

Present:

B. Campbell - Chair
Councillor Bose
C. Dragomir
M. Harcourt
G. Sangha
B. Stewart

Regrets:

A. Schulze
B. Burnside
K. Keshvani
G. Sahota
S. VanKeulen, Agricultural Advisory
Committee Representative

Staff Present:

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

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was Moved Councillor Bose
Seconded by C. Dragomir
That the minutes of the Environmental
Advisory Committee meeting held on October 27, 2010, be adopted.
Carried

B. DELEGATIONS**1. Deb Jack, Surrey Environmental Partners and
John Werring, David Suzuki Foundation**

Deb Jack, Surrey Environmental Partners, and John Werring, David Suzuki Foundation, were in attendance to speak to the concerns and recommendations regarding the Draft Ecosystem Management Study (EMS) prepared for Surrey by HB Lanarc. A copy of Ms. Jack's presentation was provided to the Committee and comments were as follows:

- Surrey Environmental Partners (SEP) is non-profit, serving as an umbrella organization for both Surrey organizations and individuals concerned about the living environment. There are approximately 1,200 members. SEP's main activities are education and advocacy, with a primary focus of Surrey.
- As there are a number of concerns with regard to the EMS, it was requested that SEP's presentation be given to the EAC prior to their presentation to Council, which will be given in conjunction with the EMS, for which the date is yet to be determined.
- The Sustainability Charter is an initial way of accepting and recognizing how everything is integrated. However it was surprising to note that the living environment was put subordinate to both the economical and socio-cultural pillars in the study.
- It seems that the Sustainability Charter is a document for change. It talks about of number of things being changed that has not been utilized before.
- SEP would like to propose changes to how reports are written based on the Sustainability Charter by not only noting the fulfillment of certain

sustainability criteria, but to also include/make note of the areas of the particular subject/application that does not fulfill sustainability criteria.

- With regard to resources and staff, the Sustainability Office is a department of one. One person is not enough to deal with the Charter and come up with a biodiversity charter and guidelines, etc. Further, the City should really consider setting up an environmental department that pertains specifically to environmental issues.
- One of the really big issues is that there has been an apparent reduction in the longstanding City policy of 4.2 hectares of parkland per 1,000 population. The new standard is reportedly 1.2 hectares per 1,000, with the remaining 3.0 hectares listed as an “aspirational goal” (*Parks Strategic Plan 2008-2017*). The fact is, there should be an increase in parkland acquisitions.
- With regard to the acquisition of green infrastructure network (GIN) lands, it seems to us that Ecosystem/GIN and biodiversity conservation are not solely a Parks, Recreation and Culture issue. Therefore, that City department should not be solely responsible for its acquisition.
- There is concern with regard to the Grandview Heights NCP Area #4 as the area has been highlighted as an area with one of the highest value wildlife hubs in the City. How will that be incorporated into the NCP?
- The EMS was done using old photos. There are areas that show all sorts of green areas and sites that aren't there anymore. The maps are not truly representative of the particular areas. Additional information is missing – there are all sorts of species (owls, hawks, etc.) for which there should have been some ground grading.
- Another concern is that this study does not give justification to older, already existing spaces that may be considered green space. Any place where there is a house that is 30 or 40 years old, has existing habitat. Many of the areas with older homes typically have a green corridor; raccoons can be seen walking down alleyways, etc. However, time and time again, trees are lost in those areas.
- There is a problem with agricultural land as well with 30% of that land not being used. The shift needs to be at the land level. Environmental uses of the lands and their real value needs to be recognized for what they are. Wild lands that are not built up should be worth much more than they are presently.
- Any area that is a green space, needs to stay a green space. It is recognized that this would be problematic for the community, but there needs to be a switch to looking at densification of existing areas, adding “green” roofs, etc., in order to protect what currently remains green space in Surrey.
- Some of the older areas probably can be densified, but not the wholesale development that is going on right now. We have this study, we have this plan, noble gesture, right idea, not enough consideration of money given to do it right.
- Surrey is not one of the fastest growing, it is the fastest urban sprawl. At the current rate of growth, there will not be one square foot of land to develop in 10 years.
- Specific action items should include:
 - Stop building on these green spaces. Focus on already disturbed areas to densify and leave the green space alone.. The City is going in that direction with building in the city corridor, however the other issue is that Surrey is wide open for development; not looking and focusing on already existing

areas. Something is going to have to suffer, but the same amount of weight (and some) has to be put to environmental values. The environment arc is not coming into the centre. Surrey has the capability to freeze building permits until a solid decision can be made for the future of Surrey. Council should be convinced to curb development within the city boundaries. Maybe instead of issuing permits everywhere, focus on one NCP.

- Develop enforceable bylaws and increase fines to the point that it cannot be simply accepted as “the cost of doing business”.
- To reiterate, it is absolutely critical that Surrey needs its own internal qualified professionals on staff specifically appointed to work on the various studies, such as the EMS, undertaken in the past by consultants (e.g. three or four biologists, hydrologists, agrologists, etc.). The City relies too much on consultants. There is no check or balance; not able to evaluate and look for clarity. Internal studies by professionals could provide further detail and would likely cost less.

The Committee’s comments were as follows:

- Wild lands are valued because we commodify land. The value of wild land should be twice or three times what built up lands are.
- One of the points raised was the shift in parkland acquisition, the City has not abandoned the 4.2 acres, but with the development in City Centre, and not the kind of land available to buy for the urban core, there is still land to purchase, just not the standard of 10 acres per 1,000, in that area. Overall, the City actually exceeds the 4.2 hectares per 1,000 across the city.
- Finer grade detail in the EMS would have taken quite a bit longer to complete. Funding for a finer grade of detail work is not available. However, there have been funds set aside for a biodiversity plan to look at and determine where the most environmentally valuable areas are, what are we protecting for (bears? squirrels?), etc. Depending on how much is lost, it could be a case of protecting for raccoons. To do the super assessment and the ground tree technology is not a small task.
- The status of the EMS is that staff met with the consultant to get it updated for 2010. As the study was undertaken in 2007, and completion of the study was not envisioned to take as long as it has, modifications are underway to apply the 2010 data to the plan to show the base layer with the hubs and sites, etc.
- It is anticipated that Council will see the EMS either before or just after Christmas.
- This presentation should also be made to Council as soon as possible. It would be best if Council did not have to wait until they are considering the EMS to receive the presentation from Deb Jack and John Werring, as their ideas are compelling and should be considered.
- A review of the presentation further, by the Committee, should also be done with a goal to condensing the information in order to reinforce and recommend priorities for Council. Further, although the EMS is not finalized, the Draft is available on-line and should also be reviewed again.
- The main agenda item for the December meeting will be to synopsise both the presentation and the EMS document in order to make recommendations to Council.
- Parks’ staff will also contribute a response at the December EAC meeting.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

It was Moved M. Harcourt
Seconded by C. Dragomir
That the Environmental Advisory Committee
recommend that Council receive Deb Jack, Surrey Environmental Partners, and
John Werring, David Suzuki Foundation, at the earliest possible date, as
delegations prior to considering the Ecosystem Management Study.
Carried

C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS**1. Pesticide Control By-law**
File No. 5280-23

As noted at the October meeting, staff were requested to provide an update with regard to the current distribution of pesticides and herbicides by major retailers within the City of Surrey at the November meeting. As such, a memo to the Committee from Owen Croy, Manager of Parks, outlining the review of retail distribution of pesticides, was provided on table. Comments were as follows:

- Staff made site visits to retailers and spoke with management employees that were familiar with their products. They were asked if they were aware that the City put forward a Pesticide Control By-law and as such their observations to any trend with regard to pesticide sales since the introduction of the by-law.
- In general, there is a trend towards increasing use of 'eco-friendly' pest control products over conventional chemical pesticides.
- Several retailers reported that they have seen a steady decline in pesticide sales over the last 15 years, even though the population of Surrey has nearly doubled that time.
- It was noted that younger customers are not very knowledgeable about gardening or pest control products, and are more likely to ask what to use; most garden shops steer them to 'eco-friendly' products.
- All outlets reported that many middle-aged and older gardeners still request chemical pesticides, and are resistant to trying 'eco-friendly' pesticides. Older gardeners are more knowledgeable about gardening, may have tried 'eco-friendly' products, but want more traditional chemical pesticides.
- When one of the large retailers stopped stocking weed 'n feed products and more conventional chemical pesticides, sales of these products increased at other retailers.
- Another large retailer still sells a variety of chemical pesticides, but has a greater supply of the 'eco-friendly' materials, and will increase the ratio of 'eco-friendly' pesticides in the future.
- Smaller garden stores sell a broader range of pesticides, including conventional pesticides and 'eco-friendly' products. On average, it appeared that they sold about 30% conventional/traditional and 70% 'eco-friendly'.
- One smaller retailer stated that they sold only 'eco-friendly' products, but metaldehyde, weed 'n feed and captan fungicide were found on the shelves.

- Retailers report that many people are unaware of the by-law. Further, several retailers themselves misunderstood the by-law.
- There remains strong demand for herbicides and for insecticides related to insects that cause problems in lawns.

The Committee commented as follows:

- Is there a need for the City to go back out in the spring to reiterate that there is a by-law, etc.?
- Perhaps there can be a small educational brochure or card, preferably in as many languages as possible, that can be distributed to the various garden centres for their display racks.
- Certainly from the evidence received there is still some confusion.
- A paradigm shift, this sickness of the lawn versus the sickness of the soil. It is the bugs in the soil that needs to be concentrated on. Grass isn't hard to grow, it is easy to mess up is what it is. The misunderstanding is what is going on underneath. You can take a decongestant, but you still have a cold. You still have a deficiency in the soil that is healthy.
- There is an absolute lack of education. We are saying you can't use this, but we don't provide the education. We need to tell people how to handle the problems and what to do if the problem becomes an issue.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

It was

Moved B. Stewart

Seconded by Councillor Bose

While there appears to be general

acceptance in the community of Pesticide Control By-law No. 17160, there is still a degree of confusion among retailers and citizens. The Environmental Advisory Committee therefore recommends that Council:

1. Request staff to design an enhanced education program about Pesticide Control By-law No. 17160; and
2. That funds be set aside to pay for said program.

Carried

D. NEW BUSINESS

E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

F. CORRESPONDENCE**1. Jane Sullivan, City Clerk**

File No. 0540-20

The memo from the City Clerk regarding the proposed 2011 EAC meeting dates was reviewed.

It was Moved by Councillor Bose
Seconded by B. Stewart
That the proposed Environmental Advisory
Committee meeting schedule for 2011 be approved.
Carried

G. INFORMATION ITEMS**1. Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) Update**

Updates from the AAC meetings of October 7 and November 4, 2010, were provided as follows:

October 7, 2010:

- Representatives from Kwantlen Polytechnic University were on hand to respond to questions from the Committee about their proposed study on “Strategies for Enhanced Local-Scale Agriculture” in Surrey. This study was initiated in response to a presentation at the 2009 Economic Summit. The Committee had been asked on a very short notice to provide a letter of support for an Investment Agriculture grant to fund the study, and requested clarification on several points. A subcommittee was formed to investigate the matter further.
- An update on the NCP for Grandview Heights Area #4 was, similar to the one presented to the EAC in September, was received. Concerns were raised over the proximity of higher density sites to ALR land, and the conflicts that could arise in terms of odours and noise.
- Input with regard to the issues arising from the implementation of the cosmetic pesticide by-law was sought. It was noted that the lawn-destroying *European Chafer* is spreading rapidly throughout Metro Vancouver, and the Committee members expressed concern over the implications for farms in Surrey. Clarification was requested as to whether treatment for this pest would be permitted under the by-law.
- It was reported that the Agricultural Land Commission had denied the application for the proposed compost facility in Hazelmere.
- An update on the proposed overpasses on 152, 192 and 196 Streets and on 54 Avenue was provided. There are also changes being made to Colebrook Road west of King George Boulevard as part of a “Whistle Cessation” program.

November 4, 2010:

- The Committee received another update on the NCP for Grandview Heights Area #4. It was noted that the projected population for the area has been

increased, from 5,000 – 7,000 up to 7,000 – 10,000. Most of the discussion focused on buffers between the ALR and the NCP area, as well as the concept of increased densities to allow for more open space.

- An update on the OCP Review was provided. It was noted that two potential development areas in the east hazelmere area will very likely continue to be designated “agricultural” for the next several years. This is relevant from an environmental point of view because this area has apparently absorbed wildlife displaced from Campbell Heights.
- During discussion of a proposed warehouse facility in Campbell Heights, on land presently zoned A-2, a motion was passed recommending that the proposal should be forwarded to the EAC for comment. It has since been noted that, unlike the AAC, the EAC cannot speak to applications as there are just too many.

2. Development Advisory Committee (DAC) Update

An update from the DAC meeting of October 28, 2010, will be provided at the December meeting.

H. OTHER BUSINESS

I. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee will be held on December 15, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. in the Executive Board Room.

J. ADJOURNMENT

It was

meeting do now adjourn.

Moved by B. Stewart
Seconded by M. Harcourt
That the Environmental Advisory Committee

Carried

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

Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

Bob Campbell, Chair
Surrey Environmental Advisory Committee