

Armours Beach plans taking shape

GIBSONS

DECEMBER 15, 2013

IAN JACQUES/EDITOR

Plans for a revitalized Armours Beach area are starting to take shape.

At the Tuesday, Dec. 3 Gibsons council meeting, director of parks Wendy Gilbertson presented a preliminary conceptual design to council, a design that has been worked on by a volunteer community committee which was struck in July after a successful open house in May.

"The public's comments, customary use and the committee's opinions were considered in developing the plan," said Gilbertson in her report. "The committee worked through ideas and potential issues, striving to achieve recommendations that best satisfy the many interests of this location."

Gilbertson said the plan focuses on the waterfront and complements the many past, present and future marine activity related uses the park has been used for and is capable of accommodating. The plan also maximizes the site usage abilities by providing waterfront, land and building amenities.

Heritage considerations include the installation of arbutus trees, preservation of the old rock driveway wall and the provision of space for heritage story boards on the facilities and the site. Replacement of the existing concrete block shoreline wall with placed rock and walkway improvements are a must. There are also planned float improvements, improvements to the swimming area, better accessibility, public washrooms, additional benches and picnic area.

Gilbertson stressed to council that the plans were all preliminary, and that the work could be done in several phases, but that she wanted to get the plans to council so the process of development and building permits could be prepared and work could begin in 2014.

"I also want to make sure we have a good plan in place should a possible funding grant opportunity come up," she told council. "In order to get a grant you have to have a solid and complete plan ready to go."

In general, council was pleased with the progress of the committee and thanked the members for their work.

The plan will be made available at the municipal office as well as posted on the Town's website. The Town will also host a public open house sometime in January where the public can provide further feedback and comment and council has ensured that at least foreshore sea walk improvements, swimming area extensions and building demolition work be included in their 2014 budget discussions as the first steps in implementing the plan.