

**MINUTES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT
MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 2005-APRIL-05
IN THE TRAINING ROOM, CITY HALL ANNEX, 238 FRANKLYN STREET.**

Present: Gail Adrienne
Councillor Dawn Tyndall
Ron Bolin
Ron Brown
Staff
Rob Lawrance
Fran Grant (Recording Secretary)

Allan Hawryzki
Brigid Reynolds
Mike Geselbracht

Kevin Brydges
Graham Savage

Guests: Steve Earle, Malaspina University-College
Charles Thirkill

Regrets: Pete Law
Councillor Bill Holdom

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair D. Tyndall at 4:15 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes 2005-Mar-01:

Change:
Page 1, Budget, 5th bullet – change 2004 to 2005

MOVED by R. Bolin, SECONDED by G. Adrienne, that the minutes of 2005-Mar-01 be adopted with the above noted change.

CARRIED

3. Approval of Agenda and Introduction of Late Items:

Late Items:

- Food Security Forum (M. Geselbracht)
- Correspondence item (R. Lawrance)
- 1st Nations' Representative (R. Lawrance)

MOVED by R. Bolin, SECONDED by G. Adrienne, that the agenda be approved with the addition of the above noted late items.

CARRIED

4. Budget:

R. Lawrance noted that:

- There are no outstanding monies owed for the 360 pans from 2004.
- Postage for the pesticide survey was paid for by the Community Planning Division.

5. Delegations:

- a) Steve Earle, Malaspina University-College: An introduction to Green Building Design / Renewable Energy Forum

S. Earle gave a presentation on Green Building Design and Renewable Energy Forum. Copies of the presentation were distributed to Committee members. S. Earle made the following additional comments:

- Critical for Nanaimo to develop policies of green building because the City is starting a number of large development projects.
- New buildings planned for Downtown Nanaimo are close enough to the ocean to make use of marine energy for heat.
- Green buildings do not necessarily cost more to build than conventional buildings.
- A renewable energy conference and trade show is being hosted by Malaspina University-College in conjunction with other education centres. It is being held on April 29 to April 30. The conference will provide energy options to the public and focuses primarily on residential buildings.

Comments from the Committee:

- Use of composting toilets may be affected by building codes and health regulations.
- Council has asked that ACE report back to them on this issue.

The Chair thanked S. Earle for his informative presentation.

- b) Charles Thirkill: An overview of restoration projects with School District 68 – request for letter of support

C. Thirkill gave a brief presentation on the proposed tree planting project in the Jingle Pot Marsh. Maps of the site and proposed planting areas were distributed. C. Thirkill noted that:

- The marsh is a key area of the Catstream watershed.
- The area currently is poor terrestrial habitat for wildlife because of the proliferation of hawthorn and broom.
- This is also a passive stream vegetation project.
- Is one of the few sizable areas in the City that is suitable for an urban reforestation project.
- Work would be done by local students possibly through the Job for Youth program.
- Working closely with School District 68 and their Career and Planning Program (CAP).
- Three proposed planting areas are shown on the map.
- This will be a five year project because of the amount of hawthorn and broom that needs to be removed.
- Letters of support are being solicited from different groups in order to secure funding for the project.
- Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission has given the project their support.
- Looking for a letter of support from ACE.
- Will be asking City Council for their support.

C. Thirkill gave the following answers to questions from the Committee:

- There may be some small infringement in the area but will try very hard to avoid it.
- The area planned for Garry oak and Arbutus does contain a few of these trees. The soil profile fits well with these trees.
- The total size of the largest area is approximately 200m x 30m
- Not all the hawthorne in the marsh will be removed.
- We have not yet run into any opposition to this project.
- Will use fertilizer and water the seedlings to promote growth.
- Historically this area was a forest and then a military camp.

- It is hoped that once the trees are planted they will stop the hawthorne and broom from growing back.

Comments from the Committee:

- May be helpful to talk to other City staff as there have been a number of studies done on this site.
- Bundling cut broom and hawthorne and leaving it for habitat might not be a good idea.
- To lessen the impact on the area, it would be advisable to co-ordinate this project with the other project being done by Lanarc.

MOVED by R. Brown, SECONDED by G. Adrienne, that ACE send a letter of support similar to the one from the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission for this project.

CARRIED

The Chair thanked C. Thirkill for his presentation.

6. Correspondence/Handouts/Notices of Upcoming Events:

R. Lawrance circulated information on the Clean Air Forum being held in Vancouver on April 22, 9 am to 4:30 pm.

7. Unfinished/Ongoing Business:

- a) Environmental Awards Program – status and distribute brochures

R. Lawrance noted that:

- Press releases can go out now (D. Tyndall will do this)
- A letter and brochures have been sent to all the schools.
- Brochures are available at main City buildings.
- Brochures were given to Committee members to distribute.

- b) Pesticide Survey – update and recommended actions (G. Adrienne)

The Pesticide sub-committee (G. Adrienne, R. Brown, B. Reynolds) gave the following update of their meeting:

- Input received from the survey is solid.
- Recommendations for education and bylaw action were discussed and it was felt that bylaw action is not a realistic target.
- Should start on education approach soon.
- Work with City to put information into City publications and mail outs.
- Talk with City and Parks staff about what they are doing about pesticide use and propose a showcase of their practices.
- Could draw up a communication strategy.
- May be too late for public education this year as spring is the best time before people start working on their yards and gardens.
- Will do some more research and sub-committee will draft a report to bring back to ACE.
- Is the Committee interested in having a display for Earth Day about pesticide use alternatives or during Environment Week in June?
- Al Martel (Weed Man) could be invited to participate.

Comments and suggestions from the Committee:

- Presentation could be made to Council.
- Get educational material out where it is available to the public.
- Different educational tips can go out throughout the year that are pertinent to that season. E.g. in July and August could send out information about not cutting grass short as longer grass preserves water and deters weeds.

Action Item: Come up with a “do-ables” education list for each season.

c) Nature of Nanaimo 2005 – Update

R. Lawrance distributed an events list to Committee members and noted that:

- A co-ordination for these events is being funded by Parks, Recreation and Culture Department.
- Events are being held April – June. Nothing is planned for the fall.
- Send any comments or suggestions to R. Lawrance.
- Brochures will be going out soon.

d) Partners for Climate Protection – Update

R. Lawrance advised that:

- Report is going to City Council with an update on the project’s milestones and the greenhouse gas inventory.
- RDN has joined the program and has some funding to hire a consultant to complete corporate inventories and plans in partnership with the City.
- Working on a community level plan for the RDN and City.
- Will e-mail report to ACE members for review and comment as the report will be going to Council before the next ACE meeting.
- Hope to complete milestone three by the end of 2005.

8. Late Items:

a) Food Security Forum in Victoria:

M. Geselbracht gave an update on the Food Security Forum that he attended and noted that:

- Distributed copies of the draft Charter from the Forum.
- Main focus of the Forum was healthier food and access for all.
- In the past, food has not been part of government planning.
- VIHA is doing a study on Vancouver Island on food production.
- One option discussed was community gardens in open spaces and parks.
- There were no representatives from the federal or provincial governments to speak to the protection of farm land.
- Would like to see a forum held in Nanaimo.

Comments from the Committee:

- A group called Food Link has just started up in Nanaimo.
- Appeal to people with vacant land to see if they are interested in establishing a community garden.
- Most grocery stores do not have a policy that allows them to reduce prices on food that is past its prime. It is thrown out.
- See three different issues: food to the poor; growing food on Vancouver Island is expensive; transportation and distribution costs for food on the Island will only increase.

b) Environmentally Sensitive Areas:

R. Lawrance advised that an OCP Amendment Bylaw to create a development permit and development approval information area in order to protect non-aquatic ESAs was adopted by Council at their last meeting.

c) 1st Nations Representative:

R. Lawrance noted that a letter has been sent to the 1st Nations and he is waiting for a response.

d) Leave of Absence:

M. Geselbracht advised that he has accepted an internship from May to October so will not be able to attend ACE meetings during this time.

e) Change ACE meeting time:

It was suggested that ACE change the start time of meetings to 4:30. It was decided to discuss this issue at the next meeting when all members are present.

9. Next Meeting:

- Next ACE meeting is scheduled for 2005-May-03

10. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.