

**Samuel Wilmot Nature Area Management Advisory Committee  
(SWNAMAC)  
MINUTES**

If this information is required in an alternate format, please contact the Accessibility Coordinator at 905-623-3379 ext. 2131.

**Date:** March 8, 2022

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Place:** Held Virtually via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT: All members

**1. Call to Order**

**2. Additions to the Agenda – timing and manner of distribution of agenda**

- **Newcastle Fall Festival - participation**

**3. Adoption of the Agenda –** moved by Tom Hossie, seconded by Leo Blindenbach that the agenda, with additions, be approved. **CARRIED**

**4. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s) –** moved by Kate Potter, seconded by Rod McArthur that the minutes of the SWNAMAC meeting of February 8, 2022 be approved. **CARRIED**

**5. Status Reports/Updates**

1. Signage re Bridge Surfaces and Re Cyclists/Hikers – Ken advised that the signs have been produced and will be installed as weather and winter-related workload permits
2. Trail Markers through old growth forest – Brian and Carmen reported that they had installed the new markers on the previous Saturday
3. Treatment Plant Study –. The minutes of the meeting held with Durham Region and members of the SWNAMAC had been received shortly before the present meeting. Brian had circulated them to all members. Considerable discussion took

place. Those present at the meeting with the Region advised that they were impressed with the thoroughness of the meeting and the degree to which the regional team respected and responded to the concerns raised. Two issues require more information:

- 1) the estimated length of time that trail access from the Toronto Street parking lot would be closed;
- 2) how public safety can be maintained should people choose to use the makeshift trail south of the storm drainage pond during closure of the main trail. The regional team indicated that it would work with our committee and the appropriate staff from the Municipality to address this concern. Brian noted that he had advised the regional team that he or other committee members would be happy to conduct a walk- about with the regional team to familiarize it with the “auxiliary” trail.

Related to this is the issue of ensuring vehicles do not access the nature area via this route. It was noted that the large stone barriers that once blocked access have been removed.

Staff representative Ken and Chairperson Brian will look into these two items.

4. Traffic/Usage Survey – Kate reported that she had reworked the forms that Brian provided from our 2012 survey. She will circulate the “ new” forms to the committee for review and comment. Further work will be done on the forms prior to our next meeting with a view to beginning the survey in May, 2022.

5. Calendar/Chart of Activities – Kate added our annual bird box cleanout to the calendar for early April and will add the date of a spring cleanup once determined. Leo offered to coordinate this event again this year. We may also be able to do another wildflower planting event in May depending on the availability of funding. Leah will provide Brian with a contact person at OPG re this matter.

6. Interpretative Signage/QR Codes Project – Tom advised that draft narratives had been provided for several of the topics agreed upon at our last meeting. Others are underway. Two other narratives will be prepared: one on Invasive Species by Tom, one of the hybernaculum by Brian

Kate was working to resolve a technical issue with access to the one-drive repository of the drafts so all committee members could see them and comment. Discussion took place around how to place the QR markers themselves. Options include affixing them to existing interpretative signage, free standing posts or benches . Tom pointed out that the system used in Orono Crown Lands ( posts ) was a good model. Meg asked if we could incorporate audio so young people not

yet able to read could hear the information. Tom responded that this is certainly possible, probably by having someone read/record the narratives. This will be explored further. On a related matter, Tom and Kate will continue to work on a spring scavenger hunt using the digital/QR approach.

## **6. Items “ on hold “:**

- 1. Storm Drainage Pond**
- 2. Butternut Tree Planting**
- 3. Scouting/Birdhouse Project**
- 4. Silt fencing along waterfront trail**
- 5. Mowing of wildflower garden – Lakeshore**

## **7. Other Business**

1)Timing and manner of distribution of agenda. The current method involves submitting the agenda to the municipality then having it returned to the chair for distribution. This seems to be an unnecessary step and builds in an extra delay. Ken will look into the possibility of having the agenda sent directly by municipal staff to members once it has been received and formatted properly ( the formatting has been an issue ) If this can be arranged, Brian will endeavor to submit the agenda to the municipality no later than the Thursday prior to each meeting.

**2) Newcastle Fall Festival** – Kate advised that this year’s event will be held on October 1<sup>st</sup>. We have participated in the past and it was agreed that we should do so again. This will be added to the event calendar.

## **8. Round Table – All Members**

Kristin – would like to assist with the bird box cleanup this year.

Tom – pointed out the extensive erosion along the bluffs along Lakebreeze and that someone had been pruning black locusts in that area. The latter is not necessarily a problem except that they do provide some measure of stability to the soil, thereby slowing erosion .There is also a safety issue because of the erosion of the bank and many people have been seen walking very close to the edge. Ken will visit the area in question to assess the situation ( it was noted that this is NOT part of the Nature Area) It was also suggested that the “ mow line “ be moved inward a couple of feet.

Kate – reported that an injured swan had been rescued and taken to a rehab centre recently

Carmen – commented that there were a lot of older trees damaged or down in the eastern portion of the old growth forest

Rod – enquired about the status of parking just north of the access point to the waterfront trail along Toronto Street. At one point during work on Toronto Street, there had been discussion about the possibility of having some angled parking incorporated into the road project. It appears that this was NOT included in the project.

Brian – pointed out that related to Rod’s comments was the issue of having a proper gating/chain system installed at the point of access to the Hydro corridor to prevent unauthorized vehicles from accessing SWNA in that way. Ken will look into this.

Leah – advised that OPG has been working with a local high school to produce bee houses. A number of these could be made available to us for use in SWNA. Leah will look into this further.

Leo- reported that a bald eagle had been sighted in the vicinity of Bond Head

Corinna – offered her continued support to the committee as Council representative

**9. Next meeting** – Tuesday April 12, 2022 ( virtual or in-person TBD )

**10. Adjournment** – moved by Kate, seconded by Leo that the meeting be adjourned.