

# City of Surrey

## *Environmental Advisory Committee* *Minutes*

Executive Boardroom  
City Hall  
14245 - 56 Avenue  
Surrey, B.C.  
**THURSDAY, JULY 17, 2003**  
Time: 7:00 p.m.  
File No. 0540-20 EAC

**Present:**

Dr. R.M. Strang - Chair  
Dr. T. Godwin  
J. Grewal  
H. Locke  
D. Maher  
Dr. F. Perello  
J. Sarwal  
J. Trimble

**Absent:**

Councillor Bose  
B. Stilwell  
S. VanKeulen  
R. Wetzel

**Staff Present:**

C. Baron, Drainage & Environment Manager  
O. Croy, Manager of Parks  
A. Zonta, Legislative Services

### **A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

#### **1. Environmental Advisory Committee**

It was Moved by J. Sarwal  
Seconded by Dr. T. Godwin  
That the minutes of the Environmental Advisory committee meeting of  
June 19, 2003 be adopted.

Carried

### **B. DELEGATIONS**

#### **1. Parks, Recreation & Culture Department -Environmental Guidelines for Planning, Design, Development and Operations in Park Facilities**

Bob Paterson, Manager of Parks Development Services, gave a slide presentation on environmental guidelines for planning, design, development and operations of the City's Park Facilities. These guidelines were presented on table (Appendix A.)

This document initially evolved from Surrey's Official Community Plan (1996) and from citizens' response to the City's 1998 survey (*1998 Update: Report Card on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.*) From this, a strategic plan was developed to create and incorporate specific environmental guidelines into the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department's policies and programs, primarily the development of parks and facilities.

The Principles of Environmental Design were briefly discussed. These are the foundation for the Parks, Recreation and Culture environmental guidelines.

The Parks and Facilities Design Guidelines incorporate specific focuses that includes:

- Site Planning
- Environmental Assessments
- Buildings
- Materials and Construction Methods
- Vegetation Management
- Tree Management
- Fauna Management
- Stream Crossings and Preservation of Water Courses

- Stormwater Management
- Soil Management and Erosion Control
- Siltation Control
- Trail Development
- Water Conservation
- Indoor Environmental Quality
- Pest Control
- Waste Disposal and Cleaning
- Public Participation and Process

In addition to the points discussed above it was noted that environmental consultants in conjunction with city staff complete environmental assessments.

Park, Recreation and Culture buildings and facilities are presently incorporating LEED principals in order to improve energy consumption. The LEED system uses an incentive program where businesses achieve Gold, Silver and Bronze status upon completing requirements within each level. Currently, Parks is working towards achieving Bronze status.

The department is also utilizing selected guidelines from the GVRD's "*Green Building Strategies for Municipal Buildings*" into their Buildings, Materials and Construction Methods, Energy Conservation and Indoor Environmental Quality objectives.

The WaterWise Garden pamphlet was distributed to show one of the ways water is conserved and recycled through landscape design and function.

Trail Development within the City is conducted so that designers and developers adhere to the "Trail Classification System" and trail development guidelines as articulated in the *Access and Recreation Management Strategy* and the *Trail Standards* documents of the Natural Areas Management Plan (NAMP.)

Public Participation is one of the key processes as community education and outreach is very important. This process assists in informing and educating the public on positive environmental approaches and promoting environmental programs within the City.

## C. DISCUSSION OF DELEGATIONS

### 1. Parks, Recreation & Culture Department – Environmental Guidelines for Planning, Design, Development and Operations in Park Facilities

A question was posed regarding the liaison between the City and the GVRD. Manager of Parks responded that the Parks Department has standing arrangements with the GVRD on a monthly basis. The GVRD is invited to attend monthly Parks meetings. The GVRD attends monthly meetings of Parks Managers from local municipalities. The City and GVRD have a Memorandum of Understanding regarding the joint operation of Mud Bay Park. Direct discussions between the City and the GVRD are completed at management levels about the future development of some GVRD parks located within Surrey.

It was asked when retrofitting or renovations are completed does the City incorporate the LEED system principles during this time. Manager of Parks, responded that three years ago the Department undertook a study through a BC Hydro consultant to discuss and provide suggestions on how to make Park facilities more energy efficient; the suggestions for the smaller Park buildings have now all been implemented since that time. Currently, all larger Parks, Recreation and Culture buildings are being reviewed by a civic Energy Management Committee. This Committee will be providing an information session to the EAC regarding energy conservation initiatives at a future date.

There was discussion regarding the utilization of ladybugs and dragon flies for pest control. Currently, through the creation of new marsh lands, there is an increase in population of dragonflies because of more dragonfly habitats has been created.

A query was posed regarding the replacement of old fleet vehicles with newer energy efficient vehicles. The environmental guidelines do not extend to cover this issue. It is the decision of the City's Fleet Manager to decide what the replacement vehicles will be.

There was a comment regarding environmental guidelines extending to the private lands within the City (i.e. lands around the mud flats of Mud Bay.) Initially, these guidelines were intended for Park facilities, and Park land development. The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department will make these guidelines available to other city departments for their consideration.

It was noted that these guidelines are available for public review. Any comments, concerns and suggestions can be addressed through the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department.

The order of the agenda was changed, by general consensus, to hear the delegation presentation regarding the Grandview Corridor Update and the Semiahmoo Trail Development Proposal.

## **D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **3. Grandview Corridor Update**

A public consultation session was held recently to review the recent updates to the Grandview Corridor Development Plan.

Observers were in attendance to express some concerns regarding this development. The Chair acknowledged their attendance and asked that they direct any comments, concerns or questions through the Chair.

The main concern that the observers had with respect to the open house was the lack of detailed information regarding environmental assessments and responses to environmental questions posed. However, by attending this committee meeting most of these questions and concerns were answered and noted that the city does have environmental systems in place when dealing with proposed developments.

Drainage & Environment Manager reiterated that an environmental consultant has been retained by the Planning and Development Department to provide environmental assessments for this developmental proposal. She also concluded that the consultant is willing to work with the public to address their concerns.

It was asked whether assessments qualitative or quantitative. Drainage & Environment Manager responded that the assessments are quite detailed as the consultant goes into the field to compile environmental inventories and review information provided by the public. She provided some examples on how some assessments are conducted.

D. Maher asked if staff have the terms of reference for the Grandview Corridor project. Drainage & Environment Manager stated that these terms could be provided through the Senior Planner, George Fujii.

### **4. Semiahmoo Trail – Proposed Development Concern**

Cecilia Achiam was in attendance to speak on this issue and provide an update to the committee. A memo and plans was provided for their review.

A brief overview of the project was presented and the following comments made:

- Surrounding the proposed site are developments to the west and to the north.
- This is the last piece of a four-phase development project previously approved. The Development Permit has lapsed and a new development has proposed a new scheme for this site which is currently under consideration.
- Initially, this portion of the Semiahmoo Trail was relocated to facilitate the development to the west.
- As part of the review of the current development proposal, the Parks Department commissioned an

arborist's report to assess the viability of the trees on this portion of the Semiahmoo Trail (assessment copies and photographs of wind throw were distributed to members for their review).

- A comparison of the tree survey conducted in 1995 with the current site (pre-development) showed that additional trees have been blown down in the intervening years (landscape plans from 1995 and the current plans were provided to show the difference).
- An overview showing the proposed townhouse and condominium locations and structure descriptions was presented. There will be a combination of 17-unit 3-storey townhouses and with a 34-unit, 2,3,4 storey condominiums on the proposed site.
- The developer has been working cooperatively with the city to meet the city's requirements, and the community's needs.
- The developer has been working cooperatively with the city to meet the city's requirements, and the community's needs.
- The developer has proposed to increase the shrub plantings and tree plantings as well as look at retaining some trees on the north corner and at the trailhead in addition to retaining some of the healthy trees adjacent to the Semiahmoo Trail.
- The developer has also responded to the Surrey Heritage Advisory Commissions recommendations by increasing some of the site's setbacks along the trail.
- The Planning Department has to balance tree retention and address the interface issues with the neighbours to the north and west.

Manager of Parks provided some additional information on the arborist reports. Currently, two reviews of the trees have been conducted. The independent tree assessment by the consultant, Norman Hall, echoes the assessment conducted by City staff. The overall result of the independent review states that the clearing of the land will negatively impact most of the large trees and the rest of the remaining trees will likely be wind thrown (pose a public safety hazard.) However, staff will be reassessing the site at a future date to see if they can retain more of the existing large trees through various hazard mitigation strategies.

The Chair stated that after reviewing the proposed plans and attending a site visit he agrees with the arborists' reports.

Through the Chair, a public member noted that the information presented today was an improvement to what was presented to the community at the meeting held with BC Hydro. Initially, residents and nearby stratas were not adequately informed and therefore formed the Friends of Semiahmoo Heritage Trail.

It was asked that trees requiring removal be carefully assessed before doing so and that trees not at high risk be re-evaluated to ensure that they aren't unnecessarily removed.

The Chair provided some information regarding the site's soil consistency. The large trees are rooted in shallow clay soil with a high water table. If there were a disturbance (i.e. tree removal) the rest of the trees' stability would be compromised.

In addition, Manager of Parks stated that over time, there would be a need to remove the trees that are in decline due changes with the water table, increased sun exposure, and greater exposure to winds. This decline is particularly evident in thinning crowns, heavy cone crops and increases in epicormic growth. If this development proceeds, the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department would ensure that the site retains as much of its natural state as possible (i.e. medium to small trees and ground foliage) while removing large existing trees that are potentially hazardous.

There was discussion regarding buffer zones around public lands and the city allocation of land dedications in development applications. It was concluded that the RM-45 zoning designation was already granted for this parcel and that this portion of the trail was dedicated as park as part of the original rezoning process. Since the development site already has its zoning in place, it does not require rezoning or any variances as part of the current application. Therefore, the preservation of the "natural conditions" and other augmentation of planting materials adjacent to the trail will be mainly be achieved through negotiation by the City with the developer and the good will of the developer.

Manager of Parks provided park land ratio numbers to the committee. Currently, the City exceeds the park land provision standard for South Surrey in the green belt category (standard at 0.8 hectares per thousand) and in the neighbourhood park category (0.6 hectares per thousand.) Staff is following the guidelines and plans

established by Council, the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department and the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission.

The developer will be managing stormwater runoff by tying into the current stormwater system from a neighbouring site. A swale will also be provided.

The underground parking will have pumps to deal with run off. Drainage & Environment Manager provided additional information on how the development may influence existing water problems on adjacent sites.

The Chair inquired about the landscaping on site. C. Achiam responded that the replanted trees will be of native species with an assortment of ornamental species. Also the understory will have a mixture of native and non-native species.

There was an inquiry to what would be the total number of trees removed and if the site would be reassessed to ensure that trees were not unnecessarily removed. The Chair stated that there are a number of mechanisms in place to assess the need for tree removal and for hazard assessments. He assured that the city would balance environmental needs versus public safety concerns.

It was asked by the Friends of Semiahmoo Heritage Trail if they could appear as a delegation at the next Environmental Advisory Committee meeting. The Chair stated that it could be accommodated at that time.

The Chair thanked the observers and the Manager of Parks for their attendance and their comments.

C. Achiam left the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

Manager of Parks left the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

The normal order of the agenda was restored at 8:11 p.m.

#### **D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

##### **1. Environmental Website**

There was nothing to report.

##### **2. Environmental Workshop**

A brief meeting was held between the Chair and the City Manager recently. This would not be favourable at this time due to staff restraints.

##### **5. Application for Amendment of Special Waste Storage Permit PS-8610**

Drainage & Environment Manager noted that BC Hydro has fulfilled their requirements. The plan was provided to the City of Surrey as previously requested.

The outstanding action list to be updated and this item marked completed.

##### **6. Amendment of EAC's Terms of Reference**

This item was reviewed. There was nothing further to discuss.

#### **E. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **1. Campbell Heights Development**

The Chair attended the Campbell Heights open house recently. He stated that the development has been in the planning stages since March of 2003.

The Chair attended the site recently and took photos of the creeks flowing out of the area. They were provided to the members for their review.

Several queries were posed to staff:

1. What environmental studies have been conducted over what period of time?
2. Where these studies qualitative or quantitative?
3. Who performed the studies?
4. How will ground water be allowed by the development?
5. Has the GVRD/TransLink been contacted about traffic since only minor roads currently service the area and workers will need to commute, as there is no available residential housing nearby?
6. Have alternative sites been considered?

Drainage & Environment Manager responded to the questions posed by the Chair and made the following comments:

- She has been assessing the site since 1999.
- It is an active gravel pit which the City operates.
- Construction of the site has led to creeks forming which were not present prior to mining activities.
- The city is dealing with contamination of the site from past activities through assessment and cleanup of a portion of the site.
- During the beginning stages, a cursory environmental assessment was completed which focused on creeks and fisheries, in 2000.
- A follow up assessment was completed when the City was entertaining of possibly developing the site. It was noted that more creeks had formed as a result of mining activities and staff decided to revisit the site plan.
- At the present time, a pre-servicing plan for the area is underway.  
This plan is to examine past environmental studies and information, update fisheries information, assess amphibian and wildlife inventories, review groundwater conditions, develop storm water management plans for the area stating impacts on the environment and sustaining the fisheries resources in the community.
- Transportation road works and systems are to be reviewed.

Staff is continuing to work on the environmental studies and will be available for review at a future date. All studies must be signed off by staff before going before Council.

The amphibian study may be completed for next week. Drainage and groundwater assessments will be received shortly.

J. Trimble asked if staff could forward the completed assessments to the committee for the September meeting. Drainage & Environment Manager to follow up with this request.

There was brief discussion concerning the promotional materials regarding the development and the impact it may have on the environmental assessments. J. Trimble responded that the promotional materials presented to the public cannot impede environmental assessments and the results.

Through the Chair, it was noted by the observers that the city needs to address the public concerns regarding the environment in a more timely manner rather than after the fact. Currently, at the public information sessions, there is not enough information concerning environmental assessments and results.

## **F. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL**

**G. UPDATES**

**1. Outstanding Action List (For Review)**

**a) BC Hydro PCB Contamination at Bear Creek**

R. Wetzel was not in attendance to provide this information. This item to be tabled for the next meeting.

**H. CORRESPONDENCE**

It was

Moved by Dr. Perello

Seconded by Dr. T. Godwin

That correspondence items H.1. and H.2. be received for information.

Carried

**1. Integrated Water and Watershed Science for Clean and Healthy Drinking Water: Emerging Issues for BC and Canadian Communities**

**2. Friends of Semiahmoo Heritage Trail**

**I. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**J. OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

**1. EAC member resignation**

J. Trimble has offered his resignation as a member of the Environmental Advisory Committee. It was asked that he forward a formal letter to Legislative Services to confirm his resignation.

The Chair expressed his gratitude for his service as a committee member and wished him well on his future endeavours.

**K. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, September 18, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. in the Executive Board Room.

**L. ADJOURNMENT**

The Environmental Advisory Committee adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

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Chairperson