



# Environmental Advisory Committee - Minutes

Executive Boardroom  
City Hall  
14245 - 56 Avenue  
Surrey, B.C.  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2010  
Time: 6:30 pm  
File: 0540-20

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**Present:**

B. Campbell- Chair  
Councillor Bose  
B. Burnside  
M. Deo  
K. Keshvani  
G. Sangha  
B. Stewart

**Regrets:**

C. Dragomir  
A. Schulze  
M. Harcourt  
G. Sahota

**Staff Present:**

C. Baron, Drainage and Environmental  
Manager  
L. Anderson, Legislative Services

**Agricultural Advisory  
Committee Representative:**

S. VanKeulen

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**A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

It was Moved by B. Stewart  
Seconded by G. Sangha  
That the minutes of the Environmental  
Advisory Committee meeting held on February 10, 2010, be adopted.  
Carried

**B. DELEGATIONS**

**1. Dr. Valentin Schaefer, Ph.D., R.P.Bio.  
Restoration of Natural Systems Program, University of Victoria**

Dr. Valentin Schaefer, Ph.D., R.P.Bio., was in attendance to provide a PowerPoint presentation to the EAC on Urban Ecology and Natural area restoration and how that relates to the City's new direction on Ecosystem Management. Comments were as follows:

- The impact of habitat loss and disturbance can be measured in many ways.
- A study looking at breeding birds surveyed over a 40 year period noted a general decline that leveled off over time. Primarily what has been lost is insect eating birds as opposed to seeding birds.
- It is not unusual to have up to 250 species in urban areas. There are urban adapters (such as crows) that continue to increase in number.
- It is important to look regionally to see how other areas are doing in relation to each other. (An example of the Saanich Peninsula pre-European settlement compared to 1997 was shown and the effects of disrupted landscapes were discussed.)

- Looking at patches in terms of connectivity. Some patches are reservoirs, others may not have much value in themselves, but could have value in terms of a corridor or stepping stones to move species between the two areas.
- A slide was shown to identify the various patch sizes, shapes and distribution and what they mean in relation to the opportunities for variations of species. The loss of biodiversity was noted for the smaller areas, however if there are larger areas that are being reduced slightly may not be affected.
- Depending on the species, it can be more beneficial to pay attention to the smaller patches of land as opposed to focusing on expanding larger parks.
- The shape of the patch is also important as there are species that just don't like people and require more "interior habitat". They need a buffer, space between us and them. The shape also makes a difference such as a circle as opposed to square. Usually developers like linear parks, but these have little interior habitat. On the other hand if you want to use the park for only connectivity, the square/rectangular shape is better.
- Work done 10 years ago shows wildlife use of various sized habitats and how much habitat is needed. It was noted that 1 ha will enable gray squirrel, and fairly common birds taking space in the 1 ha, however, as you go up to 4 ha you get other larger species. You can keep on going up to 30 ha where you start to get small populations of forest interior species, valuable for a larger diversity of wildlife.
- In terms of novel ecosystems, unique environments, one of the contributors is the urban heat island affect where you see a warmer temperature (happens in downtown Vancouver - a few degrees higher). This will impact on what can be planted and the species that will be there. The hydrology is altered; there will be species that take advantage of this and some species that will actually move.
- Urban adaptors and urban exploiters love garbage and back yards. Their population can continue to grow because they can adapt. What you want to watch out for is not to lose the keystones, the species that determine the nature of that particular eco system.
- The uniqueness of the urban environment extends into our air; it affects the health of others.
- The average life span of a tree downtown is about 7 years. Trees have longer and healthier lives the further away from urban development.
- Hydrology is a big concern in urban areas, primarily stream health. An increase in impervious surfaces alters hydrology of urban watersheds. Decreased biodiversity, high nutrient loadings and elevated primary production produce an 'urban stream syndrome'.
- Invasive species is a very big issue. We are swamped with invasive species that are coming at us fast and have big impacts e.g. Japanese knotweeds have an impact in diversity within the streams which really reduces diversity. It is important to find where they get started, do the mapping and implement a program to monitor natural areas regularly so as to report them immediately to be dealt with as soon as possible; there is no time to wait and see first. (Further examples were discussed and it was noted that many best management practices point out when the invasive species are at their most dangerous and when the best time of the year is to take them out.)

- When talking about restoring/maintaining ecosystems, looking at an ecosystem approach which encourages biodiversity, water resources, human impacts, best management practices and wildlife inventories.
- What is happening more and more is community based conservation. It is important to promote stewardship.
- It important to give a strong message that stormwater management is not all about the fish; stormwater management gives quality of life and better health for everyone.
- There are two arguments, one is nature services and the other storm drains. Must watch what is going on in the lower grounds. If there is development after development after another, the storm drain in one feeds into the other further down, which must be it equipped – that costs a lot of money. Once there is the point that the storm drain is overloaded, it has to be replaced. It is important to avoid things that will overload the storm drain down the road. The other argument is health, some suggest more should be added because there hasn't been enough nature, etc. Be conservative with the green space it has physiological health benefits.

The Committee made the following comments:

- Although intrigued with some of the models, the problem is perception of what is natural and how far to go. Old growth pasture land is a key example, it does what it does which, in the long term, turns into another type of eco system unless it is managed. It sounds good to save this area and let it go into its natural state, but in actual fact, we have changed the whole system. It would be beneficial to see more models with human perception taken out – based on science, not based on emotion as we move through this.

## 2. **Draft Ecosystem Management Project**

Further to item B.1 above, Carrie Baron, Drainage and Environmental Manager, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the City's Draft Ecosystem Management Project. Comments were as follows:

- The Ecosystem Management Study is a study on the integration of ecological processes with land use. HB Lanarc was hired by the City to undertake the plan.
- Natural areas in Surrey are changing as the City grows and evolves. Many important natural areas remain or may be restored. Management of natural areas and processes is a key component of the City's commitment to sustainability.
- Surrey is the first to have an EMS plan.
- ESAs were "cutting edge" in 1990, but inventory is now out of date.
- Urban development since 1990 has changed Surrey's landscape substantially; it is fragmented.
- The new focus is on maintaining natural processes and "ecosystem function and linkage", not simply landscape preservation. This will 'fold in' well with 2010 OCP Update.

- People want environment in their communities. Retention of the city's natural areas has been identified as important to Surrey residents through several statistically valid surveys.
- The ecosystem function creates a balance between the needs of Surrey's human population and the protection of terrestrial ecosystems and is also a key component in the City's Sustainability Charter.
- Looking at development is much more than looking only at trees. If there are only trees, there would not be much biodiversity and differences in wildlife.
- A green infrastructure network (a functioning network of ecosystems such as forests, streams, fields, etc.) is comprised of important hubs, sites and linkages that sustain ecological processes.
- For an ecological inventory, the City has mapped various areas to assess environmental conditions across Surrey's landscape (land and water features, sensitive species, and vegetation) which will assist in understanding better and in determining how to link the whole system.
- One thing that comes up is the degree of naturalness. All of Surrey has been logged or affected, how natural is the different vegetation now? How modified is it? The consultant looked at all the hubs and the higher naturalness (larger areas that have a refuge where animals live and flourish) and the smaller with moderate and higher naturalness (community parks, etc.), then looked at the slope of the lands, the roads, etc. to determine how to implement hub corridor sites to link within Surrey as well as connectivity in the region. Understanding the regional context is critical for effective conservation.
- A report was taken to Council in November with the understanding that a shirtsleeve session will follow. It is anticipated that a shirtsleeve session will happen as soon as scheduling permits.

Some discussion ensued regarding power lines and rights-of-ways and the ownership of those lands, noting that the vast majority is private land. Comments continued from the Committee as follows:

- The presentation should also be given to the Agricultural Advisory Committee.
- The EAC should be engaged in discussions regarding the Ecosystem Management Study as it is another major initiative for the Committee. Notwithstanding that Council has not had its shirtsleeve session, the Committee should be able to advise and/or make decisions in this regard and should be involved now.
- Council should be advised that the Committee has received multiple presentations on the Ecosystem Management Study, supports the information in the study and encourages Council to adopt the recommendations of the study.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

It was

Moved by S. VanKeulen

Seconded by B. Stewart

That the Environmental Advisory Committee

recommend to Council that the Ecosystem Management Study be reviewed as soon as possible.

Carried

M. Deo left the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

**C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS**

**1. Update on Draft Pesticide Control By-law**

File: 5280-23

The Committee was advised that Council met with staff to review the presentation on the draft pesticide control by-law and to discuss next steps. Comments were as follows:

- A map, noting all of the communities that have an established pesticide control by-law, was presented.
- Council made informal discussions based on some of that information and the importance of having a pesticide control by-law and the target.
- The aim of the pesticide control by-law is to discourage residents from indiscriminant use of pesticides.
- Trials are still being done to determine the costs.
- There is one modifier that was made to the draft by-law: all exemptions must be treated only by a qualified professional.
- It is anticipated that the pesticide control by-law will be introduced at the next scheduled meeting of Council, April 12, 2010.

It was requested that if a corporate report is provided to Council regarding the pesticide control by-law, that a copy of that report be emailed to the EAC members as soon as it is available.

**D. NEW BUSINESS**

**E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL**

**1. Corporate Report Ro40**

**2010 Salmon Habitat and Restoration Program ("SHaRP")**

File: 4810-901

At the Regular Council Public Hearing meeting held on Monday, March 1, 2010, Council referred Corporate Report Ro40 to the Environmental Advisory Committee for information.

It was Moved by B. Stewart  
Seconded by Councillor Bose  
That Corporate Report Ro40, 2010 Salmon  
Habitat and Restoration Program ("SHaRP"), be received.  
Carried

2. **Corporate Report Ro46**  
**City of Surrey Sustainability Achievements in 2009 and Work Plan for 2010**  
File: 0512-02

At the Regular Council Public Hearing meeting held on Monday, March 22, 2010, Council referred Corporate Report Ro46 to the Environmental Advisory Committee for information.

It was Moved by Councillor Bose  
Seconded by B. Burnside  
That Corporate Report Ro46, City of Surrey  
Sustainability Achievements in 2009 and Work Plan for 2010, be received.  
Carried

## F. CORRESPONDENCE

## G. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. **Corporate Report R035**  
**Erosion and Sediment By-law Implementation Update**  
File: 3900-20(16138)

The above noted Corporate Report was provided to the Environmental Advisory Committee for information.

2. **Corporate Report R039**  
**Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O Program for 2010**  
File: 1210-1010

The above noted Corporate Report was provided to the Environmental Advisory Committee for information.

3. **Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) Update**

An update from the AAC meeting of March 4, 2010, was provided. In particular, following a review of a soil deposition application that brought to the AAC, it was determined that a soil deposition application template should be created in order

to provide the Engineering Department with particular ALC requirements in addition to the standard City criteria, before moving the application forward.

**4. Development Advisory Committee (DAC) Update**

An update from the DAC meeting of February 25, 2010, was not provided as the EAC representative to DAC was not present. An update from the February 25, March 25 and April 22, 2010 meetings will be provided at the April EAC meeting.

**5. Committee Presentations to Council**

At the March 1, 2010, Regular Council Public Hearing meeting, Council passed a resolution that there be periodic delegation presentations from the EAC to provide progress reports. Further to that resolution and to the information provided under item C.1 (above) regarding the introduction of the pesticide control by-law, the Committee discussed the opportunity to present to Council on the same date as the final adoption of the pesticide control by-law, possibly May 3, 2010.

The presentation will begin with congratulating Council for adopting the by-law, noting the time and dedication of the Committee in drafting the by-law (and receiving a number of presentations in that regard), followed by a brief summary of the Committee's accomplishments and focus for 2010 (the summary to be approved by the EAC at the April meeting).

It was  
Moved by Councillor Bose  
Seconded by B. Burnside  
That the Environmental Advisory Committee  
make a presentation to Council on May 3, 2010  
Carried

**6. Stewardship/Stakeholder Groups**

Following the discussion at the February meeting regarding the creation of a list of the stewardship/stakeholder groups in Surrey, a preliminary list was provided on table for review by the Committee. A number of associations were noted for inclusion on an updated list which will be provided to the EAC for further review and discussion at the April meeting.

**H. OTHER BUSINESS**

**1. Single Stream Recycling**

The Committee was advised that a follow-up letter to R. Costanzo, Deputy Operations Manager, regarding his presentation to the EAC in February, resulted in further questions and additional information regarding the single stream recycling program (i.e. clarity on what the City collects and doesn't collect, etc.). That information will be summarized and copied to the EAC at the April meeting.

**I. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee will be held on April 28, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. in the Executive Board Room.

**J. ADJOURNMENT**

It was

Moved by B. Stewart

Seconded by K. Keshvani

That the Environmental Advisory Committee

meeting do now adjourn.

Carried

The Environmental Committee adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

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Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

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Bob Campbell, Chair  
Surrey Environmental Advisory Committee