

# *Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee - Minutes*

---

**Present:**

Chair – Councillor Hayne  
B. Campbell  
G. James  
W. Mbaho  
S. Sabharwal  
G. Sahota  
A. Schulze  
D. Skaey  
J. Stewart  
S. Van Keulen

**Regrets:**

J. Purewal  
B. Stewart

**Staff Present:**

C. Baron, Manager, Drainage & Environment  
A. Mathewson, Manager, Sustainability  
S. Whitton, Trees and Landscape Manager,  
Planning and Development  
J. Gallinger, Legislative Services

---

**A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES****1. Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee - Minutes**  
Minutes of January 22, 2014 to be adopted.

It was

Moved by B. Campbell  
Seconded by J. Stewart

That the minutes of the Environmental  
Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting of January 22, 2014 be adopted with  
requested amendments.

Carried

**B. DELEGATIONS****C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS****1. Review Tree Protection Bylaw 16100**

Steve Whitton, Trees and Landscape Manager, Planning and Development, was before the Committee to review the Tree Protection Bylaw 16100.

The Chair informed the Committee that the review of the Bylaw was to ascertain whether the Bylaw conformed to current requirements developmentally and environmentally or should be amended.

The Trees and Landscape Manager made the following comments:

- The Department receives, on average, 400 calls per month and was currently staffed with 1 manager, 2 clerks, 4 inspectors and 1 landscape architect. One employee has been with the department since inception and will be retiring this year.
- The purpose of the City's Tree Protection Bylaw is to reduce the number of trees unnecessarily removed or damaged either by builders during development, or by residential homeowners and helps to ensure that

replacement trees are planted when trees do have to be removed. By improving protection and replanting requirements, the City hopes to retain and preserve the City's urban forests for generations and to ensure sustainable, healthy and viable urban forests for the City and its residents.

- The main goal of the team is to retain trees where feasible, educate public and to have replacement trees planted where needed.
- In a year in Surrey:
  - 5,000 trees are removed due to subdivision;
  - 7,000 replacement trees proposed in subdivisions;
  - 1,000 trees retained in subdivisions;
  - \$1,000,000 is put into the Green City Fund;
  - 400 arborist reports are reviewed;
  - 4200 inspections are done;
  - 1,050 permits issued; and
  - 650 residential applications for tree removal are review and processed or denied.
- Current Permit fees – how much and for what?
  - Permit fees are \$69 and \$27 for every tree removed – Vancouver charges \$100+;
  - There is no charge for hazard trees ie. deficient root system causing the tree to lean precariously and to eventually fall over;
  - Replacement Tree Securities of \$300 per tree are charged when a tree is removed. 50% of the cost is returned upon planting another tree and the last 50% is returned after 1 year if tree is still alive;
  - A bonding of \$3,000 per retained trees to a maximum of \$10,000 per lot is charged. The bonding is released at building final unless trees are damaged then will be released 2 years after substantial completion of development or building final if the trees survive.
- What happens if you remove a tree outside of the Bylaw?
  - People are subject to fines, stop inspections and stop work orders.
  - Fines can be:
    - \$1,000 per removed tree;
    - Loss of \$3000 bonding/tree;
    - MTI (Municipal ticket ) – min. \$500 for topping/bad pruning;
    - \$2,000 for removal of a specimen tree; and
    - \$10,000 for removal of a Significant Tree.
- More information can be found at Surrey Bylaw [www.surrey.ca/treeprotection](http://www.surrey.ca/treeprotection)
- Deciduous trees are being promoted for planting and education is helping in the preservation of trees within Surrey.

In response to questions from the Committee the Manager responded:

- With population densification being pushed it is a balancing of the preservation of trees – parks/areas/boulevards and it is the responsibility of the developers/designers along with the City to ensure that trees are being managed.
- Boulevards have been increased to 3 meters to help with this and to ensure that the trees have room to grow. Medians now have a depth of 3 feet of soil.
- Trees are being planted properly to improve the viability of the trees. It is not the number of trees being planted that is important, it is how many trees remain viable after planting that ensures the sustainability.
- To get the lush trees the cost is low. Trees are assets that appreciate not depreciate.
- Densification requires bigger buffer zones to ensure that trees are maintained. Beautiful boulevards and parks can be created but developments and private property have to be encouraged to plant trees. More trees should be seen on private property rather than public property to maintain a healthy city.
- The amount of trees the City would like to plant is phenomenal. The plans are in place in Surrey and the developers are required to plant a lot of trees.
- Full grown trees can provide \$200 to 300 in services to the City in the way of reducing drainage demands, cleaning the air, etc.
- With the push from developers for densification the City needs to ensure that a balance is maintained.
- Versus other municipalities in the lower mainland, Surrey has the strictest Tree Protection Bylaw and stiffer fines.
- When a bylaw is instituted, it is said, 75% of the residents abide by the law. There are those who want the trees removed and will pay the charges to remove the trees. In the last 5 or so years residents are becoming cognizant of the fact that permits are required to remove a tree and fines are levied if the bylaws are not followed.
- Fine increases are not recommended as the current fines are currently sufficient. For those individuals who do not follow and abuse the law they will be charged and taken to court where higher fines could be applied. There currently is no need to increase the fines.
- Deb Jack stated that consideration should be given to start valuating bigger trees as to their rarity. Older trees are far more valuable. Trees are being removed in Surrey, that are 2-4 ft in diameter. There is research that demonstrates that these trees are not just decoration and areas where there are trees (even low income areas) that show there is less violence and residences show more pride in their property than where there are little or no trees. Research also shows that people working in the same environment walk along treed areas are more relaxed and produce more at work than those walking along a concrete environment, and shows the

value of trees in educational environments. The health and well-being of the cities residences depends on the trees and the environment.

- One of the philosophies of making laws is to guide the citizens. By and large most residences follow the law. Creative use of the density needs to identify the natural roads and green space
- On the issue of deciduous trees – the leaves falling in autumn are a major complaint. Eventually, you will see a complete reversal when in 50 years trees will be dying in other municipalities and Surrey's trees will be thriving.
- Part of the job is to educate the public as to the real benefit of the trees.
- When BC Hydro prunes trees around the hydro many complaints are received and it was really hard to deal with all of the complaints when trees are excessively pruned and many times majorly damage.
- Trees should be watered on a weekly basis and should be left to dry out before watering again.
- Pruning standards for a tree's health is to use the 100 ft tree guideline of 25% pruning per maximum per year. 33% is the pruning maximum per lifetime of the tree. A stern warning is given at 50% and if pruning goes further a fine may be levied.
- A program is in place wherein \$25 will get a \$75 voucher to purchase a tree. There is a restriction of one tree per household which has been reduced from 3 trees per household in the past. Party for the Planet is one event where these vouchers are available.
- “A tree is public (an asset) property on private property” is a very good marketing phrase and over the past years Council has become more cognisant regarding trees and is working towards improving the ratio of trees on private property – more trees need to be on private property rather than public property.
- 600 trees in a Tynehead development were to be removed. Council instructed staff to find a solution wherein the trees would be retained and to work with the developer to ensure the esthetics.
- Developers will be held accountable to ensure that the majority of trees within a development be retained.
- Council is looking at the value of trees and how to re-evaluate. The City has an equitable Bylaw but is there a case to be made to the Bylaw so that some of the trees are recognized more than the others. If a tree needs to be cut down then it is – trees are not telephone poles and they need gallons of water, soil and room to grow. What is being seen from development is how many people will give up an area to retain a tree on their property. It is a lot easier to save a smaller tree and let it grow than it is to save a big tree and by not giving it room to grow it will die in 10 years. The right thing to do is to allow the larger trees space to grow but it is hard to make sure that the spaces will be there in coming years. A large, fully grown tree requires up to 500 gallons a day and if the area is developed the roots of a large tree are cut to allow for construction. Once the roots are cut trees cannot get the required 500 gallons and the trees will die.

- Transplanting is not a sure way to ensure a tree will live as most transplanted trees die within 5 years. There is a lot to consider when trying to save large trees as the bigger the tree removed the more smaller trees you can plant ie. a 100 sq. inch tree can get 100 1 sq. inch trees to replant.
- Cut twice build once – a developer is allowed to clear trees to allow for utilities etc. Once a property is purchased and the buyer may want to cut down more trees. This can happen and that is why there is bonding. Grading and servicing views are not provided by developers – when there are design issues bonding is kept as a penalty to make architects/designers understand that their errors regarding trees cost clients money by way of bonding being kept by the City.
- Planning will be invited to present their point of view to the Committee regarding secondary cuts and proposed tree planting as the City moves into densification. How is densification and tree preservation going to work going forth? How to stop excessive removal of trees? The cut twice build once issue to be discussed and how does Planning account for the tree replacements and the long term planning.

2. **Environmental Summit** - Environmental Program with the Surrey School District

The Sustainability Manager provided an update on the discussions with Surrey Schools with respect to an environmental/sustainability summit in 2014, and made the following comments:

- 80 students and teachers from across the District participated in a day of dialogue around sustainability held in December 2013, which also included a number of City staff. This day was a precursor to a larger event under discussion for 2014.
- To build on the December 2013 meeting, a Sustainability Fair has been suggested that would focus on work students are doing in their schools, with complementary City displays on related issues.
- The Fair could be held around certain themes – energy, waste, water management etc.

In response to comments by the Committee, the Manager responded:

- It is a good idea and students will be engaged in the planning of a Sustainability Fair. It will give the students an opportunity to show their ideas and display their work related to sustainability and environmental issues. The Fair will be open to all levels of students and will highlight various categories. Awards will also be considered.
- The Fair may be held at Central City. The Atrium of the New City Hall was suggested but is likely unavailable.
- Richmond School District holds a similar annual event with students and City Staff.

3. **2014 Work Plan** – Committee Member input tabled from January 22, 2014.

The following comments were provided:

- Reviewing the complete tree bylaw to narrow down requirements.
- The question of the City ensuring that waste and recycling are going to the highest use.
- KinderMorgan Project (FortisBC) to be added to the work plan. The Chair informed the Committee that Intervener Status has been applied for by the City, in regards to the KinderMorgan pipeline project. There are approximately 2,000 other applicants.
- The Green City Award to be added to the work plan.
- AFSAC would like to know what the environmental impacts will be in regards to the LRT and how it will fit into the environment. The idea of the transit system is driving density along certain corridors. An application has come forward on a project which is high density along an Agricultural Land Reserve.
- The concept needs to be understood by residents and what plans are being made to ensure that developments will be environmentally friendly. Densification along the LRT will occur.
- Gordon Gibson article around environmental impacts to be distributed by the Secretary.
- Neighbourhood community planning and how this planning is taking into account environmental issues.
- Don Luymes, Manager, Community Planning to be invited to attend the next ESAC meeting and speak to densification, neighbourhoods, etc.
- There will be no City-organized Earth Hour event this year; however Council will make a Declaration in support of Earth Hour and local participation in the event. Earth Day is on April 22, 2014 and the “Party for the Planet” event is being held Saturday, April 26, 2014.

4. **ESAC Representative to Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee (AFSAC)** - Call for a volunteer to stand as representative on AFSAC.

No volunteer stepped forward to represent ESAC at AFSAC. The Item will be brought back to the Committee at the March 26, 2017 meeting.

**D. NEW BUSINESS**

**E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL**

**F. CORRESPONDENCE**

The Committee received the email to Mayor Watts, dated January 25, 2014, regarding Port Metro Vancouver's presentation to Council January 13, 2014 and letter from Port Metro Vancouver dated February 19, 2014 regarding the forthcoming decision.

- It was stated that Port Metro Vancouver (PMV) will not follow the recommendations of Surrey and other municipalities in regards to the Fraser Surrey Docks' (FSD) proposed coal facility and it was suggested that Surrey resend the recommendations to PMV.
- It was pointed out that PMV knows that the surrounding municipalities are against the proposed coal facility and that PMV will make up their own mind in regards to the project.

**G. OTHER BUSINESS****1. 2014 Good Citizen Award**

Deadline for nomination submittal - March 25, 2014

**2. Sustainability Charter**

Council approved proceeding with an update of the Sustainability Charter in 2014. The Secretary will distribute the Corporate Report to Committee Members.

[http://www.surrey.ca/bylawsandcouncillibrary/CR\\_2014-R022.pdf](http://www.surrey.ca/bylawsandcouncillibrary/CR_2014-R022.pdf)

**3. Sustainability Communities Award**

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FMC) – Surrey won the award for the FMC's 2014 Sustainable Communities Award for the City's Rethink Waste Program. Councillor Hayne picked up the award in Charlottetown, PEI on February 13, 2014.

More information can be found at <http://www.surrey.ca/city-government/14815.aspx>

**H. INFORMATION ITEMS****1. Agricultural Food and Safety Advisory Committee (AFSAC) Update from the February 6, 2014 meeting**

There was nothing to report.

**2. Development Advisory Committee (DAC) Update from the January 23, 2014 meeting**

There was nothing to report.

**I. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee will be held on **Wednesday, March 26, 2014** at 6:30 p.m. in room 2.E. Community Room A on the 2nd floor of new City Hall.

**J. ADJOURNMENT**

It was

Moved by J. Stewart

Seconded by G. Sahota

That the Environmental Sustainability Advisory

Committee meeting adjourn.

The Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee adjourned at 8:48 PM.

---

Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

---

Chairperson – Councillor B. Hayne  
Environmental Sustainability Advisory  
Committee