

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT
TUESDAY, 2007-DEC-04, TRAINING ROOM, CITY HALL ANNEX

Present:	Joy Cameron, Chair	Ron Brown
	Charles Thirkill	Chris Zamora
	Steve Earle	Margaret Henigman
	<u>Staff:</u>	
	Rob Lawrance	Kevin Brydges
	Cindy Hall (Recording Secretary)	
Regrets:	Caroline Read	
Others:	Angelique Nash-Thurmeier	Bev Brown

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 4:20 p.m.

2. Adoption of Minutes of 2007-Oct-02, 2007-Oct-15 (In Camera), and 2007-Nov-06:

MOVED by C. Thirkill, SECONDED by S. Earle that the Minutes from 2007-Oct-02, 2007-Oct-15 (In Camera) and 2007-Nov-06 be adopted. CARRIED.

3. Approval of Agenda and Late Items:

The Agenda was approved with the following additions:

- Report dated 2007-Dec-03 from A.W. Laidlaw to G.D. Berry re Ombudsman's Investigation (Third Street projects adjacent to Cat Stream).
- Draft notes from Environmental Forum held 2007-Nov-29.

4. Budget:

\$1,745.45 remains in ACE's regular budget.

5. Environmental Forum:

Draft notes were distributed and the Committee commented the following about the Forum:

- Was a good opportunity for groups to communicate.
- Attendance was not as good as hoped - will re-think timing next year - Fall is not good for students.
- Is useful to have on a regular basis however.
- What it lacked in numbers, made up in quality - good networking opportunity.
- Environmental groups could get together on their own as well.
- Consider adding forums to ACE's 2008 Workplan.
- A survey of environmental priorities sent out to the groups prior to a forum might be a good way to get the information to other City committees and staff.
- Having more "natural" City parks was emphasized at the Forum.
- Parks and Recreation should be made aware of the Community Garden's need for land.
- With respect to concerns voiced at the Forum regarding a bio-filtration swale being filled in near the ball field at Jingle Pot Marsh, K. Brydges noted that the swale had become a safety hazard, so an underground pond, which functions exactly the same as the swale, was created there. Another drainage pond was redirected into a ditch along Third Street after confirmation from the Water Branch that it was not a stream or watercourse.

6. Ongoing Business:

- a) Draft Urban Forest Plan - Some comments from the Committee on the Draft Plan were:
- Does such a plan need to contain such a long history portion?
 - Not sure that anyone will get what is trying to be achieved through the Plan.
 - Should try to encourage planning around the coastal Douglas fir zone.
 - Needs a lot of work around ecological issues - too many gaps and too confusing right now.
 - Some points lack in reality, and are more like a "Christmas Wish List"; e.g. requiring a full-time site monitor for enforcement. This would require the hiring of another person. Another example is trying to get residents to water trees.
 - Having to get landscape architects involved in designing subdivisions is a bit much.
 - Will need to have a large educational component accompany the Plan.
 - Would like to see more about retaining the characteristics of the sites; i.e. maintaining as much native vegetation as possible.
 - Having a certification for developers with respect to retaining native vegetation, similar to the LEED certification for builders, would be a good idea.
 - Should leave larger, concentrated areas of natural vegetation, rather than having smaller areas scattered around.
 - Fines should be steeper for infractions. (Check the City of Boston's ordinances.)
 - Would like to see what percentage of our forest cover we have already lost, and how that changes year to year. (R. Lawrance advised that there is a map showing percentage of existing forest cover that will be attached to the Plan.)
 - The Plan does not talk about fish values. Fish and wildlife should be an integral part.
 - Don't see enough native species included in the tree list. Rocky mountain juniper should definitely be included.
 - Have to think about the effects climate change will have on tree species. Red cedar should not be included in the tree list.
 - Would be very helpful to homeowners to have a list on what to plant on their residential lot. Some good examples that help with groundwater retention are salal and sword fern.
 - Need to encourage local nurseries to have a selection of local native plants.
 - Would be a good opportunity to be leaders in our own parks.
 - Have a few native demonstration gardens for education purposes; i.e. what you could plant in your backyard and the fact that native plants are basically care-free.
 - If there is a demand for plants, the nurseries will provide them.
 - The norm of what is acceptable needs to be changed - and also why it's important.
 - Topic of people's view is addressed minimally in the Plan.

R. Lawrance advised that the draft Urban Forest Plan will also be distributed to City staff for their comments. The modules still require a fair bit of work. Mal-U have been contacted about assisting with a community-wide survey asking where the public sees the Plan going, how education could be improved, and whether the public would be interested in stewarding opportunities.

- b) Jingle Pot Marsh Vegetation Management Plan - The Committee will review the Plan and email any comments to R. Lawrance.
- c) Ombudsman's Report - At the request of Councillor Cameron, a report dated 2007-Dec-03 from A.W. Laidlaw to G.D. Berry regarding a complaint received about development projects on Third Street adjacent to the Cat Stream, and with the subsequent report from the Ombudsman attached, was distributed for the Committee's information.

- d) 2008 Workplan - The 2007 Workplan was distributed and R. Lawrance reviewed with the Committee what had been achieved and what will carry on in 2008. One item that will be moved forward to the 2008 Workplan is the update of the website habitat atlas.
- e) Information Item - C. Thirkill recommended that the Committee consider buying five copies of the book entitled "Last Child in the Woods" to circulate. The book stresses the importance of children being allowed opportunities to reconnect with nature.

7. Next Committee Meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 2008-Jan-08.

8. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m. to proceed to dinner.

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