

Fall News and Updates for Halifax North West Trails...September 2013

I hope you all have enjoyed walking and hiking on the trails of the Halifax North West Trails Association region, or elsewhere in the province and beyond. Personally, I had a chance to revisit some favourites and new trails including the Keji Seaside loop, now reopened. We know the Linear Trail is busy, with over 10,000 users - walkers and cyclists - in each of the past 3 months. To try out some new trails around the province, consider the many fall offerings posted at www.Hikenovascotia.ca. I will be leading a walk to **Blue Mountain** on September 29, see registration details on page 1. Dust off your bicycle and join friends and family at **Switch...Open Street Sunday**....September 8, 10-3 along Agricola St - Bell Rd. - South Park St. Go to www.switchhfx.ca for details.

In early August, the province announced the designation of over 13% land protection. Included in this is a 465-ha expansion of the **Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes** Wilderness Area. HNWTA is partnering with other community groups to begin planning for trails in the WA. Open Houses will happen once funding/visioning/mapping have all been put in place according to the NS Environment's 14 step process - stay tuned, we want and need your input. HRM has not shared any progress on the Regional Park land acquisition.

September gives way to meetings and activities, a necessary part of 'progress' in our region which brings new opportunities for trails and walking, not always connected however!

Metro Transit is about to begin a major consultation process re routes, possible changes and mapping. This process will include two series of public consultations with the first meetings happening in September. The meeting on the peninsula will be Sept 9 at St Agnes Church Hall, Mumford Rd. There will also be an online survey. Please check their website at <http://halifax.ca/movingforwardtogether/> for details soon to be posted! There will be no meeting in our region so plan to attend at St Agnes or Sept 11 in Lower Sackville or Sept 12 in Dartmouth, Holiday Inn. Plan to share your transit needs with regards to connectivity with the trails and pathways in your neighbourhood and suggest new route ideas to make transit work better for our region and you.

You will want to note a lack of recent community input regarding the decision made by Council on July 23rd to site the new **Lacewood Terminal** on Lacewood/Radcliffe - now proposed in the last wooded area along this already busy corridor...an \$8million investment in a large treed gully, adjacent to the Canada Games Centre but isolated from retail and lacking a sense of safety for riders after nightfall.

<http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/130723ca11112.pdf>

An alternate proposed site at the current commercial centre, Clayton Park

Shopping Centre, should be given reconsideration linking Dunbrack as a corridor for high frequency (10 minute) service, like the Portland Hills area currently enjoys. Contact your councillor to discuss details on this 'common sense' approach to transit oriented development.

September 18 is the public meeting, after the Council decision was made, to plan the 12-bay terminal. Plan to attend and let your wishes known. If unable to attend, please contact Transit Planner Patricia Hughes: hughesp@halifax.ca

Let your Councillor know you look forward to community engagement on this and future community issues; as always we are looking for open and transparent decision making.

September 15, 2pm - Cabin Lake Trail - come out and celebrate as we view the interpretive panel, funded by the HRM Community Grants program and TD FEF. Join us on the trail at Transom Drive, off Starboard Drive (approach from Larry Uteck opposite Bedros Lane). An interpreted trail walk will follow, see link for details.

<http://www.halifaxnorthwesttrails.ca/Events/Events-Hikes/>

Let us know what you are up to on the trails...we will be extending the Linear Trail towards Ramsbrook Court in Mount Royale in the coming weeks and doing maintenance on the Mainland Common Loop trail.

Happy Trails,
Bob McDonald, Chair,
Halifax North West Trails