

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT
THURSDAY, 2008-MAR-06, BOARD ROOM, CITY HALL

Present:	Joy Cameron, Chair	Ron Brown
	Charles Thirkill	Chris Zamora
Guests:	Elizabeth Demattia	Nadine Schwager
	Shelley Serebrin	
Staff:	Rob Lawrance	Kevin Brydges
	Bruce Anderson	Deborah Jensen
	Jim Plasteras	Cindy Hall (Recording Secretary)
Regrets:	Steve Earle	Margaret Henigman
Absent:	Geoff Garbutt	Geraldine Manson
	Scott Northrup	

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. without a quorum.

2. Adoption of Minutes of 2008-Jan-08 & 2008-Feb-05:

Deferred to next meeting.

3. Approval of Agenda and Late Items:

The Agenda was approved with the following addition:

- Letter dated 2008-Feb-21 from Janet Irvine to Captain Doug Bell regarding smoke control, fire prevention and residential wood burning. Included with the letter was Bylaw No. 2083, 2005 from the District of Powell River.

The letter was distributed and the Chair advised that it would be placed on the next agenda for consideration, and that Ms. Irvine would be invited to the meeting.

4. Budget:

The budget information was received.

5. Delegation:

- a) Bruce Anderson, Manager of Community Planning and Deborah Jensen, OCP Planner - gave an update on the Official Community Plan 10-Year Review process:
- A working paper entitled "SustainNanaimo" was issued in the summer, followed up by highlighters explaining what policy revisions were being made to "Plan Nanaimo".
 - The Review is under the purview of the Plan Nanaimo Advisory Committee.
 - Some large, complicated Official Community Plan applications were received by the City after the Review began.
 - The City is now in a public consultation phase, which will wind up in a community forum on April 10th at Beban.
 - The most recent draft of the revised plan, called "planNanaimo" is on the City's website, plus a brief online survey.
 - A newspaper wrap giving information on the new draft plan will be distributed to all Nanaimo households that receive the Bulletin.
 - Displays will be put up at Woodgrove Mall on March 29 and Port Place Mall on April 5.
 - Comments will be accepted up until the third week in April.

- The draft plan will then be updated and the bylaw sent to Council for adoption in June (tentatively).
- The Review is basically to refine what is still valid in “Plan Nanaimo” which was based on the policies of “Imagine Nanaimo”, and to make sustainability more prominent. Social and economic goals have also been added.
- All of the amendments made to “Plan Nanaimo” were starting to make it look like a regulatory document. Are now looking at putting it back into a policy place and to give guidance to what can be done; i.e. sustainability.
- A major change will be realignment of the Urban Containment Boundary. Jingle Pot neighbourhood and Linley Valley will now be inside the UCB; however they will be within an urban reserve designation which will require a comprehensive plan prior to any development.
- Looking at an urban nodes and corridors concept to try to focus residential density on corridors that run between major residential nodes, and support transit along the corridors with more frequent service between the nodes.
- A separate “Mobility” map has been added showing trails, cycle routes and roads.

When asked why Harewood Plains was not included in the UCB realignment, R. Lawrance advised that other options are being considered by the City while working with the land owner to protect the environmentally sensitive areas. B. Anderson added that there are two options: exclude the area from the UCB and put a resource protection designation on it; or keep it in the UCB and developers would then have to go through the process of excluding the environmentally sensitive area from the UCB in order to develop it.

Rob commented on some of the changes to the previous environmental goal that will become Goal 5 in the new ‘planNanaimo’:

- More attention to energy and emissions management and encouraging green buildings in development.
- Alternate storm water and rainwater systems will have more focus.
- Comprehensive parking plans will be required.
- There will be a new focus on urban forestry.
- “Hazard Lands” will be included under one DPA.
- DPAs have been condensed and reduced to 9 areas from the current 25.
- Will be more focus on urban agriculture.
- The watercourse DPA has been updated to reflect the provincial riparian area regulation.

When asked about measurable indicators, B. Anderson noted that the City has adopted a Climate Change plan that includes targets that the City has to try to attain.

D. Jensen noted that comments regarding the draft plan can be submitted to plan.nanaimo@nanaimo.ca. There will also be opportunities for people to voice their opinions on an online survey, at the public forum on April 10th, and at the public hearing on the OCP bylaw during the formal adoption process at a later date.

When asked if there is anything really innovative being initiated by the City in the new Plan, B. Anderson advised that the City will be encouraging innovation and that what you do with what is in the Plan, is the exciting part. There is a sustainability checklist in the document to work with industry and to encourage and reward environmental design.

Another question from the Committee was whether innovations submitted by citizens could be included in the Plan. Bruce advised that they could if they “struck a chord with Council”.

B. Anderson and D. Jensen were thanked for providing the Committee with this information, and they left the meeting.

- b) Jim Plasteras, Manager of Parks Operations - Provided information on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in City Parks operations:
- He stated that they consider cultural, physical, biological and mechanical methods of pest control before chemicals. They also look at what the allowable threshold is in weeds and grass before going to any method of control.
 - Their focus is on plant health care so that if plants do get pests or a disease, they can handle it without the use of chemicals.
 - Parks are always looking at innovative ways to control weeds; i.e. brought in pigs to Beaufort Parks to eat the blackberry bushes.
 - Also use manual labour in invasive species control; i.e. pulled blackberry bushes out of the bank at a park and replanted it with rye grass.
 - They are also looking into the use of goats for invasive species control.
 - Are showing people that there are other ways to deal with pest problems.
 - Park's focus is on making choices that will not negatively affect the environment for future generations.
 - They also follow the provincial pest control plan and each year review how they have done.
 - He also noted the industry-driven IPM program that trains and certifies applicators, in order to make the landscaping industry accountable for their use of pesticides.

When asked about the "Volunteer in Parks" program and the use of summer students, Mr. Plasteras advised that very successful ivy pulls had been accomplished with the help of volunteers and students, and that he believed there would be grants available again this summer to hire students. C. Thirkill noted the enormous pool of physically fit people; i.e. students that require work experience, and E. Demattia suggested tying IPM research into school science curriculums.

When asked whether golf courses are included in the IPM program, Mr. Plasteras advised that they are not because of the many differences to private property. He did however believe that golf course owners are proactive and very interested in IMP.

R. Lawrance suggested having a session on IPM as one of the "SustainNanaimo" presentations, as a larger discussion is required on this topic including what role a bylaw in Nanaimo would be.

Jim Plasteras was thanked for his presentation, and he left the meeting.

6. Correspondence, Handouts, Notices:
None.

7. Ongoing Business:

- a) SustainNanaimo Workshop Series - A draft overview of the proposed sessions was distributed. R. Lawrance asked the Committee for suggestions on other topics, speakers and sponsors. Some suggestions were:
- Architect at Royal Roads University who specializes in green building
 - V.I. Real Estate Board
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Geothermal Association
 - B.C. Construction Association
 - Canadian Home Builders Association

- TD Canada Trust
- Mid-Island Construction Association
- Coastal Credit Union

A suggestion was also made for the City to have a web-interactive site for people interested in the workshops but unable to attend. Rob will look into this suggestion with the City's IT Department.

Further information about the workshops will be provided at the next meeting.

- b) Revised ACE Terms of Reference - Copies of amended terms of reference for ACE were distributed. Proposed revisions are to increase the number of at-large members, and to change the Federal, Provincial, Regional and First Nation seats to an as-needed, non-voting basis. Rob will prepare the required Report to Council and will poll ACE members via email for approval of the report prior to it going to Council.

8. **New Business:**

- a) Colliery Dam Park Water Line - In response to an inquiry made at the last meeting, K. Brydges advised that prior to the City installing new watermain, a design review is required and the City works closely with MOE and DFO. As there has been a problem with fire flows in the water system in the Colliery Dam area, a new watermain is required. The two options being considered are: looping through the park and having a clear span bridge over the creek with the pipe strung underneath; or twinning the existing line. The first option would cost approximately \$500,000 less than the twinning option, and less than 50 trees would need to be removed. The swath that would be cut through the park for the first option would only be a metre wider than for the twinning option and would provide a new path through the park. A suggestion was made for the City to monitor the owls in the park during construction.
- b) Eagle Heights Retaining Wall - Also in response to an inquiry from the last meeting, K. Brydges advised that in the past, retaining walls on private properties along Hammond Bay Road were built by the homeowners. A building permit was required plus a development permit or geotechnical engineer's certification. The liability in those cases lay with the certification, or in some cases, with the City. As of two months ago, the City made it a requirement for the developer to provide lot grading plans identifying where retaining walls will be necessary through the subdivision design stage acceptance process. Professional engineers are required to design the retaining walls, and the liability now rests with them. It was noted that when a retaining wall is being designed, drainage is a very important factor and must also be considered.
- c) Earth Day Event - April 26 - C. Thirkill advised that planning for the event is going well with support from the Nanaimo Recycling Exchange. They are anticipating 200 to 500 people to attend, and 30 organizations have committed so far. There are some residual funds remaining from last year's event, but he would like to see the City also partner and put up a display. He will contact Jeff Ritchie at the Parks Maintenance Department regarding use of City awnings and tables. S. Serebrin will contact Tammy Toor of Parks and Recreation regarding use of the large screen adjacent to the library downtown. Charles asked if the Committee could help fund the event. J. Cameron suggested that in future the organizing group submit a grant application to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission (2008 grants have already been allocated), and Rob suggested that funding partnerships be built in the future.

Charles will submit a funding request to the City, and Rob will advise the Committee via email when a decision has been made on the request.

9. Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 2008-Apr-01.

10. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

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