway vehicles on October 13th. This Fun Run will begin at Atwood's Brook and will go through along the former CNR right of way to Yarmouth. There will be local commercial benefits from this type of activity along the trail.

It was strongly suggested that the time to develop the trail is now.

It was also suggested that the abusers of the trail are in a minority and they should not be allowed to affect the use of the trail for the majority of off-highway vehicle users.

It was reiterated that the Woodland Multi-Use Trail Association is asking for use of the conversion of the portion of the trail from Atwood's Brook to the Cape Sable Island Causeway, for now, as a first phase in further developing the trail in this area.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed discussion of this matter, the meeting was adjourned by the Warden at 8:55 p.m.

Warden

Secretary for the Meeting

On website October 3, 2012.