

Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee - Minutes

Present:

Chair – Councillor Hayne
G. Sahota
A. Schulze
B. Stewart
M. Alvarez
D. Skaey

Regrets:

B. Campbell
S. Van Keulen (AFSAC Representative)
J. Purewal
J. Stewart
R. Grewal
G. James

Staff Present:

C. Baron, Manager, Drainage & Environment
A. Mathewson, Sustainability Manager
N. Avan, Manager, Urban Forestry & Environ. Prog.
P. Bellefontaine, Manager, Trans. Planning
L. Luaifoa, Legislative Services

Guests:

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was Moved by G. Sahota
Seconded by M. Alvarez
That the minutes of the Environmental
Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting held on February 27, 2013 be adopted.
Carried

The Chair recognized Tom Godwin and his contributions to the Environmental Advisory Committee and the Surrey Environmental Partners.

B. DELEGATIONS

1. Anna Mathewson, Sustainability Manager

Anna Mathewson, Sustainability Manager provided a brief update on the Climate Adaptation Strategy (CAS) and the Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP):

- The CAS outlines how the City of Surrey plans to adapt to climate change and the CEEP displays how the City plans to reduce emissions. Surrey was one of the fewer municipalities to receive funding to complete both plans together.
- Both plans include extensive stakeholder consultation. The World Cafe event for CEEP was held in December, 2012.
- Once staff reviews the feedback and input from the stakeholders' consultations, the plans will be presented to the City's advisory committees including the ESAC in June.
- The province funded 14 charging stations for electric vehicles with 8 stations located at the new city hall. There is no charge for use yet. A media release about the charging stations will take place when the fast charge stations are installed at the Surrey Museum in June.

C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS**1. Presentation to the Finance Committee – Surrey Environmental Partners (SEP)**

File no: 1705-01

In January, 2013, committee members A. Schulze and B. Stewart volunteered to review the SEP Presentation to the Finance Committee and provide a report to the Committee.

In February, 2013, the subcommittee consisting of A. Schulze and B. Stewart provided a brief update to the Committee and reported that further clarification on the following five objectives were required before a recommendation be made to the Committee:

1. Obtain land for three more "very large parks"
2. Implement a levy for the purpose of acquiring Biodiversity Conservation/Green Infrastructure Network lands
3. Adopt a "No Net Loss" policy with respect to the loss of open parkland and natural areas
4. Add two staff to assist the Environmental Coordinator, attached to the Engineering Department
5. Adopt a higher standard for replacement of City-owned trees which are cut down.

After consulting with SEP, the Committee discussed the five objectives and made the following recommendation to Council.

RECOMMENDATION

It was

Moved by B. Stewart

Seconded by A. Schulze

That the Environmental Sustainability

Advisory Committee recommends that Council consider the Surrey Environmental Partners (SEP) Presentation to the Finance Committee - November 28, 2012 and consider implementing where possible the following courses of action:

1. Obtain large tracks of land for natural parks as part of the development of the Green Infrastructure Network and explore funding models including options such as property taxes, for a period of at least ten years, at a level sufficient to fund land acquisition in support of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy – Green Infrastructure Network lands;
2. Strive to maintain or enhance the number of natural areas in the City.
3. Commit to adequate staffing levels for environmental personnel to meet increased demands due to the increased workloads in part by the downloading of environmental responsibilities from senior governments to municipalities.
4. Take a leading role in adopting best in class standards for tree replacement on City-owned lands.

Carried

Note: See the attached Surrey Environmental Partners (SEP) presentation to the Finance Committee – November 28, 2012 as Appendix A

2. Sensitive Urban Infill Study

File no: 6430-01

A sub-committee was created to review the Sensitive Urban Infill Study and report back to the Committee.

The following comments were made:

- The study was forwarded to the ESAC for information. It is quite an extensive study with a lot of good work in it.
- It was recommended that staff be invited to provide a presentation to the Committee on the study.

It was

Moved by G. Sahota

Seconded by D. Skaey

That the Environmental Sustainability

Advisory Committee recommends that Don Luymes, Manager, Community Planning Division be invited to an Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting to provide a presentation on the Sensitive Urban Infill Study.

Carried

D. NEW BUSINESS

E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

F. CORRESPONDENCE

G. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Update on changes to the Fisheries Act

Carrie Baron, Drainage and Environment Manager provided an update on the changes to the Fisheries Act.

- Since the last update provided to the Committee, there has been numerous letters written to the Department of Fisheries (DFO) about consultation.
- Recently, UBCM hosted a meeting with DFO staff from BC and Ottawa to gain a better understanding of the Fisheries Act changes and timeline for implementation and guidance development. City of Surrey staff were present at the half day meeting
- In February, DFO staff stepped away from the monthly Environmental coordination (ERC) meetings in Planning and Engineering. Developers and City staff have no access to discuss issues or variances with DFO at this time.
- A website is available to contact DFO as face to face consultation is no longer available.

- DFO BC is looking at dividing staff into 6 divisions: IPP, Hydro, Mining, Oil and Gas, Marine and Coastal and one for Land Development linear.
- There may be an opportunity for large habitat banking projects through the new partnership provision in the Act.
- Within the farming community there are still standards as per the Agricultural Guidance document created with the Ministry of Agriculture in the past.
- DFO suggested using UBCM and the UBCM talk to their committees and sub-committee.
- With the new DFO process, there will be more onus on the City to review applications to see that they do comply with regulations.

2. Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Working Group Update

Al Schulze provided an update on the 4th BCS Working Group meeting:

- The Steering Committee (made up of 11 key City staff) did most of the work during 5 additional meetings and many consultations.
- The draft report is impressive – a magnum "opus" of 136 pages – the result of a lot of research, knowledge and effort.
- The BCS is a policy framework that attempts to establish biodiversity goals and targets as well as conservation priorities for the City of Surrey.
- The term "biodiversity" is used as a relative indicator of species abundance/diversity and habitat quality – it was assessed using higher-level species groups (mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, reptiles and plants).
- The objective is to develop a set of policies and regulatory tools (plans, by-laws and other regulations) that will be used to manage Surrey's biodiversity. This information will help the City with the updating and implementation of the Official Community Plan, the Sustainability Charter, Neighbourhood Concept Plans, and the Parks, Recreation and Culture Strategic Plan.
- There were 22 attendees at the final meeting yesterday, including facilitators from EcoPlan and Diamondhead Consulting, key city staff and municipal, corporate and citizen stakeholders.
- The agenda included:
 - A discussion on and further refinement of the Green Infrastructure Network (GIN) including high priority hubs, sites, wildlife corridors and crossings;
 - An examination of managing biodiversity at the site level including enhancement of forested, of shrub/herb/grass, of aquatic and riparian habitat, restoration of disturbed habitat;
 - A look at policy planning and development including BCS implementation, permits and monitoring, natural areas protection/enhancement, green building standards, agricultural areas, climate change, and community education and awareness.
- Yet to be worked out are:
 - The detailed study of biodiversity in the urban matrix;
 - A biodiversity checklist

- There will be an Open House on Tuesday, April 30, 2013 from 6:00 to 8:30 pm in Council Chambers. The Committee is invited to attend.

The Chair thanked Mr. Schulze for sitting on the Stakeholder Working Group and for reporting back on the meetings to the ESAC.

H. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Agricultural Food and Security Advisory Committee (AFSAC) Update

B. Stewart provided a report to the Committee on the March 14 and April 11, 2013 meetings.

March 14 - Proposed Rezoning, Subdivision and Local Area Plan Amendment:

The Committee was asked to comment on plans for another development in the Campbell Heights Business Park, this being at the southwest corner of the Campbell Heights at 18821 – 20 Avenue. A motion was made to have this matter referred to the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee, but it does not appear to have made it in time for the current agenda.

Concerns were raised about the buffer on the west side of the property, which abuts the Agricultural Land Reserve, and recommendations were made regarding the width of the buffer, the location of any walkway, and installation of a fence on the boundary. Additional concerns were raised about the narrowness of the wildlife corridor along the south boundary, which is why the matter was referred to ESAC.

It should be noted that the proposal includes a portion of the property being dedicated to the City as "habitat protection area", as this includes the headwaters of Twin Creek, a subsidiary of the Little Campbell River.

April 11 – Ministry of Agriculture Report – Agriculture Land Use Inventory in Surrey:

The Committee reviewed a draft Ministry of Agriculture report on Agriculture Land Use in Surrey as of 2010. It was noted that there are over 9,000 hectares (almost 23,000 acres) in the ALR in Surrey, and that over 2,000 hectares (5,000 acres) are rated as "not farmed but available and with potential for farming".

How significant are these lands currently as wildlife habitat? As population growth increases pressure for additional food production, could conversion of these lands to intensive agriculture uses have a negative impact on our wildlife?

2. Development Advisory Committee (DAC) Update

G. Sahota provided the following report from the February and March DAC meetings:

February: There was nothing pertinent to the ESAC to report.

March: Stephen Godwin provided a presentation on the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.

I. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee will be held on Wednesday, May 22, at 6:30 p.m. in the Executive Boardroom.

J. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by G. Sahota

Seconded by B. Stewart

That the Environmental Sustainability Advisory

Committee meeting adjourn.

Carried

The Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

Councillor Hayne, Chair