



City of Surrey

Environmental Advisory Committee

Minutes

Executive Boardroom
City Hall
14245 - 56 Avenue
Surrey, B.C.
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2008
Time: 6:38 p.m.
File: 0540-20

Present:

B. Stillwell - Chair
M. Deo
M. Harcourt
A. Keshvani
D. Maher
G. Sangha
A. Schulze
W. Stewart
Councillor Bose

Absent:

C. Dragomir
H. Locke

Staff Present:

C. Baron, Drainage & Environment Manager
O. Croy, Manager, Parks
D. Luymes, Policy Planning Manager
L. Anderson, Legislative Services

Agricultural Advisory Committee
Representative

S. VanKeulen

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Environmental Advisory Committee (“EAC”) Minutes

It was Moved by Councillor Bose
Seconded by B. Stewart
That the minutes of the Environmental
Advisory Committee meeting of July 16, 2008 be adopted.
Carried

B. DELEGATIONS

1. Annual Report – 2007 Integrated Pest Management on City Parkland

Further to the EAC 2008 Priority Items & Work Plan, which includes staff delegation requests to periodically speak to the Committee regarding various issues, Owen Croy, Manager, Parks, was in attendance to review the 2007 Integrated Pest Management on City Parkland Annual Report. The following comments were provided:

- Hotwater treatment for weed control was done on a trial basis this year on a number of gravel all-weather fields. There were questionable treatment results. Parks is looking at trying an alternative heat treatment process on additional all-weather fields to see if it was the treatment style, rather than the overall treatment, that was at issue.
- Discussion on the use of heat treatments on rail corridors. Parks’ staff have been in contact with a number of rail companies over the years on this issue. In some areas it works well with some weeds. However, some weeds simply scorch and then grow back from the roots, but done frequently enough they can get it under control. Representatives of one of the rail companies has indicated that if they had their choice, most of the rail companies would prefer to chemically treat, due to higher efficacy.

- Each year the City gets notifications from the rail companies that they are going to be treating the rail beds and the City sends a letter back to suspend spraying adjacent to parks, environmentally sensitive areas and active or passive recreation facilities.
- The question of whether the City uses Neem was raised. Neem is an antifeedant (insects won't feed on plants treated with Neem oil). UBC, under Dr. Murray Eismen, ran trials on Neem. Unsure of the product status in Canada.
- The use of Round-up in various forms was raised. Round-up and glyphosate, comes in soluble crystal and a liquid, glyphosate is that active ingredient, where Round-up is the trade name, not the active ingredient. Measurements were recorded individually of the various mixtures and various forms, and then reported out as such.
- The use of Casoron with newly planted beds was discussed. Casoron releases a low vapour below the mulch material that affects seedlings as they begin to emerge, killing off the seedling. In new beds, the City uses more mature plant stock that is not affected by the Casoron which only affects the emergent weeds
- Martin brought up the method of sheet composting which is used in North Vancouver in the traffic circles. Sheet composting consists of layering mulch and cardboard a couple of times to inhibit weed production and getting away from using chemicals such as Casoron.
- In 2007, Staff took a report to Surrey Council after the question of the use of herbicides for the weeds in street landscaping was raised. Staff explained to Council that herbicides were used in areas where there is generally little public access. At that time, the labour cost for hand weeding was discussed. Council did not indicate to staff to proceed or not to proceed.
- It was noted that more product was used in 2007 than in previous years. A 300% increase in one year for one particular type of pesticide. The reason for the additional usage was the large inventory that was recently added. Streetscaping and median plantings resulted in considerably more new landscaped areas that require more initial treatments until plants have time to mature.
- The median plantings are generally put in the previous year, and are maintained by the contractor who usually puts them in and then taken over by the City the following year, at which time pre-emergent herbicides may be used.
- The report includes all product used even by contractors working for Surrey. At the back of the report is a table for this year that includes the contractors use for 2007. Perhaps the table produced last year did not reflect the contractor's usage.
- The park system has more than doubled in the last 10 years; going from 1100 hectares to 2700 hectares in the last 15 years. Given the number of streetscapes put in, there is a reduction of the pesticide use on a unit basis.
- In the City, although we are using an integrated approach as much as practical, we do rely on some use of pesticides along the way.

O. Croy left the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

EAC members then discussed if they thought the City was doing a good job in their Integrated Pest Management Plan. Comments continued:

- Some members thought the City staff could improve their methods and their plan, which consists of outdated 20 year old information. More education could assist staff in implementing new pesticide free practices. There are a lot more programs now.
- The role of the EAC Committee is that if there is a different understanding then there may be opportunities to learn.
- M. Harcourt, through his work at Gaia College, is teaching the organic master gardener program to the region right now. Trying to develop programs right now that are 3 hour programs for parks workers. There is a huge demand, from communities such as Maple Ridge, Parksville and City of Vancouver. Education is key. A few years ago we didn't have organic fertilizers, now we have many in the Fraser Valley, truly organic fertilisers, best in the world. We can do it, but the mind set has to change.
- Members discussed how best to educate staff as to new methods. It was thought that a presentation to Council on organic pesticides and organic compost from the Dean of Gaia College, Heide Hermary, would be beneficial.
- The Committee also thought that a presentation to key Parks staff would be more effective than just to Council members.
- If we educate the Parks staff, then they will lead the people, lead by example. We can't stop the sale of pesticides; businesses such as Home Depot and Rona stopped the sale as a safety issue for their staff and hazard requirements, etc.

It was

Moved by B. Stewart

Seconded by K. Keshvani

That the Environmental Advisory

Committee invite Heide Hermary, head of Gaia College, to speak to the Committee on the question of organic landscape management and that representatives from the Surrey School Board be invited to attend.

Carried

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

It was

Moved by B. Stewart

Seconded by K. Keshvani

That the Environmental Advisory

Committee recommend that Council request that key Parks, Recreation and Culture staff (*i.e. Manager of Parks and Beautification Coordinator*) attend the EAC meeting when the delegation of Heide Hermary, head of Gaia College, provides a presentation on organic landscape management.

Carried

2. OCP (Office Community Plan) Review

Further to the EAC 2008 Priority Items & Work Plan, which includes staff delegation requests to periodically speak to the Committee regarding various issues, Don Luymes, Policy Planning Manager, was in attendance to provide a PowerPoint presentation and an update regarding the OCP review. Comments were as follows:

- Every municipality is required, by legislation, to have an Official Community Plan. The OCP sets out the land use and policy statements that govern the City direction for future development. The OCP primarily encompasses Land Use but also Environmental, Social and Economic Planning and Civic Infrastructure (water, sewer, amenities and services). All subsequent City plans and policies must conform to the OCP.
- The current OCP was ratified in 2002, and updated plans from 1996 and 1986 before it. The OCP is reshaped approximately every five years.
- The OCP is updated to articulate a vision for the City and to respond to significant changes in provincial and regional plans (transit, etc) and policy initiatives.
- An OCP includes a vision of the City's development, Citywide land use, infrastructure, plans and maps.
- The ultimate goal of this process is to address significant planning issues, build a sustainable livable community and to identify the key issues and challenges facing Surrey.

In response to the information provided, comments were as follows:

- The number of OCP amendments should be kept to a minimum. At present, OCP amendments can occur on a weekly basis due to the way the City implements NCPs (Neighbourhood Concept Plans).
- The OCP contains both policies and land use designations, adopted by bylaw, but the one firm legal element within the whole range of provisions of the OCP is the map. We change the OCP very often, but it is always with respect to the land use designations. The question should be put as to how many times during the life of the OCP do we change policy.
- Often, the OCP is written so broadly that a wide range can be construed as many things.
- What is missing is a flowchart showing the approval points and regulatory bodies. For example, the flowchart could also set out which portion requires approval, etc.
- Having an OCP that actually reflects the current NCPs is what is needed. This could be accomplished with a procedural in the NCP as to how it is adopted in the OCP. Perhaps NCPs should not be adopted without first adopting and enabling an OCP; not approve an NCP until it conforms to an updated OCP, with the OCP having a broad enough brush to avoid getting hung up on streams, park acquisitions, etc. If, for example, policies were adopted that required OCP amendments on a larger scale, prior to the adoption of the NCP, with the OCP less fine grained, there could be a public hearing that would have some kind of meaning, as there are arguments being made that NCPs should be subject to a public hearing.
- The NCPs themselves cannot be faulted, they are very well done. They have good environmental information and densities are carefully worked

out. The question is that it is not reflected in the document that shows this greater, the OCP.

Kurban left at 8:04pm

- The OCP could include a policy statement to address the City's desire to achieve certain densities.
- "Piecemealing" has to be addressed, as well as a policy, within the OCP, to set out goals of the environmentally areas.
- The delegation should come back to the Committee with a framework of the discussion above, to advise the Committee on the procedures for adopting the NCP with respect to the OCP.
- Surrey's projected growth by 2012 is 521,340. Managing that growth, instead of closing the door, is key.

Discussion ensued regarding rental housing versus affordable housing for purchase.

In closing, D. Luymes suggested that the Committee members email him at dluymes@surrey.ca or ocpreview@surrey.ca with any further questions and/or suggestions.

The Committee expressed their appreciation for the presentation and the opportunity to provide comments, noting that a further presentation is required.

C. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

1. Corporate Report R097 – New Surrey Stormwater Drainage Regulation and Charges By-law

This item was deferred from the July 16, 2008 EAC meeting.

At the Regular Council Public Hearing meeting held on Monday, June 16, 2008, Council considered the above noted Corporate Report R097, a copy of which is provided to the Environmental Advisory Committee for information.

It was
Stormwater Drainage Regulation and Charges By-law, be received.
Moved by M. Deo
Seconded by S. Van Keulen
That Corporate Report R097, New Surrey
Carried

D. NEW BUSINESS

E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

1. Love our Environment – Eliminate Pesticides (LEEP) and Surrey/White Rock Pesticide-free Coalition

At the Council-in-Committee meeting held on Monday, July 28, 2008, Council referred the information provided by LEEP and the Surrey/White Rock Pesticide-free Coalition to the EAC for further investigation and a report back to Council.

It was Moved by S. Van Keulen
Seconded by A. Schulze
That the Environmental Advisory
Committee advise Council that the EAC is pursuing education in this issue further for the purpose of providing Council with alternatives.
Carried

Agenda varied

G. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Surrey White Rock Pesticide-free Coalition

Letter dated September 15, 2008, requesting to appear before the Committee to discuss the July 2008 cosmetic pesticide presentation to Surrey Council and the Mayor's request for the Committee's guidance.

It was Moved by S. Van Keulen
Seconded by A. Schulze
That the Environmental Advisory
Committee advise the Surrey White Rock Pesticide-free Coalition that alternatives to pesticide uses are being sought and that a presentation would be premature at this time.
Carried

F. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Campbell Heights

C. Baron, Drainage and Environment Manager, provided an update on the Campbell Heights expert panel. The following comments were made:

- The Expert Panel was assembled to review Phase I, it does not deal with anything that is under development for Phase II.
- The Panel reviewed the City's plans to complete the fisheries authorization works associated with Phase I along with all other comments from site tours and other interested citizens and community groups. The Panel then developed a revised plan for the completion of the Phase I works.

- DFO was shown the Expert Panel's plan and was satisfied with the plan direction.
- A copy of the revised plan, which will go to Council on September 29th, is available on the City's website along with planting plans. "Living in Surrey – Environment – Protecting our Environment – Campbell Heights".
- Work has already started. An old access road is being decommissioned with the area being regarded and topsoiled and seeded. Existing material was worked into the new material to obtain an improved growing medium for proposed plantings.
- The creek can no longer be accessed from the west side of the pit area. Only key portions can now be accessed by vehicle.

2. Sustainability Charter

C. Baron, Drainage and Environment Manager, provided an update on the Sustainability Charter. Comments were as follows:

- At the Mayor's recent meeting with the various groups dealing with Phase II of the Charter, information regarding the draft document was provided such as the wording and the immediate action list of implementation items, etc.
- Once Phase II has gone through Council, the start up of Phase III will begin. Phase III consists of developing key targets (short, medium and long term) and indicators to track how the City is doing at achieving its sustainability goals
- There are early discussions on how to include participants into Phase III of the project. The EAC, other City Committees and key community groups will all play integral roles. A series of workshops is being investigated to help with Phase III target/indicator development.
- The Sustainability Office will likely be initiated at the City once Phase II has been adopted. This office will be key to Phase II development and the long term success of the Charter once adopted.

Discussion ensued regarding the hierarchy of the Sustainability Charter and the OCP. Is the Sustainability Charter the overarching document or is it the guiding principles to use in the OCP? At some point there needs to be clarification as to which is the real umbrella document. The language has got to be such that there is no confusion of the overarching document and the other.

H. OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

1. EAC 2008 Priority Items & Work Plan

The 2008 Priority Items & Work Plan was provided as an on-going item and guideline, for review and updates as necessary. The following comments were made:

- Alternatives to pesticide use should be placed as item two.

- R. Costanzo, Deputy Operations Manager, should attend the next meeting to give a very quick presentation to address the next steps for stewardship of garbage, how we handle waste materials of all kinds, etc.

I. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the EAC will be held on October 15, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. in the Executive Board Room.

J. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by S. Van Keulen
Seconded by Councillor Bose
That the Environmental Advisory

Committee meeting do now adjourn.

Carried

The Environmental Advisory Committee adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Margaret Jones, City Clerk

Bill Stilwell, Chairperson
Environmental Advisory Committee