

MINUTES OF THE TUESDAY, 2001-JUN-12 MEETING OF THE PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT STANDING COMMITTEE, HELD IN CONFERENCE ROOM 2,
CITY HALL ANNEX, COMMENCING AT 4:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillor L. J. Sherry, Chair

Member: Councillor L. D. McNabb

Absent: Councillor W. J. Holdom

Staff: B. N. Mehaffey
S. E. Fletcher
E. C. Swabey

J. T. Bowden
D. Bryce

1. Adoption of Minutes:

- (a) Minutes of the 2001-MAY-17 Meeting of the Planning and Development Standing Committee held in Conference Room 2, City Hall Annex at 4:00 p.m.

Moved by Councillor McNabb, seconded by Councillor Sherry that the Minutes be adopted as circulated. The motion carried.

2. Reports of Advisory Committees:

- (a) Advisory Committee on Environment - Proposed Pesticides Reduction Program for the City of Nanaimo

Council's Advisory Committee on the Environment (ACE) was created to advise Council on environmental policy. One of its objectives is "to bring to Council's attention the need for specific policies to deal with matters of importance to the community's environmental well-being".

In reviewing environmental issues in the City, ACE identified the use of pesticides in Nanaimo as a priority topic for its examination in this 3-year term. ACE commissioned a background report to bring it up-to-date on pesticide practices and issues.

The background report addresses a series of questions:

- What are pesticides? Who uses them?
- What are the environmental and human health concerns regarding pesticide use?
- What are alternatives to using pesticides?
- Who regulates pesticides in Canada?
- What is happening in Nanaimo with respect to use of pesticides?
- What are other municipalities doing to reduce the use of pesticides?
- What are some things for Nanaimo to consider in promoting better use of pesticides within the city?

According to the *Integrated Pest Management Manual* published by the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, pesticides are "any substances used to kill, control, repel or manage insects, rodents, fungi, weeds and other living things considered to be pests". They include herbicides, insecticides, rodenticides, etc.

The report indicates that while some pesticides are relatively benign, others can be toxic when used indiscriminately or without the appropriate care. ACE recognizes that pesticides have many valuable uses, such as prevention and control of plant diseases, control of invasive or noxious weeds and control of rodents. Other uses, however, may be purely cosmetic and therefore less necessary, such as maintaining well-groomed gardens and lawns.

The City's use of pesticides is regulated and monitored by both federal and provincial legislation, and City Staff and contractors are trained in their appropriate use and application. Furthermore, over the last 5-10 years, the City's Parks, Recreation and Culture Department has significantly reduced its use of pesticides in the better interest of the City's environmental and human health.

Consequently, ACE's concern focuses primarily on cosmetic applications done by non-professionals; i.e., the average homeowner, who may not be well informed about the proper application or potential dangers of the substances they are using.

Based on the findings of this report, the Committee suggests that Council could promote the better and more judicious use of pesticides within the community by adopting the following actions:

- (1) Support in principle a statement that promotes reducing the use of pesticides in Nanaimo; and,
- (2) Support the initiation of a public awareness program to reduce pesticide use in the City.

With respect to the second action, rather than expending limited staff time and resources, ACE foresees such an initiative being effectively carried out by the non-profit sector. Two organizations, Green Communities and the Nanaimo Area Land Trust Society, are willing to spearhead a public awareness campaign aimed at providing useful information to residents about pesticides, their proper use and alternatives to their use. These two organizations will be applying for support funding from federal and provincial programs. ACE recommends that contributing financial and in-kind support to these groups would be the most efficient use of City resources in supporting reduced use of pesticides by the public.

Recommendations: That the Committee:

- (1) receive the background report on pesticide use and issues;
- (2) support in principle a policy that promotes reducing the inappropriate and unnecessary use of pesticides in Nanaimo;
- (3) in conjunction with MELP, support the initiation of a public awareness program on reduced pesticide use coordinated by community organizations in the City; and,
- (4) ask Staff to provide a report on the best way such a program should be implemented.

Moved by Councillor McNabb, seconded by Councillor Sherry that the report be forwarded directly to Council for consideration. The motion carried.

3. Adjournment:

Moved by Councillor McNabb, seconded by Councillor Sherry at 4:15 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CITY CLERK