

**Councillor Steves and council members,**

*Garden City Conservation Society directors*  
Mike and Yvonne invited us to meet with them today, but we weren't able to manage it. We would have shared this with them, and now we'll share it with you too.

Garden City Conservation Society directors have come up with four improvements to recommend. For time reasons, I will mainly describe the *gaps* to fill.

*We do all agree* there has been further progress. Now, on to the four gaps.

First: On the Landscape Zones page (PDF page 59), we came across this image (which I've blurred for effect). There's a bulge of "Flex Field" into the bog area. I put a cutout of the bog area over the satellite image. The Flex Field includes part of the depression that enables the best sphagnum patch, which is labeled "Sphagnum bog sanctuary." The trail on the bog edge has to be a farm road with a diking role, and the construction equipment and the road's weight will affect the area. The route also needs to be well away from that sensitive spot to limit accidental damage by park users. The point is that *great* care is needed there. On the graphic, it is easy to fix, but we need to have the intent of *great* care too.

Second: Three pages into The Wetland part (PDF page 74), the plan still says "The predominant Scotch heather in the north-east corner is not native to Richmond, however, well suited to the bog environment." The heather has colonized far beyond that corner by now. After it moves into a sphagnum patch, it wipes out the sphagnum, which is the *keystone genus*. We can't have the ecosystem without the sphagnum (which we found lately is being quite resilient, but let's not press our luck). The legacy value of the bog would be lost. A decision whether to save the legacy is basic, so we recommend it be addressed now.

Third: In the Implementation part (PDF page 100), there's this: "selectively allow natural progression along the edges." There's been damage to world-class 180-degree panoramic natural views from the Garden City Lands area of the City Centre. We have a bit of a second chance because any edge trees can be planned to mitigate that loss of legacy and somewhat restore the legacy.

Fourth: The plan includes an ALR commitment that can become an ALR legacy, because the Lands are the best place in the world to celebrate it. However, that requires us to *embrace* the ALR on the Lands. The #22 and #23 fields still look like renamed areas for sports tournaments and large festivals that are not ALR uses. Also, the farmers market I heard about at an AAC meeting is not an ALR use. The future need is for a *farmgate* market, and that *is* an ALR use if half of what's sold is produced on the Lands. We recommend *celebrating the ALR* on the Lands.