

James Bay Neighbourhood Association

The James Bay Neighbourhood Association (JBNA) focuses on land-use and quality of life within the community. Development reviews, gardening and food security, parks and the environment, and traffic/roadway use continue to receive close scrutiny, and community support where appropriate.

The 2026 Annual General Meeting of the JBNA was held, in person, at the James Bay Community Centre on April 14, 2026 at 6:00 pm. The following are acclaimed to the 2026-27 Board:

- President – Trevor Moat
- Treasurer – Franklin Stewart
- Secretary - unfilled
- Directors at Large – Pat McGuire and Kirk Buhne.

Keira Jackson continues as Vice-President.

The Board is permitted to appoint members-at-large and may do so at their first meeting.

The April 14, 2026 General Monthly Meeting of the JBNA starting at 7:00 following the Annual General Meeting. The meeting was Chaired by President Trevor Moat who welcomed residents to the meeting. Trevor began with a territorial acknowledgement.

Holland/Finlayson Point Biodiversity Initiative presented by **Jacklyn Jolicoeur, - a former professional forester who is an active volunteer within the environmental community.**

This initiative is a citizen-led designation to support a proposed Key Bio Area (KBA) for this area in our neighbourhood. KBAs are internationally recognized, scientifically identified sites that contribute significantly to the global persistence across a variety of ecosystems. KBAs are an effective tool for guiding conservation and stewardship across the Country. Federal, Provincial, Territorial and Indigenous governments as well as non-profit community organizations endorse and participate in identifying and stewarding KBAs.

The designation of Holland/Finlayson Point as a KBA will result in a mapped description and identification to support biodiversity elements, threatened species, and ecosystems. It will determine future plans for management of the site.

BC has the most KBAs in Canada. There are 15 existing KBAs in Victoria and this proposal at Holland/Finlayson Point.

Holland/Finlayson is a good candidate for a KBA. A pilot project has recorded current habitat conditions, plants, animals, and insects within the area. Evidence is being

gathered for a future preservation project. The area meets 3 criteria of critically endangered species:

1. Critically endangered species: the Dense Flowers Lupine and the Audouin Night Stalking Tiger Beetle;
2. Vulnerable Taxon*: Purple Sanicle**; and
3. Geographically Restricted Taxon: Audouin Night Stalking Tiger Beetle.

*A taxon is a scientific classification system

** Purple Sanicle is a plant.

The Holland/Finlayson Point area includes an archaeological culturally sensitive site, a municipal park, grassy meadow areas, sensitive ecosystems, and a migratory bird sanctuary. There are invasive grass species, but ongoing volunteer stewardship will decrease number of invasive species over time and help to preserve the native grasses that are on the site. Ongoing volunteer stewardship will decrease number of invasive species over time. There is funding for ongoing stewardship of KBAs.

For additional information or if you are interested in volunteering for this KBA initiative, go the www.inaturalist.org where you can find specific details about the initiative as well as information about how to participate.

The Past, Present, and Future of Royal BC Museum (RBCM): Museums and Community Building presented by James McGuire, Director of Indigenous Collections and Repatriation

James McGuire introduced himself with his Haida name. He acknowledge the recent loss of Songhees Elder Skip Dick who is being mourned by Ləkʷəŋən community, the Songhees and Xʷsepsəm (Esquimalt) Nations, the W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples.

James McGuire is a recent James Bay resident. He emphasized the important of communication with the community about the RBCM and how the Museum's difficult history came to be.

Mr. McGuire lived in Skidegate and is an expert in Haida culture, his culture. He provided an overview of a segment of our history when Europeans had not been on coast for more than 100 years and China was the prevailing economy.

High status Chinese loved sea otter fur and the Coastal Indigenous Peoples were experts in harvesting sea otter pelts. There was a reciprocal relationship between the late 1700s and 1850s that changed dramatically when settlers introduced small box to Indigenous Peoples drastically reducing their populations.

In 1862 the federal government passed legislation to ban the carving of poles, speaking of native languages, the traditional exchange of gifts and cultural practices. By 1902, when Charles Frederic Newcomb was removing poles from Indigenous villages, there were only 540 Haida left.

Haida Gwaii has identified ancient sites, including a fishing village now under 150' water dating from before Cedar trees grew in BC (600 years ago).

The Haida ways of being :

- Respect for all beings
- Respect for ourselves
- Respect for all existence

Haida resided in longhouses with 30 or more people and that is where children were raised. The living generation accepts the responsibility to ensure that Haida heritage is passed on to following generations. Everything depends on everything else – a universal truth. It is essential to seek consent from others when building community.

Giving and receiving or reciprocity is an essential step toward reconciling with a person. Mr. McGuire said you have to build a relationship with someone before you can reconcile with that person. Mr. McGuire reminded us that “Truth and Reconciliation” has to start with truth, but that we have yet to tell the truth about our colonizing history. He said acknowledging truth is not a way to judge, but to say what happened. Once spoken, truth exists and we can move toward reconciliation.

He said the RBCM has never spoken the truth. Museums have adopted a colonial practice which has misused, mislabeled, and misappropriated objects and bodies of Indigenous People for decades.

However, starting in 2021 changes began to emerge with recognition that it is Indigenous People who are expert in their culture. Museums are transitioning due to federally mandated self-determination. Exhibits can be reconceptualized and we can learn from new conceptualizations.

Now the RBCM has a fluid relationship with BC's Indigenous People and with other museum institutions throughout the world. Haida cultural objects are dispersed throughout the world. There are 500,000 Indigenous artifacts in RBCM.

There isn't capacity for everything to be returned so those items on display are among the most powerful in helping non-Indigenous Peoples understand. The new galleries will demonstrate the history of those who came before in their own words, through self-determination.

Conversations are taking place about taking the story of BC's Indigenous People beyond the walls of the museum. Conversation and dialogue is the way we will come to understand and appreciate one another. Indigenous People do not want what we have. They want self-determination and respect.

James McGuire concludes by telling us to arm ourselves with truth; to stand your ground.

This was a compelling wide-ranging presentation with considerable interest demonstrated by those in attendance and was limited only by the clock. The JBNA invited James McGuire to please come again.

ABCD Workshop – An Asset Based Community Development opportunity.

Residents of James Bay are invited to attend one of three ABCD workshops where residents will be able to identify what ideas or projects they would like to achieve in our community. ABCD offers the opportunity for residents to decide what is important, what they want to achieve. It is a chance to meet your neighbours and share some ideas. There is no obligation, and no required outcome. Residents are invited to contribute their ideas and see what happens. Details can be found at <https://www.jbna.org/jbnas-abcd-workshop-series/> . Participation is free but registration is required as these workshops are open only to James Bay residents. For information about how to register, contact Calen at community@jbna.org.

JBNA Photo Contest

This spring the JBNA invited residents to submit photos depicting their favourite James Bay event, site or location to the organization for a photo contest. In total 16 photos were submitted. The winning photo was submitted by Terry Loeptky who will receive a gift card.

Community Comments

Councillor Matt Dell was in attendance to answer any questions from the participants.

The first question was with regard to the apartment under construction at Menzies and Niagara. The resident asked when will the developer of the property open the sidewalk on the west side of Menzies. There is no signage to inform vehicle traffic that pedestrians are crossing mid-block because the sidewalk on the westside is blocked. Councillor Dell agreed to look into the issue and report back.

A resident observed that the sx^wen'x^wəŋ taŋ'exw James Bay branch has not fulfilled a commitment when the library was built with regard to the ability of the public to reserve use of the Dr. Elmer Seniemten George room. The room was provided as a community

amenity contribution from the Capital Park Development as part of the Victoria Accord. The room was not accessible during Covid but since opening up again it is not possible for any community group or individual to book space in the room. The resident thanked Councillor Dell for recent efforts but noted that the outcome remained the same.

Councillor Dell noted that the Greater Victoria Public Library recently agreed to provide meeting space for the Board of the JBNA as a pilot project. Residents responded that the commitment for a meeting space was not a pilot project. Councillor Dell has made effort to resolve this issue and will follow up and report back.

Residents noted a dangerous situation at the intersection of Oswego and Michigan. Vehicles traveling west on Michigan Street lack sufficient sight lines to safely cross Oswego or turn left onto Oswego Street. It was suggested the intersection was the site of many vehicle collisions. Councillor Dell will take these concerns to the City's Engineering department which is responsible for traffic issues.

A resident expressed disappointment that Councillor Dell voted to allow the proposal for development at 50 Government to return to Council. In response, Councillor Dell said he thought the potential for some affordable rental housing was worthy of consideration. He said he didn't approve of the project, but wanted to give direction to developer so he could return with a proposal that would work. He believed it was appropriate for Council to provide some direction so that the developer can make a project that will work for James Bay. Following was a brief discussion about the history of this particular site.

A question was raised about the ongoing development of the Chevron gas station at Menzies and Michigan. Council Dell said he believed that the property is for sale.

A resident thanked Councillor Dell for having the developer do some yard maintenance on the properties in the 100 block of Menzies Street. It was noted that 2 of the 3 houses are vacant and derelict but the property is not being developed. There is frustration among the community about the lack of maintenance of the properties that could have provided rental accommodation.

A resident expressed disappointment with the process that resulted in the new OCP, in particular the decision to move the James Bay boundary without consultation which enables bigger developments in the area.

There was a suggestion that the City could better coordinate decisions about traffic restrictions on access roads to and from James Bay. The Councillor agreed.

Jane's Walk

The JBNA is sponsoring the 2nd annual Jane's Walk, a free citizen-led walking tour of our neighbourhood held from May 1 to May 3, 2026. For more information go to www.jbna.org .

The next General Monthly meeting of the JBNA will be held on Tuesday, May 12, 2026. If you would like to receive notices, email jbna@jbna.org.