

Wood Islands & Area Development Corporation

13056 Shore Road,
Wood Islands, Prince Edward Island, C0A 1B0
(902) 962-3761 office,
(902) 969-0023 cell,
wiadc@woodislands.ca,
www.woodislands.ca



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Good Day CAO Bob, Mr Mayor and Councillors

Thank you for your message! We are pleased to share with you what we know about the origins and progress of the Strategic Plan to revitalize Wood Islands Harbour and environs. Following are your questions and our answers:

- **What was the time period for the consultation process for the *Wood Islands Strategic Development Plan*?**

It all started with a chance meeting with Darlene Compton on the day the Province bulldozed the much-loved Fishing Village in Wood Islands Park. We made a proposal and received some seed money to begin the process of building a new village. Darlene was most helpful to get us going! The WIADC Board decided to ask a number of prominent local residents familiar with area to join a Steering Committee to promote the replacement of the Fishing Village - some 10-12 people. We first met in early November 2020. The Steering Committee made this whole process possible. Their support gave the small WIADC Board courage and confidence.

We interviewed and then hired an architect to suggest conceptual designs. The architect met with the Board and the Steering Committee and presented a plan the was agreeable to all. With that plan, in the summer of 2021, we applied to an ACOA program and caught the attention of Ms Marilyn Murphy who insisted we take a big-picture look at the whole Harbour area. She was most encouraging and, partnering with the Province, funded the hiring of a consultant to create the Strategic Plan. We hired the excellent team of Harvey Sawler and Dan Glenn. It was in the thick of Covid but the Steering Committee and the Board first met the Consultants over a snowy bonfire in January of 2022.

- **How were the area residents involved and/or invited to attend the consultations?**

The consultants worked furiously from mid-December 2021 to April of 2022. They designed a grand plan for the whole area, very thoughtful, very creative! The Board and the Steering Committee were favourable impressed, too! Twice during the winter of 2022 we advertised public meetings in the Belfast News. Please see the attached February and April editions of the Newsletter. The meetings were not well-attended. It was still in Covid time....

- **Which government organizations were involved in the consultation process for that Plan?**

Hon Darlene Compton, Hon Lawrence MacAulay, ACOA and PEI Dep't of Rural Economic Development, PEI Dep't of Tourism, PEI Dep't of Transportation and Public Works, Heritage PEI, Heritage Canada and many other provincial bureaucrats.

- **Is there more public consultation planned for this Project? Or has it already been approved?**

We are in the conceptual planning stage for 95% of the project. We do have construction drawings for the work on the exterior of the Lighthouse - but no others yet. So the next step is to search for funding to hire the consultants to create the construction drawings. There is still a mountain of work before we need a shovel. And during that time we will have public meetings - as many as needed to satisfy all concerns.

- **The report that the Federal Government commissioned entitled: *The Transportation Assets Risk Assessments (TARA) - Wood Islands Ferry Terminal PEI* - Did the government accept the findings of that report? And/or use the results of that report in their consultation/approval process?**

No government official of any department has mentioned that report. However, in our recent Active Transportation Fund proposal we were provided with a Coastal Hazard Assessment from the PEI Dep't of Environment (attached).

The WIADC is, of course, aware that a climate change 'lens' is a requirement for a responsible assessment of any project. We know things will change in the future, We don't know when or by how much.

- **Who is on the current Board of Directors of WIADC?**

Dorothy Oulton, Daniel Emery, Gwyn Davies, Harvey Sawler, Kyle Cook, John Rousseau.

- **Will you be able to attend the meeting on may 17th?**

I am visiting family in Montreal at the moment but have decided to return home early in order to attend the meeting.

Accompanying me will be Mr Bill Drost who, with the assistance of ACOA and the PEI Dep't of Rural Economic Development, is our Project Officer. Mr Drost was hired in September, 2022, and has been working on the Strategic Plan to expand and sort out the very many details. I asked Mr Drost to consider and reply to the April 25th message you received from the former Manager of the Wood Islands Harbour Authority. Please see the attached to me from Mr Drost.

At this time we would like to share with you some of the progress on one of the aspects of the Strategic Plan. In December, 2022, Mr Dross, on behalf of the WIADC, completed an application to the Active Transportation Fund for funding to extend the Confederation Trail from Wood Islands Market (formerly Plough The Waves) to the Wood Islands Lighthouse. We have just recently heard that Minister Hudson ((Transportation and Public Works) has signed off on the project and it is now waiting for Treasury Board approval. This 2km route will, essentially, join the Trails of two provinces - a 'last spike' that will allow walking or biking Islanders and visitors to access the Trail safely and directly to and from Northumberland Ferries.

Regarding the 'water' project that the Rural Municipality of Belfast is generously helping with, Mr Drost is learning more and more about what is and will be possible to establish a supply of fresh water to the Wood Islands Park and Wood Islands Lighthouse. We hope to provide more detailed information to you in the near future.

In closing we share with you the experience of working on this project. We have noticed a 'feeling', some energy, in every government office, elected or bureaucrat, that this is Wood Island's 'time'. Time to show off the history and natural beauty of the area. Time to rebuild the magic of the old Fishing Village where kids of all ages played. Time to be included in the number one industry in Prince Edward Island: Tourism.

Looking forward to meeting with you on the 17th. Best regards,

John Rousseau

Chair, WIADC Board of Directors

902-962-4190 tel, 902-969-9335 cell

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