



MINUTES

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 2010-SEP-08 AT 4:15 PM
CITY HALL BOARD ROOM, 455 WALLACE STREET

Present:	Shelley Serebrin, Chair Joan Wagner Anne Kerr	Wally Wells Charles Thirkill Meg Savory
Guests:	Al Kemp, Urban Forester, Parks	
Staff:	Rob Lawrance, Environmental Planner	Rebecca Tubbs (Recording Secretary)
Regrets:	Jeff Thomas	Jim Kipp

1. Call to Order

Chair S. Serebrin called the meeting to order at 4:26 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda & Late Items

The agenda was approved as presented with the addition of the following late items:

a) New ACE representative needed for PNAC (J. Wagner):

J. Wagner, who represents ACE on the Plan Nanaimo Advisory Committee (PNAC), has decided to resign her position. J. Wagner requested that the Committee nominate a new ACE representative. M. Savory volunteered and was nominated to be the representative. A. Kerr and J. Wagner volunteered to serve as back-up representatives if M. Savory is unavailable.

MOVED by A. Kerr, SECONDED by C. Thirkill, that M. Savory replace J. Wagner as ACE representative on PNAC.

CARRIED.

b) Moorecroft Property Petition (J. Wagner):

J. Wagner distributed this item and asked members if they were interested in signing a petition given to her by NALT that expresses support to preserve the 89-acre property known as "Moorecroft". She distributed the petition as well as an information brochure.

c) Speaker David Korten, Victoria, 2010-SEP-30 (S. Serebrin):

Mr. Korten is a lecturer and author of "Agenda for a New Economy: From Phantom Wealth to Real Wealth". He will be hosting a discussion on 2010-SEP-30, 5:30 pm, at the Victoria City Hall. S. Serebrin offered to carpool with any members interested in attending. She will e-mail more information to members after the meeting.

3. Adoption of Minutes (2010-JUL-07)

a) J. Wagner requested that "*in Manitoba*" be added to the following statement:

"Habitat for Humanity has made LEED certification their standard in Manitoba."

MOVED by C Thirkill, SECONDED by M. Savory, that the 2010-JUL-07 Minutes be adopted as amended.

CARRIED.

4. Items Arising from Minutes

None.

5. Budget (\$1,739)

6. Delegation

a) A. Kemp, Urban Forester – Urban Forest Management Strategy - Next Steps:

S. Serebrin welcomed A. Kemp, the Urban Forester for the City of Nanaimo, to the meeting. He has been working with members of City staff to complete the Urban Forest Management Strategy (UFMS). It provides a framework for future policy creation on forestry management in Nanaimo.

A. Kemp explained that the previous ACE Committee provided input to the UFMS. The UFMS establishes a set of principles, objectives and initial actions, all organized within a series of modules. Once the modules were drafted, a number of open houses were held and a public survey on public perceptions and awareness of various forestry management issues was taken. A. Kemp provided members with an overview of the modules.

A. Kemp is currently working on updating the Tree Protection Bylaw (module 7). The Bylaw was originally created in 1993 to respond to the clear-cutting of large developments in the north end. Because there was no strategy in place at that time, many parcels of land were being clear-cut and standing vacant for long periods of time. In reviewing tree protection bylaws from other municipalities, it was obvious that Nanaimo was not keeping up with current practice.

How does the UFMS relate specifically to the Zoning Bylaw in regards to landscaping requirements? A. Kemp explained that the documents work together and that different zones have different requirements. Depending on the property, landscaping requirements for new development are addressed both fully by the Zoning Bylaw, and generally in the UFMS.

R. Lawrance said that more work needs to be done incorporate the Green Design Guidelines and some of the UFMS's overarching principles into the Zoning Bylaw.

A. Kerr noted that requirements for native plants are included in the UFMS (Parks and Natural Areas Management, module 2), but that she would like to see more specific references to native planting as an option for new developments. The only reference to native plant requirements in the Zoning Bylaw is a note to retain existing native plants (Level 2, Landscaping Treatments).

R. Lawrance explained that part of the intent of the Green Design Guidelines is to provide context and background to what is being requested under the Zoning Bylaw. When using the zoning bylaw, both documents should be used together.

M. Savory asked A. Kerr how she would like to integrate requirements for native plants into a zoning bylaw. A. Kerr referred to, for instance, Section 17.1.2. *"landscaping should be composed of two or more of the following landscape techniques....."* She would like a requirement for the use of native plants to be added to that list of techniques, or another level of treatment added (instead of just retaining existing vegetation). For instance, the requirement could be that at least 35% of all plantings be drought resistant, or that 25% of all vegetation be native.

A. Kemp explained that not all native plants are suitable for all jobs. A. Kerr said that the RDN has created a list of examples of suitable native plants.

What criterion is used when deciding which trees should be removed during a new development? What criterion is provided to developers in terms of new construction? A. Kemp explained that the criterion is partially covered in the Tree Protection Bylaw, which is currently being updated. Currently, developers are required to submit a tree management plan, completed by a licensed arborist or forester, as well as an environmental assessment. Trees cannot be removed until these requirements have been met. There are, of course, some groups who remove everything on-site, despite the requirements. The City would like to start creating incentives for those groups who decide to retain existing trees, etc. instead of focusing on the negative consequences for those who do not comply. A. Kemp explained that other than the Tree Protection Bylaw, and increasing fines, education is the most important tool, as some people don't care about being fined heavily.

S. Serebrin asked what type of fine schedule is used. A. Kemp said that because the Bylaw does not currently include a fine schedule, there is no way to legally fine offenders. During the course of updating the Bylaw, the fines will be increased.

J. Wagner suggested that guidelines be developed for appropriate replacement specimens for residential lots as a public reference.

M. Savory noted that she would like ACE to review the Tree Protection Bylaw once it has been drafted. Once Parks is comfortable with the Bylaw, it will be brought forward to advisory bodies for input.

R. Lawrance suggested that members review the document and read through the Implementation section of each module. They may be able to identify roles for ACE within those points, which could be forwarded to A. Kemp. S. Serebrin thanked A. Kemp for attending the information and providing some useful information to the Committee.

7. Correspondence, Handouts, Notices

a) Exclusive Golf Course is Organic – article:

J. Wagner had forwarded this article to R. Lawrance for information. R. Lawrance distributed the article to members prior to the meeting.

b) Green Building Tour – brochure:

R. Lawrance distributed brochures to members at the meeting for information. He explained that part of the process in coming up with emission targets for the RDN's Growth Management Strategy is to raise public awareness about green building. The event is a series of short seminars from builders, architects, etc., followed by a tour of local green buildings. R. Lawrance will be hosting a portion of the event at the Oliver Woods Community Centre on 2010-SEP-14. Registration is required for the tour portion of the event.

c) Council Update Schedule – circulate:

Circulated.

8. Ongoing Business

a) Sustainability Action Plan:

R. Lawrance brought a couple of copies of the plan to the meeting for review. He will e-mail it to members for information after the meeting. It is currently in draft format. R. Lawrance explained that it is being created as part of the Implementation of the OCP (the Implementation Strategy recommends that a sustainability strategy should be created) and because the province has set legislation for local governments to adopt emission reduction targets. The intent of the Sustainability Action Plan is to identify what is currently being done in the community and by at-large stakeholder groups, energy-emissions wise. R. Lawrance will meet with these groups over the course of the fall.

A. Kerr said that although the overall goal is sustainability, it needs to be better defined which short-term goals will allow the overall goal to be reached. R. Lawrance agrees. A. Kerr feels that to avoid being misleading, the document should specify that it is being “targeted toward GHG targets”, because all aspects of sustainability are not being dealt with immediately. R. Lawrance agrees that the title could be revised or that the intro could specify that the City will tackle meeting emissions reduction targets first, and build on other elements of sustainability later. R. Lawrance explained that currently the Plan's driving force is GHG reduction targets, but that there are other efforts far beyond emissions reduction that are being taken that could be incorporated into the Plan as well.

W. Wells noted that with the financial priorities that Council has set may conflict with the financial implications of meeting these emissions targets.

R. Lawrance added that he has submitted a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the City to have a technical Energy and Emissions study completed. The study will look at emissions/energy use from a land use perspective, the OCP's maps, population projections, etc., will provide information on the City's energy emissions profile, and will suggest what needs to be done now to meet the GHG reduction targets. R. Lawrance has received seven proposals and will be

selecting a consultant shortly to report back in January. The study is being co-funded by BC Hydro under their Sustainable Communities program.

J. Wagner thinks it's a good idea to focus the Plan on energy emissions reductions and to include in the introduction, how it will tie into a larger sustainability plan for Nanaimo as the resources become available.

C. Thirkill noted that sustainability is like a jigsaw puzzle with many pieces. Different groups need to take care of different pieces because there are too many for any one group to deal with. If you make small steps and actually accomplish something, it's worth it. W. Wells said that while many of these documents are documents of the City (corporation), they need to be recognized as documents of and by residents. To engage the community, it must become the Community's sustainability plan. Residents need to help to make it happen because the City (corporation) cannot be expected to do it all.

During the next meeting, ideas for the stakeholder meeting, the introduction section of the plan, things that need to be added, performance indicators, etc. shall be discussed.

9. New Business

a) Memo from J. Kinch, Manager of Building Inspections RE: Greywater Recycling:

R. Lawrance explained that the memo is a letter of encouragement to the ACE Committee to help create new policy to encourage greywater reuse and water conservation. The key paragraph is the second from the last. It states that Mr. Ron Hartman (company owner) or J. Kinch could attend a future meeting to present information and elaborate on the issue.

M. Savory would like Mr. Hartman or J. Kinch to attend a future meeting and give a general presentation on greywater reuse.

MOVED by M. Savory, SECONDED by C. Thirkill, that ACE invite J. Kinch and/or Mr. Ron Hartman to a future meeting to discuss general greywater reuse and define a role for ACE to encourage its application.

CARRIED.

b) Schedule E (Zoning Bylaw) "Fine Schedule" (M. Savory):

M. Savory presented this item to ACE before she knew about the Zoning Bylaw rewrite that is taking place (the issue may be during in the rewrite process). The existing Zoning Bylaw includes a Fine Schedule at the back. She feels that the fines for environmental infractions should be higher, in particular, the following:

- Watercourse Leave Encroachment - \$100
- Emit noxious matter - \$100

R. Lawrance said that the revised Zoning Bylaw will include a Fine Schedule at the back of the document. ACE asked if they could recommend that fines for environmental infractions be increased.

R. Lawrance said there may be some examples from other local governments that we can use.

R. Lawrance will check on what has been done to the Fine Schedule to-date and possibly provide members with a copy. M. Savory will look into this issue more for discussion at the next meeting.

R. Lawrance will check with Current Planning staff to see if there is a revised schedule available.

W. Wells noted that the whole idea of zoning is to restrict or allow use. He feels that enforcement issues do not belong in a zoning bylaw.

c) Water Levels in Harewood Creek (M. Savory)

M. Savory brought this item to the Committee because her neighbours have been complaining about this issue. The City controls the water levels in the Harewood reservoir. The levels have been shut down to almost zero and there is almost no water in the creeks. Neighbours are concerned about low water levels with trout in the creek. The issue has been raised with Public Works but they do not seem to have an environmental perspective on the issue. Although the water in the reservoir is being held for fire safety purposes, she is concerned about the environmental impact. Hopefully the Public Works department is taking environmental impact into consideration as well as fire safety.

C. Thirkill noted that there may be no water flowing through the creek but there are some small pools of water. The only practical solution he could think of would be to increase the overall storage in the reservoir which may mean adding six or seven inches to the spillway.

R. Lawrance added that creeks go through a natural cycle of over the year. C. Thirkill explained that there are hundreds of thousands of fish that die due to low water levels. Fish can hide in various small pools and reservoirs, and sometimes bury themselves in the gravel. He doesn't see ACE being able to do very much.

10. Council Update

- a) 2010-JUL-12 (?):
No report.
- b) 2010-AUG-09 (?):
No report.

11. Next Meeting

The next regular meeting is scheduled for 2010-OCT-13 in the City Hall Board Room at 4:15 pm.
M. Savory will act as Chair.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:42 pm.

APPROVED:

Chair

Date