

**MINUTES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT
MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 2007-JAN-02
IN THE TRAINING ROOM, CITY HALL ANNEX, 238 FRANKLYN STREET**

Present:	Bill Holdom, Chair Caroline Read	Ron Brown Charles Thirkill
	<u>Staff</u> Rob Lawrance Cindy Hall (Recording Secretary)	Kevin Brydges
Regrets:	Scott Northrup Pete Law	Steve Earle Chris Zamora

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair B. Holdom at 4:25 p.m. without a quorum.

2. Adoption of Minutes from 2006-Dec-05:

Deferred to next meeting.

3. Budget:

R. Lawrance noted:

- ACE's provisional budget for 2007 is \$8,300;
- \$4,000 has been included for the interpretive signage program;
- Council will not be approving the budget until February.

4. Correspondence:

R. Lawrance circulated information regarding the Coastal Invasive Plant Committee Planning Forum to be held on February 6 at Beban Park. He advised that he will circulate the agenda when he receives it, and will also forward the information to Parks & Rec.

5. Ongoing Business:

- a) Burn It Smart Workshop - R. Lawrance advised that this year's workshop will be held on February 14 at Beban Park. He distributed a pamphlet on the program and advised that its main goal is to minimize smoke emission from woodstoves. He enquired whether the Committee wished to cost-share with the RDN for the workshop consultant's expenses (City share would be approximately \$1,100). The consultant will talk about the health impacts of smoke, burning techniques, how to store wood, and different types of stoves. The members in attendance were in favour of cost-sharing, and Rob will poll the absent members by email. Some suggestions made by Committee members were:
- In future, hold the workshop at the beginning of the burning season;
 - Post ads for the workshop in local stores that sell woodstoves;
 - Ask the stores if they would be interested in being a workshop sponsor or donating prizes;
 - In the ads, suggest people tell their neighbours about the workshop.
- b) Natural History Sign Interpretation Project - R. Lawrance clarified that by 'Natural History', he was referring to a description of nature (which includes the local ecology and geology) which places emphasis on observation over quantification and which explores

its interaction with the urban environment. He would like to hear any ideas Committee members have for the signs. In response to a question about funding, he advised that Parks & Rec. do not have funding for the design and research work, but can provide resources to erect the signs when ready. He added that he will be looking for funding partners for the project. One suggestion put forward was for an objective illuminating story about what interaction has occurred between man and nature on the Third Street property and how the land is restoring itself.

- c) Urban Forest Plan - R. Lawrance stated that ACE has the opportunity to work with Parks & Rec. on an Urban Forest Plan. ACE could provide feedback on working drafts and could provide opportunities for discussion about what other communities are doing in this regard. For example, perhaps a representative from Saanich or another community could come and give a presentation to ACE and the Parks & Rec. Commission. Some comments from Committee members were:

- Not clear on what an Urban Forest is, and what the focus of an Urban Forest Plan should be.
- What land would be included, public or private; and would it be better to see these forests as totally managed by people or allow natural regeneration to occur?
- Concern that forests on private lands will disappear and that they are not adequately valued.
- Should look at stronger landscaping practices for private lands.
- A plan could be difficult to prepare and confusing because of too many details.
- Linley Valley is seen as an Urban Forest because it is in the middle of town and won't be disturbed. But if it is not going to be disturbed, won't having an Urban Forest Plan be an exercise in futility?
- Using the recent devastation in Stanley Park as an example, it is important to know what to do afterwards.
- An example in Nanaimo of where guidelines would be useful is at Buttertubs when trees become hazards there.
- Maybe have a policy that states goals and principles rather than specifying species and actions.

R. Lawrance will prepare a draft statement of principles for Nanaimo's Urban Forest Plan to help ACE clarify a vision of what it could do. Rob will circulate it to the members prior to forwarding it to Richard Harding for comment.

Discussion followed regarding trails:

- Parks & Rec. look at trails as recreational and transportation corridors depending on their location, who uses them, and the standards the trails are built to.
- It is a challenge to find a balance between environmental and recreation needs for creekside riparian area trails. Most people would not notice the difference if they were built 7 or 15 metres away from the water.
- Maintenance zones running parallel to riparian trails need more consideration or they could become mowed areas.

Rob will bring copies of the Parks Trail Master Plan to the next meeting, and Kevin will give a presentation on it so that the Committee can see how they need to proceed on this issue.

6. New Business:

- a) Review of ACE's 2006 Workplan - R. Lawrance advised that the Committee's 2007 Workplan must be finalized by March. The Committee reviewed their 2006 Workplan

and noted the items that need to continue in 2007. Rob will draft up the 2007 plan for discussion at the next meeting.

- b) Report to Council re Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers (PBDEs) - The Committee considered a draft report recommending that Council forward their support of phasing out PBDEs to the Federal Minister of the Environment. The members in attendance were in favour of forwarding the report to Council, and Rob will poll the absent members for the opinions.

7. Next Committee Meeting:

The next regular meeting is scheduled for 2007-Feb-06.

8. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.