



MINUTES

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 2010-JUN-09 AT 4:30 PM
CITY HALL BOARD ROOM, 455 WALLACE STREET

Present:	Jim Kipp Shelley Serebrin Anne Kerr Meg Savory	Wally Wells Charles Thirkill Joan Wagner, Chair Jeff Thomas
Staff:	Rob Lawrance, Environmental Planner	Rebecca Tubbs (Recording Secretary)
Guests:	Dale Lovick, NALT	

1. Call to Order

Chair J. Wagner called the meeting to order at 4:29 pm.

A. Kerr explained that D. Lovick, Co-Chair of NALT, has requested to give a brief presentation to the Committee about NALT's native plant minimum requirement proposal.

2. Approval of Agenda & Late Items

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

- a) Native Plant Proposal – Presentation by D. Lovick, NALT
- b) Community Peace Gardens – Fundraising Dinner Announcement
- c) News Article - Council names rare plant to be Nanaimo's official floral emblem
- d) Conserving our Native Bees Workshop
- e) Green Building Conference – Funding Request

M. Savory arrived at 4:34 pm.

3. Adoption of Minutes (2010-May-12)

- a) J. Wagner requested that the following statement be revised:

"J. Wagner does not think that people will have difficulty with identifying invasive species on their own, ~~especially with the resources available today such as the internet~~ as they are now listed on the City's website and photos are available through Google images."

- b) S. Serebrin requested that the following statements be revised:

"S. Serebrin suggested that the ~~Committee~~ City of Nanaimo allow the public to know that the bylaw will be monitored for the next six months and encourage them to provide feedback on ways of improvement." and

"S. Serebrin excused herself from the meeting at 5:30 pm so that she could give a presentation of the Committee's progress to the ~~School Board~~ SD68 Education Committee."

- c) M. Savory requested that the following statement be revised:

"J. Kipp noted that although the basic structure of the Economic Development Committee Commission has been set, they are still waiting for a rep from VIU. They were unable to get a ~~rep~~ position for an "environment community" representative on the Commission ~~the from the~~ "environment community"."

- d) A. Kerr requested that the following statement be revised:

"A. Kerr circulated an e-mail that she NALT received from an upset resident on Long Lake regarding their neighbor's removal of trees and vegetation within the watercourse protection area."

MOVED by C. Thirkill, SECONDED by A. Kerr, that the 2010-May-12 Minutes be adopted as amended.

CARRIED.

4. Items Arising from Minutes

- a) A. Kerr has found several definitions for "sustainability" online, which she thinks may be better suited than the "Bruntland" version, in light of the upcoming work on the Sustainability Action Plan. R. Lawrance explained that this can be discussed further under the "Mandate and Objectives" discussion under New Business, reminding the Committee that their focus should be on "environmental sustainability".
- b) J. Wagner asked whether or not A. Kemp, Urban Forrester, would be attending the meeting. R. Lawrance explained that he will attend a future meeting.

5. Budget (\$2,115)

6. Delegation

- a) Native Plant Proposal – D. Lovick, NALT (Late Item):
D. Lovick attended the meeting on behalf of NALT to ask the ACE Committee to consider recommending new policy to set specific requirements for including native plants in landscaping treatments in new development. He is familiar with the steps that Nanaimo has already taken in regards to native plants, but believes that targets for protecting existing or including new planting of native plants, should be required in all new developments. The use of native plants means less water and fertilizer requirements. He suggested that an incentive be a DCC reduction to reflect the use of native plants and vegetation retention.

W. Wells noted that although DCC reduction would cut costs for the development company, it would not cut costs to those who maintain it. A decrease in water rates, however, would serve as a real incentive to those who use and maintain the property.

A. Kerr has noticed Parks staff using more native plants in City landscaping and likes that they are setting an example for the rest of the City. Now is the time for the practice to move onto new developments. J. Kipp took a moment to credit the Parks Department on the work that they do around the City.

R. Lawrance explained that the information received by D. Lovick can be discussed in the future when addressing the Green Guidelines and the Urban Forest Plan. J. Kipp noted that once A. Kemp is able to give a presentation to the Committee, members can recommend on ways they would like to institute higher percentages of native plants in new developments. R. Lawrance suggested inviting G. Noble, Development Approval Planner, to attend the meeting to provide his perspective on the issue from a development application point of view.

J. Kipp excused himself from the meeting at 5:08 pm due to a prior commitment.

C. Thirkill explained that if the City implements requirements for native plants, the supply of these plants will have to meet the demand.

J. Wagner has had personal experience in learning how to care for native plants and emphasized the importance of practices over product. Without education, efforts to successfully use native plants will fail. S. Serebrin added that public schools should put greater emphasis on the knowledge and interaction of native plants and consider them in the school's landscaping.

R. Lawrance will invite A. Kemp, Urban Forrester, and G. Noble, Development Approval Planner, to a future meeting to explore the issue further.

C. Thirkill and J. Wagner mentioned the use of a plant salvage program as part of a native plant retention program/ policy.

W. Wells asked if there are requirements currently in place for native plants. R. Lawrance explained that there are references for using/protecting native plants in the OCP and the Steep Slope and ESA Development Permit Areas. There is some work to be done to update the General Design Guidelines (DPA 9) and the landscaping requirements within the Zoning Bylaw. A. Kerr asked if the Committee would have a chance to review the documents before they move ahead. She feels that it would be appropriate for the Committee to review them before a decision is made. R. Lawrance explained that there will be a chance to review the General Design Guidelines, but that the Zoning Bylaw is currently following a separate public process. R. Lawrance will check for any status updates. M. Savory noted that ACE would still be able to follow the public process.

The Committee thanked D. Lovick for his presentation before he excused himself from the meeting.

7. Correspondence, Handouts, Notices

a) Learning 4 a Change Workshop, 2010-JUN-29 & 30 - Funding Request

S. Serebrin explained that she would like to attend the two day workshop that focuses on community development, communication and learning, as well as building understandings within the community. The information gathered at the workshop could be applied to the various education programs that ACE is planning to implement, such as pesticide education.

R. Lawrance agrees that the information will be useful in figuring out how to approach the Sustainability Action Plan in the coming months. M. Savory feels that the workshop does not directly relate to the Committee enough to justify providing funding. J. Thomas is unsure if the course fits into an environmental perspective, but would appreciate feedback to share with the SFN community. W. Wells is concerned about what the presenters' real life background and experience may be.

S. Serebrin offered to e-mail the workshop organizer to request more information on the event.

MOVED By C. Thirkill, SECONDED by J. Wagner, that S. Serebrin be reimbursed for the cost (\$275) of attending the "Learning 4 a Change" workshop on 2010-Jun-29&30, subject to confirmation of the practical experience and credibility of the presenters.

CARRIED.

J. Thomas excused himself at 5:56 pm due to a prior commitment. He took a moment to share with ACE that he has enjoyed sitting on the Committee so far. R. Lawrance suggested that the ACE Committee meet with the SFN Council at some point to become more acquainted.

b) Community Peace Gardens Fundraising Dinner (Late Item):

The fundraising dinner will be held Thursday, 2010-JUN-10 at 4:00 pm in the main cafeteria of VIU. Tickets are \$75 or \$35-50 for students.

c) News article - Council names rare plant to be Nanaimo's official floral emblem (Late Item):

R. Lawrance noted that Council had approved the *Lotus Pinnatus* as Nanaimo's official floral emblem. To his knowledge, no other City has adopted an endangered (red-listed) species as their floral emblem. R. Lawrance asked C. Thirkill if he knew of any ways the emblem would be used by the City. C. Thirkill suspects that it will be used for things such as pins for visiting dignitaries and guests. He has already had many requests for hats and t-shirts. He is also interested in organizing a "wildflower tour" for cruise ship passengers.

- d) News Article & Conserving our Native Bees Workshop Poster (Late Item):
J. Wagner distributed the article to members for information. She noted that a workshop entitled "Conserving our Native Bees" is being held 2010-JUN-16, from 6:00 to 9:00 pm in the Cedar United Church (1944 Cedar Road). The poster will be forwarded to members via e-mail after the meeting.
- e) Green Building Conference, Funding Request, 2010-JUN-10 (Late Item):
J. Wagner distributed an e-mail prior to the meeting that summarized the Green Building Conference. It is being held by the Green Business Council and the cost is \$210 plus taxes. She will be making the trip to attend the tradeshow portion of the event, but is requesting that the Committee reimburse her for the cost of the conference portion.

A. Kerr is unsure whether the conference relates closely enough to ACE's mandate to justify her request, noting that ACE's mandate does not address building codes or affordable housing.

S. Serebrin asked how J. Wagner would use the information gathered at the conference toward the Committee's mandate or other green building initiatives. J. Wagner explained that she would use the information gathered at the conference primarily as a volunteer for the City, when needed, to provide feedback. She offered to take notes to share with the Committee, and for instance, share the notes from the "affordable housing" section with the City's Social Planner.

J. Wagner has also volunteered for the Green Design Guidelines working group. R. Lawrance explained that the working group, made up of building professionals and developers, had been meeting with himself and G. Noble to identify issues that could be addressed as part of the Design Guidelines (Green Design Guidelines) review. The working group identified that incentives need to be created for single-family residential development, in addition to what is covered under the General Design Guidelines. The Guidelines have since gone onto the staff review stage.

MOVED by M. Savory, SECONDED by W. Wells, that J. Wagner be reimbursed for the cost of attending the Green Building Conference (\$210 +taxes) on 2010-JUN-10.

CARRIED.

8. Ongoing Business

- a) Tour of Harewood Plains, 2010-MAY-22, debrief:
C. Thirkill noted that the tours (May 22, 29) were very successful. Councilor Pattje and Leonard Krog were in attendance. The last tour will be held this Saturday at 10:00 am (McKewan Road) and will last about two hours. He mentioned that the Harewood Plains Steering Committee will be meeting on 2010-JUN-16 at 5:30 pm in the Princess Royal Family Centre.

The Committee thanked C. Thirkill for his efforts with the *Lotus Pinnatus*.

- b) Green Business Focus Group, GLOBE Foundation – Debrief
R. Lawrance distributed copies of the notes from the focus group. The GLOBE Foundation has been touring the province to complete a high level study of roadblocks and opportunities for "green" business, on behalf of the provincial government. A report is currently in the making. The notes gathered at the focus group can be distributed to members via e-mail after the meeting.
- c) Cosmetic Pesticide Education Subcommittee (2010-MAY-18) Debrief:
R. Lawrance explained that at last meeting, subcommittee members requested that a brochure that is specific to the Bylaw be created. It was also decided to arrange a meeting with local retailers and landscape/maintenance companies to explain the bylaw and answer questions they may have. Staff members in attendance will include R. Lawrance, R. Churchill (Bylaw), and J. Plasteras (Parks). The invitations have been distributed.

W. Wells would like to distribute this brochure throughout the Chamber of Commerce.

R. Lawrance explained that the brochure will be sent out to all residents over the course of the summer in their user rates bill (25,000 copies). A. Kerr said that she would prefer that the brochures that are sent to residents in their user rates bill do not include the list of permitted pesticides, but rather provide a balance between what's permitted and what's not.

A. Kerr and J. Wagner do not think that the brochure should contain the list of permitted pesticides, but a link to the provincial website for more information. They would prefer a more positive tone to the brochure. R. Lawrance explained that this brochure is one part of a larger education program that provides information on alternatives, noting that it has already been sent to retailers and landscape/maintenance companies as information.

R. Lawrance requested that members send him their revisions to be reviewed. Once the revisions have been made, the brochure can be distributed for viewing before being distributed via e-mail to residents via user rates bill.

d) PowerPoint Presentation to SD68 Education Committee:

S. Serebrin provided members with a copy of her PowerPoint presentation as information. She recently presented it to the SD68 Education Committee, consisting of the director, trustees and staff.

They expressed interest in the following:

- sharing ideas about working together, especially in the area of cost sharing, sharing of facilities, etc.;
- an interest in “action programs” and stewardship education with partnerships;
- coordinating Parks, Recreation & Culture education/outreach programs with various schools;
- developing biking, walking and transit for travelling to school;
- developing communication between ACE and their own committee;
- sharing natural space such as streams, parks, local forest, etc. and using Parks staff as naturalists and educators; and
- connecting the school curriculum with the City’s Habitat Atlas.

S. Serebrin will send the feedback that she received, as well as a list of attendees, to members via e-mail after the meeting. She also suggested that she or another member of ACE attend SD68 meetings, and that a member of SD68 attend ACE meetings.

e) Long Lake Riparian Area Encroachment – Update:

R. Lawrance explained that two different courses of action were taken by the City, regarding the two scenarios in question:

Ross Road - The owner did not have a permit and did not inform the City that he would be clearing the vegetation. The City’s Bylaw Services Department is looking into legal action against the builder.

Long Lake - A third party arborist had attended the site to confirm that the trees needed to be removed. Due to safety concerns about lifting the trees over the house to remove them from the site, they dropped the trees into the lake. While doing that, permission was given to the remove the English Ivy on the ground. The homeowner has been cooperatively working with the City of Nanaimo and will be replanting and restoring the area with native vegetation.

A. Kemp, Urban Forrester, and K. Brydges, Bylaw Services, worked with the homeowner on this project. Although the process was followed, there needs to be a careful look at how to best avoid this in the future. A. Kemp and K. Brydges will be looking into how this can be achieved.

9. New Business

a) Committee Mandate and Objectives Revision:

Deferred until the next meeting. R. Lawrance will distribute information regarding the City’s Advisory Committees which deal with some aspect of “sustainability” via e-mail after the meeting. A. Kerr will circulate the definitions of “environmental sustainability” that she obtained online.

10. Council Updatea) 2010-Jun-07 (M. Savory):

M. Savory reported that the City was making a decision about which system they should use for the water treatment plant. They chose the most environmentally and cost friendly system.

11. Next Meeting

The next ACE meeting is scheduled for 2010-Jul-07 in the City Hall Board Room at 4:15 pm.
C. Thirkill to Chair.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 pm.

APPROVED:

Chair

Date

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