

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, February 23, 2021

A Regular Meeting of the Sustainability and Environmental Advisory Committee convened on Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Committee Room, City Hall, 3000 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, BC, with the following persons present:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Councillor Teri Towner, Chair (arrived at 7:58 p.m.)
Councillor Brent Asmundson, Vice Chair
Tracy Adole
Mark Ashton
Lori Austin
Grayson Barke
Alice Hale
Jason Liao
Bonnie Razzaghi
Michelle Rosenquist
Ivana Smolcic
Pamela Zevit

REGRETS: Jay Ashworth

STAFF: Caresse Selk, Manager Environment
Shannon Wagner, Environmental Education and Enforcement Manager
Jeri Hohn, Committee Clerk

Councillor Brent Asmundson, Vice Chair, assumed the role of Chair.

CALL TO ORDER

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Vice Chair welcomed the Committee members and staff to the meeting, noting that the Chair would join the meeting at 8:00 p.m. and that a roundtable of introductions would be held at that time.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2. Minutes of the Sustainability and Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, November 24, 2020

The Minutes of the Sustainability and Environmental Advisory Committee meeting held on Tuesday, November 24, 2020, were approved.

NEW BUSINESS

3. Review and Approve Draft 2021 Work Plan

The Manager Environment presented the draft 2021 Work Plan on-screen and reviewed each of the proposed work plan items.

The Chair invited comments from the Committee.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The scope of work being undertaken by the City in concert with other levels of government relative to the work plan item titled “Cedar Drive/Partington Creek Enhancement Project”
- The understanding that the Project’s riparian area is significant
- The belief that, should the opportunity arise, Committee members and other resident volunteers would like to be involved in the Project
- Confirmation that the Project Lead would make a future presentation to the Committee
- That some items proposed by the 2020 Committee were not included on the work plan because they did not fall within the City’s jurisdiction

The Committee approved the 2021 SEAC Work Plan, and a copy is attached hereto.

The Committee recommended:

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the 2021 Sustainability and Environmental Advisory Committee Work Plan.

4. Educational Awareness Presentation: Residential Stormwater Management, and Prevention of Pollutants into City Watercourses

The Manager Environment provided a presentation, referring to on-screen slides titled as follows:

- Residential Stormwater Management and Prevention of Watercourse Pollutants
- Agenda
- What Does the City’s Stormwater System Look Like?
- Challenges and Impacts
- Stormwater Management Tools
- Stormwater Management Requirements
- Rainwater Source Control Measures
- Stream and Drainage System Protection Bylaw
- Construction Sites with Good ESC Management
- Spill Response Plan and Reporting Guidelines

- City-wide Water Quality Monitoring Program
- Coquitlam River Water Quality Monitoring Program
- Public Education and Outreach Initiatives
- Future Initiatives
- Discussion Questions

The Committee considered the following focus questions:

- Are there additional opportunities that the City or community could take to prevent spills and pollution?
- Do you have any ideas on how the City could raise public awareness on this topic?
- Are there any specific stormwater issues that you think are priorities?

In response to a question from a Committee member, the Manager Environment undertook to report back at a future meeting regarding the data collected and the level of analysis undertaken by the City relative to spills. She noted that detailed information regarding dumping and spills into catch basins and watercourses is collected through work order and service requests.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The suggestion that spills/dumping data could be analyzed by local Douglas College students and 'hot spots' mapped
- The possibility that educational signage and data about dumping, spills, water, conservation, and pollution could be posted for the users of popular trails and pathways nearby watercourses and catch basins
- The belief that any upcoming amendment to the City's stormwater policy and design manual should include an enforceable requirement relative to impermeable surface percentages
- The belief that without enforceable surface design requirements being included within the City's bylaws, desirable permeable surfaces will continue to be lost
- Whether staff could provide information about the current City planning process relative to effective impervious area (EIA) percentage requirements for new construction projects being undertaken in Coquitlam

The Chair noted that enforcement options for surface design and EIA percentage requirements could be something for the Planning and Development and Engineering and Public Works departments to review and report on in the future.

- Appreciation for the many swales and raingardens being installed by the City throughout Coquitlam
- That the City has a publicly accessible GIS mapping system that provides details noting which catch basins lead to watercourses
- The belief that many people do not understand the direct relationship between catch basins and watercourses and the suggestion that a campaign by the City to educate residents could positively impact illegal dumping
- The amount of the fine for illegally dumping paint into a creek
- The City's bylaw enforcement notification system and the fine maximum of \$500
- That illegal dumping can involve multiple levels of fines from various levels of

government including the City, federal Fisheries and Oceans, and the provincial Ministry of Environment

- Whether the City website includes climate mitigation information for residents such as how to upgrade residential driveways or pathways to permeable materials that are better for the environment
- The suggestion that popup displays created by the City in partnership with volunteer community groups could be placed in parks and next to popular trails and pathways to highlight watercourses and educate residents regarding dumping and spills
- An explanation about engineered water quality ponds, i.e., definition, purpose served, aquatic plants utilized, and maintenance schedule
- Whether the City could consider the possibility of converting some areas in City parks that are typically swampy or wet into small, engineered ponds
- An explanation regarding how, during heavy rainfall events, stormwater can be diverted using diversion pipes that carry excess water to a slough to curtail flooding
- Appreciation and support for the raingardens used to manage stormwater and benefit pollinators and whether local students could be involved in the creation of the City's raingardens
- Information about a current project being undertaken by the Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable to install a community raingarden and the opportunity for students and residents to get involved in that project
- Whether the City's website provides online resources regarding how raingardens are used within the City
- That cities on the north shore of Vancouver, in partnership with SFU, created the North Shore Raingarden Project based on works by the City of Seattle in Puget Sound, and that both jurisdictions offer a rich source of information
- Whether the City considers or monitors the excess water continually produced by some residential multiplexes and commercial buildings
- The new Water Conservation Strategy to be undertaken by the City and that it could further delve into water consumption and monitoring
- That staff would seek future input from the Committee relative to the draft Water Conservation Strategy
- Whether the City had considered partnering with School District 43 relative to expanding public outreach and education regarding water pollution and spills
- The belief that engaging schools and students could be not only an opportunity to increase awareness surrounding the issue, but also to raise environmentally responsible community members

At this time (7:58 p.m.), Councillor Asmundson welcomed Councillor Towner to the meeting, and she assumed the role of Chair.

The Chair introduced herself and expressed her appreciation to the Committee members for their volunteerism and passion for sustainability and the environment.

The Committee participated in a roundtable of introductions.

5. Proposed Establishment of a Light Pollution Sub-committee

The Manager Environment gave introductory remarks regarding the feedback provided by the 2020 Committee and the proposal that the topic of light pollution be added to the 2021 Work Plan. She noted that although the topic was not one of the City's approved 2021 Business Plan priorities, the Committee could form a Sub-committee to investigate the topic, should it wish to do so. She suggested that research could be undertaken with a view to the Sub-committee bringing back a future report for the Committee's information and consideration.

In response to a question from the Manager Environment, a Committee member provided information regarding the changes in light pollution that had been observed and recorded since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and shared discoveries about greater emissions of light from private rather than publicly-owned facilities. He volunteered to lead a Sub-committee to investigate the question of "How can we grow as a City without growing light pollution?"

The Vice Chair spoke to the City's program to retrofit its traditional outdoor lighting to energy-efficient LED outdoor lighting and noted the significant advantages of doing so, including that LEDs help to minimize light pollution.

A Committee member offered to share research and resources gathered by the City of Surrey on the topic with the Sub-committee, should it be established.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Committee agreed to establish a Light Pollution Sub-Committee and the following members volunteered to serve: Grayson Barke (Group Leader), Lori Austin, Mark Ashton, and Tracy Adole. Bonnie Razzaghi expressed interest in volunteering, time permitting.

6. 2021 Environmental Volunteer Celebration – Proposed Establishment of an Event Planning Sub-committee

The Environmental Education and Enforcement Manager gave opening remarks and provided a presentation, referring to on-screen slides titled as follows:

- Environmental Volunteer Celebration 2021
- Agenda
- Environmental Achievement Awards and Volunteer Celebration
- 2017 Environmental Volunteer Celebration
- 2018 Environmental Achievement Awards
- 2019 Environmental Volunteer Celebration
- 2020 Environmental Achievement Award Recipients
- 2021 Considerations
- Recommendations
- Brainstorm Ideas
- Discussion

The Committee considered the following focus questions:

- Do you like the proposal of hosting this year's event in the fall?
- Are you interested in participating in a subcommittee group?
- Do any of the brainstorm ideas appeal to you, or are there any other ideas you would like to suggest?

The Committee agreed with the proposal that the 2021 Environmental Volunteer Celebration be held in the fall of 2021.

The following Committee members volunteered to serve on the 2021 Environmental Volunteer Celebration Sub-committee: Michelle Rosenquist, Grayson Barke, and Mark Ashton.

Staff undertook to follow-up with the volunteers by email regarding permission to share their contact details with one another and staff and so that Sub-committee event planning and brainstorming sessions could be scheduled.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- Support for the idea of maximizing a virtual platform and for utilizing elements of music, comedy, and entertainers from the Tri-Cities to encourage public attendance
- The suggestion that, in advance of the on-the-day Celebration, the City could invite residents and volunteer groups to submit 30-second video clips about the natural environment in Coquitlam that the City could use to produce a YouTube video
- That video footage could include residents and volunteer groups answering questions such as "Why do you love Coquitlam's natural environment?" or "What part of Coquitlam's natural environment is special to you?"
- Support for the idea of utilizing a "My Coquitlam" engagement tool – one that would evoke responses from residents about the specialness of Coquitlam's natural environment
- The suggestion that the City could offer residents and volunteer groups the opportunity to plant trees (within certain guidelines) in Coquitlam and submit photos of themselves doing so, and that the photos could be shared during the Celebration event

The Chair invited the members to email further ideas to staff for the Sub-committee's attention.

7. SEAC Introductions and Members' Roundtable/Emerging Issues (Standing Agenda Item)

The Chair noted that introductions had been held and invited the Committee members to share items of information and emerging issues from their communities. The following items were shared:

- That Council for the City of Surrey had recently approved, as part of the City's parkland acquisition fund, a new Development Cost Charges chart specifically designed to pay for biodiversity as an amenity, and that it was the first of its kind approved in Canada
- That Tri-City Green Drinks was hosting an online presentation titled "Preserving

Urban Tree Canopies” and that the speaker, Environmental Manager for the District of North Vancouver, would be speaking about tree canopy loss in the Tri-Cities

In response to a question from a Committee member, the Manager Environment noted that she would be attending the Tri-City Green Drinks virtual presentation. She spoke to the draft Sustainability Environmental Plan being undertaken by the City, noting that the City would be sharing the draft plan and its elements with the community and the possibility that actions relative to trees and tree canopies could be incorporated into the Plan in response to that community engagement process.

OTHER BUSINESS


NEXT MEETING DATE – April 20, 2021

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

MINUTES CERTIFIED CORRECT

CHAIR



Jeri Hohn
Committee Clerk