



City of Surrey

Environmental Advisory Committee

Minutes

Executive Boardroom
City Hall
14245 - 56 Avenue
Surrey, B.C.
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2007
Time: 6:35 p.m.
File: 0540-20

Present:

B. Stillwell
Councillor Bose
S. Deo
C. Dragomir
F. Perello
A. Keshvani
D. Maher
W. Stewart

Absent:

S. Li
H. Locke
G. Sangha
S. VanKeulen, Agricultural Advisory
Committee Representative

Staff Present:

O. Croy, Parks Manager
C. Baron, Drainage & Environment Manager
L. Anderson, Legislative Services

Also Present:

B. Kent, Canadian Cancer Society
D. Dewell, Whatcom County College
D. Riley, Surrey/White Rock Pesticide Free Coalition
W. Wedmann, Surrey/White Rock Pesticide Free Coalition
E. Wiedner, Surrey/White Rock Pesticide Free Coalition
F. Schulze, Surrey/White Rock Pesticide Free Coalition
A. Schulze, Surrey/White Rock Pesticide Free Coalition
E. Pereira, Surrey/White Rock Pesticide Free Coalition

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Environmental Advisory Committee (“EAC”) Minutes

It was Moved by K. Keshvani
Seconded by Councillor Bose
That the minutes of the Environmental
Advisory Committee meeting of September 19, 2007 be adopted.
Carried

B. DELEGATIONS

1. Canadian Cancer Society

At the September 19, 2007 EAC meeting the EAC passed the following resolution: *“That the Canadian Cancer Society representatives be invited to attend, as a delegation, to the October 17, 2007 meeting.”* Further to that resolution, Brenda Kent, Community Action Coordinator, Fraser Valley Region, was in attendance, together with Doreen Dewell, Professor, Whatcom County College, to express concerns to the EAC regarding the cosmetic use of pesticides in Surrey. B. Kent’s comments were as follows:

- This presentation is being made in the hopes that Surrey’s EAC will continue the dialogue of the cosmetic use of pesticides and reduce the use. The ultimate goal is to restrict pesticides altogether.

- Better to take precaution now than later; in reference to tobacco, it may be safe to say that if the precautionary principle had been used 20 years ago, the death rate may not have been so high with cancer today.

D. Maher joined the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

- 50% of cancers can be prevented.
- At least 10% of cancer deaths are related to environmental carcinogens.
- There is growing evidence linking pesticides to cancer.
- The “cosmetic use of pesticides” means the non-essential use of these chemicals for the purposes of enhancing the appearance of lawns, gardens, parks, golf courses, etc.
- Over 130 municipalities and one province have adopted the precautionary approach to pesticide use and moved to ban the use of cosmetic pesticides, including Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, London and the Province of Quebec (*Pesticides Management Code*).
- The majority of citizens support the by-laws. Data to support this is expected in February 2008.
- As the public are becoming more aware, cities are stepping up.
- In BC there are 13 cities that have restricted the use of pesticides.
- The components of an effective bylaw are:
 - restricts use and educates;
 - includes herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, vermicides and rodenticides; and
 - includes public and private property,and would not apply to:
 - swimming pools;
 - inside an enclosed building;
 - for purification of water;
 - to control or destroy animals or plants which constitute a danger for human beings; or
 - forestry or agriculture.

Allows for use of pesticides in exceptional situations such as confirmed infestations or health hazards (following notice, permits, etc.)

- On September 12, 2007 community dialogue was initiated, followed by the formation of the Surrey/White Rock Pesticide Free Coalition (some of which were in attendance for the presentation) in an effort to move forward educating the public, move forward on municipal pesticide bans, and to work with businesses to make sure they are on side with what is being done.

D. Dewell, Professor of Environmental Health and Ecology, Whatcom County College, continued:

- There are different categories of pesticides, insecticides and herbicides.
- Insecticides include organo phosphates which interfere with neuro transmitters.

F. Perello joined the meeting at 6:48 p.m.

- Herbicides – triazine (a base for various herbicides) are compounds that are known as possible carcinogens, which are banned by the European Union.
- 24D is used as a herbicide but it can affect humans and other organisms and has links to respiratory diseases and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.
- 98% of the sprayed insecticides and 95% of the sprayed herbicides reach areas other than what they are supposed to target, which then targets our water, air, food, etc.
- We know that pesticides can contribute to air pollution through rift, and can also give off volatile organic compounds which form a very potent ground level ozone air pollutant.
- Direct contact with pesticides can be highly lethal to amphibians and fish.
- Biodiversity in soil is better without pesticides.
- Pesticides can kill bees which are a major pollinator of crops. If honey bees are killed during the time they are supposed to pollinate, it could result in severe losses in crops.
- Animals can be damaged by pesticides, they can eliminate or contaminate the food that passes on. Over 67 million birds are killed by pesticides each year; many countries have discouraged the use in their biodiversity plans.
- There is also the problem of pest resurgence. When you spray pests with a 'non-target' spray, it kills the organisms of the pest species and the pest species can resurgence, which speaks to the issue of pest resistance.
- Billions of pounds of pesticides are used every year, and have been used for decades, however the number of pests have not reduced – it doesn't work.
- The use of pesticides not only harm humans and eco systems, there is also biodiversity loss.

Discussions from the Committee followed and the delegation continued:

- We are mainly speaking of the synthetic organic, research shown that are problematic, as there are alternatives to the synthetic.
- Follow-up studies since the ban was implemented in Hudson indicate a usage decline of 50%, with a usage decline of 30% in Toronto. People have become aware and simply don't want to use them once they are aware of the harm associated with them.
- Pesticides were not originally intended for commercial use. Alternatives are readily available now, just as alternative cleaning products have been produced.
- It is a shift in attitude and the way we view our world (from the perfect lawn) that needs to change. As there are more and more organic farms popping up, it is only a matter of time.

**2. Use of Herbicides for Weed Control in Street Landscaping
Corporate Report C016
File No.: 5280-23**

At the July 18, 2007 EAC meeting the following motion was made: “*That O. Croy, Manager, Parks, be invited to provide further information regarding Corporate Report C016.*” Further to that resolution, O. Croy provided a memo, dated October 11, 2007, as an update on pest control in City parks, and was in attendance to address the Committee’s concerns. The following points were made:

- The numbers and units given in the report do vary from year to year.
- Years ago staff did all the herbicide application, some of the volumes were not recorded and staff have now gone back to get that information.
- The report is in actual uses, not purchases, and the concentrates are in kg or litres, taken from the information of what was applied and filed with the Province at year end.
- Since 1984, park land has increased from 1,200 hectares to 2,600 hectares at an average growth of over 100 acres per year.
- Land base does not convey where the pesticide usage is. Most of the use is on the new median strips (10,000 to 22,000 square metres annually) and tree wells for street trees. The numbers will be considerably higher once the contractor numbers are added.
- The report attempts to demonstrate some of the methods being used to reduce herbicide use. A lot comes from service levels that are set. In the past the parks system was run by horticulturists, and herbicides were used to get rid of weeds in all passive grass areas, etc., a practice that was stopped in the early 1990’s.
- The only treatment of passive areas of grass is by spot spraying on rare occasions, generally in the proximity of sports fields in order to bring the quality of the sport turf back. It is sport field user safety that drives the need to use herbicide on or near sport fields, otherwise it is not used generally for passive grass. If we have various invasive exotic weeds established in our natural forests, every effort is made to remove them by hand or mechanically. Sometimes there has been some selective spraying to control invasive weed species when they cannot be controlled mechanically; herbicides are sometimes used even in our pristine natural areas.
- There is hardly any use of herbicides on sports fields, and when there is, it is generally when the season is over and the field is not being booked for play.
- The City’s use is typically in an area where there is very little human contact, the likelihood of exposure to residents is very low and every effort is made not only to choose products which have high LD50s and considered reasonable, and care is taken to time the application to reduce human exposure.
- Parks staff do not do academic ecological studies or research, however seminars are attended by staff.
- With respect to by-laws, Health Canada and the PRMA have a very strong mandate around pest control product registration and labelling. Further,

the provincial government has a mandate related to sales, storage and application of pest control products. As a professional team, staff rely upon and are in compliance with senior government legislation. It is the opinion that local government need not also be in the business of governing pesticide use; this would negate the need for further City by-laws. If in fact homeowner use/mis-use of pesticides is the key issue, then the federal government could deal with the issue easily by withdrawing the domestic labels for commonly used herbicides.

- Banning the use of pesticides would aesthetically affect public land and additional funding would be required to maintain weed free sports fields.
- An estimated additional \$375,000 would have been required in 2006 for labour for pulling weeds should pesticides have been banned, and should the same service level be desired.

Discussion ensued and it was suggested that there be some compliance to wear appropriate clothing and/or equipment to protect against the dangers of handling these products. It was further suggested that public awareness would be increased simply by seeing the protective measures professionals were taking when applying these products. Final comments were as follows:

- O. Croy pointed out that staff are presently required to wear appropriate clothing and equipment.
- There could be a value to the City to provide additional levels of education; lawn care products appear to be the number one culprit, especially when you compare the acreage of lawns in the private domain versus what the City has.
- C. Baron and O. Croy advised that information is periodically added to the City page, and that healthy lawn care information is contained on the City's website. It is an excellent resource for homeowners to visit to see what the best practices are for lawn care. The information is also sometimes printed in the spring and summer Parks, Recreation and Culture Leisure Guide.
- Instead of creating and implementing a new by-law, it should be suggested that the City send a stronger message that they are reducing the use of pesticides. This is something City staff can do without direction. Staff can also increase the messaging around pesticide use through its Nature Matters Program.

O. Croy and all the observers, except B. Kent and D. Riley, left the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

C. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

1. Highway 1/Port Mann Twinning Project

At the September 19, 2007 EAC meeting consideration for a special meeting on October 10, 2007, to address the above project, was discussed. The special meeting was subsequently cancelled in order to provide additional time to the Committee to review the DVD containing detailed information of the entire Port Mann/Highway 1 project.

As the project is now in the review stage, the Committee members were requested to provide their concerns, comments and recommendations, in order that they may be forwarded by Council within the timeline provided. C. Baron emphasized the importance of receiving the Committee's comments (via email to cabaron@surrey.ca) within the following week as the Corporate Report is already being prepared. Each Committee member noted the section they would review for comment.

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Committee Reappointment

The Chair directed those members, whose two-year term is expiring at the end of December, to submit a request for reappointment at their earliest convenience.

E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

1. Award of 2008 to 2012 City of Surrey Curbside Waste, Recyclables & Yard Waste Collection Services Contract Corporate Report R212 File No.: 2300-20 (Garbage & Recycling)

At the Regular Council Public Hearing Meeting held on October 1, 2007, Council requested a copy of the above noted report be provided to the EAC for information. Comments were as follows:

- The current contract expires this at the end of 2007.
- Only two firms submitted proposals, one of which has been secured at a significantly lower cost than the other.
- Future changes include:
 - Implementation of a single stream recyclable process; everything will go in the blue box, not separated, then it will be mechanically separated at the plant. It is anticipated that there will be a greater participation by the residents as they will no longer need to go through the process of classifying each of the recyclables.
 - Pick up will become increasingly more efficient because of the use of compactors as opposed to the side loaded bins, which require many more trips to unload than if it was all compacted and de-compacted. The big saving comes from less time on the road, more time picking up products and the speed of picking up.
 - Use of biodegradable brown bags will be implemented. An evaluation concluded that the bags are stronger (do not require debagging) and they are designed in a way that allows them to stand up right as opposed to put on a frame.
 - Service will change from a four day to a five day service.

Discussion ensued and it was agreed that Rob Costanzo, Deputy Operations Manager, should be invited to the November EAC meeting to provide information on the new process.

It was Moved by B. Stewart
Seconded by M. Deo
That Rob Costanzo, Deputy Operations
Manager, be invited to the November EAC meeting to provide an update.
Carried

B. Kent and D. Riley, observers, left the meeting at 8:46 p.m.

Final comments were as follows:

- Recycling collection will become available from the City's facilities, including recreational facilities, etc.
- The smaller "blue box" will be replaced over time by the newer, larger boxes.
- IPI will be under considerable scrutiny to ensure the City's expected standards are maintained.

It was Moved by B. Stewart
Seconded by Councillor Bose
That Corporate Report R212 be received.
Carried

F. CORRESPONDENCE

G. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Proposed British Columbia Climate Action Charter Corporate Report R209

File No.: 6950-30 (Sustainability Planning Initiatives)

The above noted report was received at the Regular Council – Public Meeting held on September 17, 2007, a copy of which was provided to the EAC for information.

It was Moved by Councillor Bose
Seconded by M. Deo
That Corporate Report R209 be received.
Carried

**2. Energy Efficient Buildings and British Columbian Green Building Code
Corporate Report R210**
File No.: 0480-20

The above noted report was received at the Regular Council Meeting held on September 17, 2007, a copy of which was provided to the EAC for information.

It was
Moved by Councillor Bose
Seconded by F. Perello
That Corporate Report R210 be received.
Carried

**3. Campbell Heights – Creek Works and Suzuki Foundation Report
Corporate Report R215**
File No.: 6520-20(CH)

The above noted report was received at the Regular Council – Public Hearing meeting held on October 15, 2007, a copy of which was provided to the EAC for information.

C. Baron, Drainage & Environment Manager, provided a PowerPoint presentation specific to Campbell Heights that provided an overview of the transition of that area. The following points were made:

- Latimer Lake, which was previously all trees with a small stream, was built in the 1970's from over extraction of gravel.
- Sensitive habitat inventory mapping (SHIM) and a local area plan review were done in 1999 and 2002 to evaluate the fisheries values of all of the watercourses/ditches on the Campbell Heights development area, and to determine conceptual options for retention and mitigation prior to any development proceeding.
- In 2005 the City completed the creek relocation works after receiving approvals from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO).
- A stakeholder group was created to share information and to provide an active role in helping to re-create the habitat.
- New planting techniques have been developed and the entire Latimer Lake Plan has been revisited.
- Community planting has been done (with areas identified for protection) and a commitment to the restoration work is well under way.
- The multiple barrier approach to storm water management is working well.
- Salmon have returned.
- An annual review will be done to ensure success.
- Engineering staff will be arranging a future tour of the site.

It was
Moved by Councillor Bose
Seconded by B. Stewart
That Corporate Report R215 be received.
Carried

**4. Highway Traffic By-law Amendments Related to Idling (Anti-Idling)
Corporate Report R217
File No.: 3900-20-13007**

The above noted report was received at the Regular Council – Public Hearing meeting held on October 15, 2007, a copy of which was provided to the EAC for information.

It was
Moved by B. Stewart
Seconded by M. Deo
That Corporate Report R217 be received.
Carried

**5. Surrey Bend Park
Corporate Report R220
File No.: 6140-20/S**

The above noted report was received at the Regular Council – Public Hearing meeting held on October 15, 2007, a copy of which is provided to the EAC for information.

It was
Moved by B. Stewart
Seconded by M. Deo
That Corporate Report R220 be received.
Carried

H. OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

1. Sustainability Charter

C. Baron, Drainage & Environment Manager, provided an update and noted that a draft version of the Sustainability Charter will be going to Council on Monday, October 22, 2007 with a recommendation that it comes back to the EAC for review.

It was
Moved by M. Deo
Seconded by F. Perello
That the information provided by C. Baron
regarding the Sustainability Charter be received.
Carried

I. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the EAC will be held on November 21, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. in the Executive Board Room.

L. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by D. Maher
Seconded by K. Keshvani
That the Environmental Advisory

Committee meeting do now adjourn.

Carried

The Environmental Advisory Committee adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

Margaret Jones, City Clerk

Bill Stilwell, Chair
Environmental Advisory Committee