

MINUTES
SAANICH ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Committee Room No. 2
January 22, 2008 at 5:05 pm

Present: Councillor Sanders; B. Bawtinheimer; L. Berkes; H. Drage; R. Hesselgrave; D. Murdock; P. West; K. Whitcroft

Staff: D. Halldorson, Manager of Underground Services; S. Hvozdzanski, Planning Supervisor; T. Demacedo, Environmental Planning Officer; M. Roth, Environmental Education Officer; N. Dechaine, Environmental Planning Officer; and M. Brothers, Committee Clerk.

Regrets: M. Haig-Brown

MINUTES

MOTION: Moved by P. West and seconded by H. Drage: "That the minutes of the Saanich Environmental Advisory Committee meeting on November 27, 2007 be adopted as circulated".

CARRIED

BATTERY RECYCLING

The Environmental Education officer reviewed the report on Battery Recycling forwarded from the November 27, 2007 meeting and noted:

- Though there are battery recycling options available in the region, there is not a lot of public awareness about the importance of keeping batteries out of the waste stream.
- Disposable batteries are the greater issue, as most stores which sell rechargeable batteries will accept their products back for recycling.
- Analysis of the waste stream to Hartland suggests that batteries make up only a very small percentage, but they are a concern due to the damaging chemicals they contain which can be harmful to human health and the environment.
- Providing receptacles at the Public Works Yard for Saanich residents to recycle their used batteries would not prevent the "piggy-back" problem where non-residents would take advantage of the same facilities; as the cost of a battery recycling program would depend on the weight of the batteries received, non-residents "piggy-backing" could have a significant impact on the program's budget.
- There are very limited resources currently available for Environmental Planning staff to address this issue.
- Ideally, the province would include disposable batteries in their product stewardship initiative which would see a deposit added to batteries, to fund a recycling program.

B. Bawtinheimer entered the meeting at 5:20 pm

Committee discussion noted:

- Keeping this item under consideration at the Capital Regional District (CRD) may help highlight the issue.
- BC Hydro has had a lot of success with their Christmas light program, in which customers are given a coupon for compact fluorescent bulbs when they turn in incandescents for recycling; if a company was interested in being a sponsor, a similar coupon could be offered for batteries.
- Information on battery recycling could be included in the Solid Waste pick up calendar, which homeowner keep and refer to all year.

In response to Committee discussion the Environmental Education Officer noted:

- A one day event where the public can bring in their used batteries to raise awareness might be easier to attempt than a pilot project; unfortunately staff do not have the time available to put an event this year.
- Transporting a large amount of batteries requires certification to transport toxic waste, which is part of the reason battery recycling is so expensive.

- It may not be appropriate for the District of Saanich to partner with only one business to offer a coupon for batteries to encourage recycling.
- Though Home Depot recycles batteries as well as CFL's, staff seem confused about their recycling program.

T. Demacedo, Environmental Planning Officer noted:

- As a way to raise public awareness, the information collected by N. Dechaine on existing recycling for batteries could be posted on the Saanich website.
- Printing an insert with battery recycling information and mailing it with the water bill would be a cost effective means of distribution.

MOTION: Moved by R. Hesselgrave and Seconded by D. Murdock, "That the Environmental Advisory Committee send a letter to the CRD's Roundtable on the Environment asking them to consider a regional battery recycling program; and that Environmental staff continue to promote and educate on battery recycling where possible, including an insert with Saanich water bills, an addition to the Solid Waste pick up calendar a promotional day/event, and posting information on Saanich's website".

CARRIED

STREAMSIDE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS ATLAS – HOUSEKEEPING AMENDMENTS

M. Roth, Environmental Education Officer, circulated maps indicating the location of the current and proposed amendments to the streamside development permit areas atlas to be considered with his report and noted:

- The atlas was originally put together using provincial aerial photographs; qualified environmental professionals (QEP) have identified 4 watercourses incorrectly included in the atlas and identified 2 watercourse that were missed.
- On map 24 the atlas incorrectly identified a ditch leading from a barn as a watercourse.
- Map 30 and map 45 both show watercourses which are proposed for inclusion in the atlas.
- A QEP found that the watercourses on Map 31 and 32 did not exist.
- The following are proposed for removal as they do not meet the requirements for inclusion in the atlas under the Riparian Areas Regulation: the ponds on Map 40 which do not contain fish and have no overland flow; the ponds on Map 53 which are isolated; and the ponds on Map 55 which were dug for irrigation on a property in an agricultural zone.

In response to Committee discussion, M. Roth noted:

- The location of the watercourse off Normandy Creek, depicted in Map 40, will be corrected.
- Staff follow up on QEP's report to confirm their findings.
- Even if a watercourse is not included in the atlas, there are further provincial and federal regulations protecting it.

MOTION: Moved by P. West and Seconded by R. Hesselgrave, "That the Environmental Advisory Committee endorse the proposed amendments to update the Streamside Development Permit Area Atlas".

with K. Whitcroft voting against

CARRIED

DRAFT OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN (OCP) REVIEW

The Planning Supervisor circulated the map accompanying the draft OCP and an overview of the OCP/Long Range Planning process, , noting:

- The current OCP was adopted in 1993, and was followed by the adoption of the current Local Area Plans, the CRD's Regional Growth Strategy in 2001 and Saanich's Regional Context Statement in 2003.

- The Regional Growth Strategy includes the Housing Affordability Strategy, the Transportation Strategy and the Economic Strategy.
- After the current OCP review is complete, the Development Permit Guidelines will be reviewed in order to ensure that densification is livable for the residents in the major centres.
- The Local Area Plans (LAP), which are much more detailed than the OCP, will be reviewed following the Development Permit Guidelines, beginning with Uptown Plan (Douglas Corridor).
- Currently, the staff are seeking out feedback on the draft OCP to determine what level of editing/reworking will be required; after the editing of the draft is complete, the OCP will be sent to Council for the formal review process, and hopefully adoption.
- The OCP is intended to serve as a framework for long term planning and a vision – it will not have all the answers or the level of detail found in a LAP.
- In this draft, the Urban Containment Boundary, the Agricultural Land Reserve and the preservation of park land are all treated similarly to the 1993 version of the OCP.
- A sustainability approach has been used as the format for the draft OCP, with comments on environmental integrity, social well-being, and economic vibrancy - emphasizing that a healthy natural environment is necessary to secure the other two principles.
- The section on Centres and Villages proposes a maximum height of 8 storeys for Major and Neighbourhood Centres with the understanding that the highest buildings should be located in the middle of the nodes; an exception is made for the Uptown Centre to have potentially 18 storeys if certain circumstances and criteria are met.
- This draft of the OCP mentions the possibility of having secondary suites through a pilot program similar to that used in the City of Victoria.
- Language addressing climate change, green building and energy conservation are also new to this draft of the OCP and may be of particular interest to the Committee.
- In addition to providing comment as a Committee at the February meeting, individual members can submit their ideas to the Secretary or to Planning directly.
- The draft OCP is posted on the website and for those members of the public who prefer to not to use the internet, there will be two open houses at the end of January.

Committee discussion noted:

- It is excellent to see the “ecological imperative” included in the draft OCP.

In response to Committee discussion, the Planning Supervisor noted

- The responses to the Citizen survey and the OCP review telephone survey were both incorporated into the draft where appropriate, along with general Planning principles and required items from the RGS.

The Chair commended Planning staff on the draft OCP and its layout.

Committee members were asked to forward their comments to the Secretary for discussion at the February meeting; discussion at the February meeting will be forwarded to the Planning Supervisor.

REVISED WATERCOURSE BYLAW

The Manager of Underground Services presented the revised Watercourse Bylaw and noted:

- Saanich’s current Watercourse Bylaw is based on an earlier CRD model bylaw, with the addition of the Streamside Development Permit Area to comply with the provincial Riparian Areas Regulation.
- The report includes the CRD’s model bylaw as well as the proposed revisions for Saanich.

In response to Committee discussion, the Manager of Underground Services noted:

- The purpose of the Watercourse Bylaw is to protect water quality and prevent inappropriate

- discharge.
- After finishing the revisions to the Watercourse Bylaw, the next step will be putting together the Codes of Practice referenced in the bylaw; these could have operational/budgetary impacts and will include run-off from roads and sidewalks.
 - Requiring an oil/grease interceptor for parking lots is an example of what will be included in the Codes of Practice, and it will require some consideration for bylaw enforcement.
 - It is easier to set up a site for natural drainage when it is being reconfigured, but if a natural option is available and works as well as an oil/grease interceptor it could be used as an alternative.
 - Saanich is one of the leaders in the region for encouraging innovative stormwater management, within the bounds of what is allowed by provincial regulation which can stifle some excellent stormwater management concepts.
 - The CRD's model bylaw has already gone through a consultation process with municipalities, industry stakeholders and the public.
 - The intention is for the revised Watercourse Bylaw to be sent to Council within the first quarter of this year.
 - Committee members should submit their individual comments within the next three weeks so that there is sufficient time to make necessary changes and have them included for the staff review.

MOTION: Moved by D. Murdock and Seconded by K. Whitcroft, "That the Environmental Advisory Committee request the Revised Watercourse Bylaw return to the Committee for consideration after the staff review and prior to being submitted to Council, if practicable".

CARRIED

ENVIRONMENT AWARDS 2008

MOTION: Moved by P. West and Seconded by B. Bawtinheimer, "That the Environmental Advisory Committee endorse the Environmental Award Guidelines, revised November 2007, with the addition of advertising on the Saanich website and in the 'Our Backyard' newsletter under the Call for Nominations/Advertising section".

CARRIED

ENVIRONMENT WEEK 2008

- T. Demacedo, Environmental Planning Officer noted:
- Most of the suggestions staff made for the awards in 2007 have been address by revising the Environmental Award Guidelines.
 - A particular theme could help to focus organization for Environment Week 2008.
 - The first week of June is identified as Environment Week; it follows Bike To Work Week, and includes Ocean Day, Rivers Day and Clean Air Day.
 - There doesn't seem to be an event celebrating the Colquitz watershed, which has unique fish stocks and is primarily located within Saanich; doing restoration work on Colquitz during Environment Week could be a way to draw attention to this unique regional feature.
 - There doesn't seem to be any other yearly events held during Environment Week which the Committee could "piggy-back".
 - Instead of hosting a whole environmental fair, as was proposed last year, the Committee could host a booth at a Saanich Farmer's Market.
 - Focusing on the importance of food security could work well the pesticide reduction work already being done – Environmental Planning staff already have a pesticide reduction booth prepared.

The Chair noted that she will not be present for Environment Week as the Federation of

Canadian Municipalities meets at that time.

Committee discussion noted that food security is a very timely issue.

MOTION: Moved by D. Murdock and Seconded by K. Whitcroft, "That Environmental Planning staff provide a list of potential options for Committee action during Environment Week 2008, with especial consideration given to Farmers Markets in Saanich and food security".

CARRIED

TREE BYLAW

The Chair noted:

- There are a few areas in which the existing tree bylaw could be improved.
- Trees need to be valued for their role in the urban forest, as well as for their species.
- If the Committee is interested, the revisions to the Tree Bylaw could be considered at a future meeting.

Committee discussion noted:

- The area in the bylaw describing the protected root zone should be reworded for clarity.
- Even without revisions, there are currently problems with enforcing the existing bylaw.
- Tax incentives could be offered to encourage keeping trees on a property.
- There isn't sufficient awareness that having more trees absorbs more carbon output.

In response to Committee discussion, T. Demacedo noted:

- It is Parks not Bylaw Enforcement who is tasked with the administration of the Tree Bylaw, including infractions.
- The Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory has an accompanying map and the Urban Forestry Stewardship Initiative is currently producing a map depicting urban forest coverage.
- The bylaw was designed for urban properties; smaller properties in rural areas should probably be handled in a different manner.
- The bylaw does indicate details for appropriate replacement trees if the bylaw is contravened.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the Parks Manager and the Urban Forestry, Horticulture & Natural Areas Manager be invited to attend the next Committee meeting to discuss the Tree Bylaw.

Committee members were asked to forward their comments to the Secretary to be compiled for discussion at the next meeting.

SUSTAINABLE ACTIONS FOR MEETINGS FACT SHEET

It was the consensus of the Committee that members should submit their ideas for the fact sheet to the Secretary for discussion at a future meeting.

STATUS OF ITEMS UNDER CURRENT CONSIDERATION

The Secretary circulated copies of the proposed format for the Status list; Committee members are asked to email their thoughts and suggestions.

PLASTIC BAGS

The Chair noted that Council has forwarded the request to ban plastic bags on to the CRD for consideration.

FUTURE MEETINGS AGENDA ITEMS

Committee members expressed interest in discussing the increase in the farm tax and in having

a presentation on bottled water.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

NEXT MEETING

The next Environmental Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, **February 26, 2008** at **5:00 p.m.** in **Committee Room 2.**

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary