



ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday May 13, 2015 - 6:30 pm

Committee Room 2

MINUTES

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor Patrick Johnstone
Todd Beernink
Peter Rautenbach
Hilary Miller
Giuliana Graves
Robert McGregor
Kathleen Somerville
Reginald Zotzman
Amanda Semenoff
Wilmer Lau

Co-Chair, Council Member
Community Member
Post-Secondary Student
Local Environment Representative
Community Member
Education Sector Representative
Committee Member
Community Member
Community Member
Local Business Representative

ABSENT:

Giuliana Graves

Community Member

VOTING MEMBER REGRETS:

Alex Csizmadia
Councillor Jaimie McEvoy
Karla Olson
Robert McGregor

Community Member
Co-Chair, Council Member
Community Member
Education Sector Representative

STAFF:

Jennifer Lukianchuk
Lynn Roxburgh
Eugene Wat
Mark Allison
Sandy Kalra

Environmental Coordinator
Planner
Manager, Infrastructure Planning
Senior Planner
Committee Clerk

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm.

1. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1. Adoption of Minutes from the meeting of March 11, 2015

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the Environment Advisory Committee held March 11, 2015 be received and adopted.

CARRIED

All Committee members present voted in favour of the motion.

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Metro Vancouver Proposed Pilot: Using clear bags to improve waste diversion – Esther Bérubé (See Attachment-1)

Esther started off by giving information about the proposed pilot project that Metro Vancouver would like to run with the help from member municipalities. She explained how they are trying to improve visual inspection of materials that are banned from landfills and to increase recycling by decreasing garbage within the region. She talked about the role of targeted education in improving participation and future research that they would like to do. At this time material bans are being enforced by visual inspection only once they arrive at Metro Vancouver disposal facilities. If the load is found non-compliant to the accepted threshold then a penalty is imposed on the cost it takes to dispose that load. Some of the tools that other communities are using to improve their visual inspections are by using clear bags for garbage collection or encouraging people to use untied bags or loose waste so contents spill out once they get into the collection truck.

The objectives of this pilot project will be to assess the benefits of using clear bags and targeted education regarding mandatory recycling. Metro Vancouver is willing to develop communication materials, data consolidation of all waste diversions and compare results with various programs in other jurisdictions. The municipal partner in return will print the communication materials and deliver the loads that get collected from single family and multi-family neighbourhoods to the Coquitlam transfer station. The municipality will be responsible for putting tags and notices on non-compliant loads at the curb and transmitting this data to Metro Vancouver.

Some of the questions asked afterwards were:

- Peter asked isn't it easier to see the load when it's loose instead of seeing one or two layers in a plastic bag?
 - Esther stated that there are pros and cons to this process and it's good to give people options that best meets their needs. You do see everything in loose waste but people seem to be more reluctant to keep their waste loose.
- Amanda wanted to know if they ever got feedback from people why they won't divert organics as it seems to work very well in her house.
 - Esther responded that there are people who do it find it simple but there are other people who see it as a complicated change. Some are wary of generating odors and attracting flies and rodents if it's out there for too long. People can keep food scraps frozen until the day of collection. Communication materials, directing them to municipal resources will all help to encourage people to recycle.
- Wilmer asked if the City will be supplying clear bags and what happens if you don't use them? Will there be fines enforced?

- Staff informed that New Westminster is willing to deliver clear bags to residents during the duration of this pilot program or they can use untied bags. If they see some residents not complying they can tag that bag. For repeat offences they might not pick up their garbage if it's still in opaque bags. There will be ample of communication to encourage participation.
- Councillor Johnstone wanted to get an idea about the scale of this pilot project if they were to do this pilot test in New Westminster. What would it look like for a neighbourhood?
 - Esther informed that it's important to fill a garbage collection truck. Queensborough route and 90 Multi-Family buildings will be perfect for this pilot testing as they both will be able to fill a garbage truck. This will be great way to collect data from participants who are following the same approach and will be easier to monitor that garbage truck amount.
- Member questioned how severe will be the fines and if this will increase the overall amount of plastic bags going to the landfill?
 - Esther informed that the fines that will be issued at the Transfer facilities will be 50 percent of the cost of disposal and it will be entirely up to the hauler to pass on that surcharge. People currently use recycled plastic bags from grocery stores hence they will have the option to use untied bags. This pilot will test that loose waste may also be an option.

After this discussion period the Committee decided to recommend this pilot program to the Council

Moved and Seconded

THAT the following recommendation be forwarded to Council for consideration:

WHEREAS Environment Advisory Committee recommend the Council consider partnering with Metro Vancouver to pilot a project promoting use of clear or untied bags for waste collection to evaluate the impact on waste diversion and facilitate visual inspection.

CARRIED

All members of the committee present voted in favor of the Motion.

Procedural Note: Esther left the meeting at 7:10pm

3.2 New Westminster Ecological Inventory – Lynn Roxburgh (See Attachment-2)

Lynn informed that Official Community Plan review is being done at the moment and how it integrates with environment. The OCP is City's long term vision for the future and describes the kind of community municipality wishes to create. This renewed revision will help us head in the right direction. We are just wrapping up Step two and have taken draft vision and goals to council and will be taking it out to the Community soon for their feedback. All information we are receiving is helping us to move towards Step three that will have land use scenarios and policies.

The biggest focus in OCP is the fact that our city is growing and we are trying to accommodate not only huge amount of residents but commercial spaces as well at the same time. We are focusing on what kind of housing we want to encourage in future – single family or high rises and the kind of people we

want to provide housing for e.g. students, seniors or families with kids. How to create a city that people would want to live in? How we grow food in this community? How do we access transit? How do we get to natural areas, parks in the city?

There are about eleven different policy areas that we are trying to explore through this Official Community Plan review. Environment natural areas is one of those policy areas that overlaps with other policies such as health, transportation, energy emissions etc. We have proposed a draft goal for environment natural areas that says “New Westminister protects and enhances urban natural and habitat areas demonstrating leadership in environmental stewardship and land management practices”. City will be putting out a survey and would like to know residents input regarding what City needs to focus on to make this a true statement so we can start drafting new policies accordingly.

City has been working with Diamond Head Consulting and Raincoast Applied Ecology to get ecological inventory. They also doing Urban Forest Management Strategy and has helped identify some of the key assets in Queensborough area. They have done general inventory of our city that can be used in our GIS system and what planning can use in their development process. They have helped us in identifying our biggest assets e.g. Fraser River Foreshore and the islands, Brunette River, Glenbrooke Ravine, trees and parks that we have in New Westminister. Their recommendations will be good basis for our policies and will be embedded in our official community plan and will influence our actions and guidelines.

After Lynn’s presentation the following questions were asked:

- Amanda wanted to know if it’s possible to get the Raincoast Applied Ecology’s report and recommendations.
 - Lynn stated that she is quite willing to distribute the edited version of the Draft to the committee members.
- Todd wanted to know if there will be cost associated with any of the priorities so that decisions can be made for different actions and goals within a policy and also if everything stated in OCP will be done by 2041?
 - Lynn informed that their next step is to review the feasibility of this plan and that it definitely is on City’s priority list. We are making sure that we have inner policy documents showing relationship with Metro Vancouver to achieve facts. Part of it will come out of Urban Forest Management strategy as lot of work is being done to see what’s most feasible that integrates with this policy.
- Reginald wanted to know since Fraser River is on City’s priority list and if their department is going to take into consideration the uniqueness of New Westminister’s land that encroaches into the river which is not usual in most municipalities.
 - Lynn informed that they haven’t considered this part and have only been focused on the environmental piece and haven’t thought much about the ownership piece. They have made recommendations about how we should be intervening more highlighting the difference in context to the south of the Queensborough where we have rich ecology and has seen some heavy interventions because of the flood-plane.

- Amanda wanted to know if we have green roofing strategy for the City of New Westminster as it can be way to increase overall habitat and green space.
 - Lynn told the members that we haven't looked at it but have talked about it. Jennifer informed that our Downtown plan has some context about this topic.

Procedural Note: Lynn left the meeting at 7:28pm

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1. Appointment of Environment Grant Sub-Committee and Chair – Jennifer Lukianchuk

The purpose of the grant sub-committee is to make funding recommendations to Council for the Environmental Grant Program. Grant applications are usually received in September and reviewed in November, by the Sub-Committee and then brought back to the Committee who then discusses and approves the recommendations. Details were provided to the committee about the role and a call was put out seeking three volunteers and a Chair for this Sub-Committee. Amanda, Reginald and Karla were chosen after drawing their names. Councillor Johnstone nominated Amanda to Chair this Grant Sub-Committee.

5.2. Fossil Fuel Update – Mark Allison (See Attachment-3)

Mark gave an update on Fraser Surrey Docks Coal Facility's new proposal that has coal going on a large ship instead of loading 4 million tonnes of coal onto barges which would have then gone to Texada island before finally being shipped to China. One ship is supposed to replace eight different barge loads going through Georgia Strait to Texada Island. Initially they were granted permit to transfer 4 million tonnes of coal which is about one train a day travelling on BNSF track through Delta and White Rock. Since that is lot of coal going through the town, City is concerned about its health impacts on residents and would like to know what they would like Port Metro Vancouver to add in their amendment application. New Westminster has no direct say in this matter but is concerned about thousands tonnes of GHG's and its dust impact not to mention the noise and vibration. Members suggested it would be a good idea to have inventory and water quality study done for the Brunette base in case of a spill.

Hilary informed the members that air quality can be managed very well up to a certain level that's probably permissible in spite of all the gaps in Fraser Surrey Docks application and wanted to know if their project will be permissible if a bar was set that they are able to achieve.

Mark responded that at this point City is advocating that a Medical Health Officer should be making the call regarding its impact on human health and not an environmental consultant. He informed that as of now Fraser Surrey Docks is refusing to do that.

- Member wanted to know if they will be responsible for any transportation issues related to coal or only environmental issues once the coal arrives at their facility.

- Mark confirmed that they are only responsible for the coal once it arrives at their facility. The regulations for shipping coal will be under Transport Canada.

5.3. Trans mountain Pipeline expansion - by Mark Allison (See Attachment-4)

Mark wanted members to focus on City's submissions to the National energy board regarding the Trans Mountain Pipeline proposal that is going along the river as they are planning to triple their capacity. He showed the pipeline route starting from Edmonton- going through the Rockies, Fraser Valley into Vancouver and crossing Fraser River. They are planning to change existing pipeline closer to Port Mann as original route has become heavily populated in the last forty years or so especially Coquitlam and Burnaby. There will be bigger impacts in case of ruptures on the Brunette River, Braid Industrial area, Hume Park and Fraser River even though it no longer proposed to go through New Westminster.

Diamond Head Consulting has done extensive research regarding eco-systems in lower Brunette River and identifies its potential environmental impacts. City is now planning to take all these concerns and put them into a submission to the National Energy Board. By September City will be making its presentation and they will be required to present a recommendation to the Federal cabinet by early 2016. He informed that there are five basic arguments that they are planning to include in their submission to the National Energy Board and wanted to get committee's feedback on sufficiency of these arguments.

Mark informed the members final draft can be send to the committee members via email and their comments if any will get incorporated in our submission.

5.4. Blue Dot Campaign: Right to Healthy Environment Declaration by New Westminster – Councillor Patrick Johnstone

Councillor Johnstone made a short announcement about the Blue Dot Campaign initiative that was brought forward to the City Council by representatives from David Suzuki Foundation and was unanimously supported by the Council. Copy of the Declaration was passed around to the members. City has signed this Declaration and is contributing to its objectives already through its Official Community Plan and Greenhouse gas plans. City is also calling to enact provincially an Environmental Bill of rights and would like province to push it to the Federal level. We will be able to change the Charter of Rights If we have enough provinces interested in having this Environmental Bill of Right. Lower mainland local government association has also voted in its support at their last conference and is working its way up to UBCM.

Todd Beernink wanted City to look through the lens of this document before they finalize their Official Community Plan. Mark Allison informed that staff will be meeting soon to discuss its comprehensive environmental policy and will work towards incorporating this declaration's findings in its future activities.

Reginald stated that he found this declaration very restricted after reading its contents as it does not express or specify that we are talking about the environment. Councillor Johnstone informed that it was quite clear to the Council what it meant and staff could understand it as well.

Wilmer wanted to know if the document could be amended to include the definition of Environment or has it already passed that stage.

6. REPORTS AND INFORMATION**6.1. Environmental coordinator's Update – Jennifer Lukianchuk**

Jennifer informed members about City's Environmental Poster Contest of this year. The Theme for this year's contest is: The 3 R's – Road to Zero Waste. We have collected about 217 posters from Grade 5 and 6 students. She would like the committee to assist with judging of these posters on Wednesday May 20th around 6 pm and went over the process of selection. An email will be sent out to remind everyone about the time, date and location.

Jennifer informed that we now have Rain barrels in stock and the City has advertised information about this program on City Page online. The brochure called "Water Conservation Composting Program" has been updated and City's website has link to this brochure.

6.2. Queensborough to Quayside (Q2Q) Bridge: Environmental Review – Mark Allison

Mark updated members about the Quayside to Queensborough Pedestrian & Bicycle Bridge which is a major component in regional bicycle and greenway network. As both the Port Royal area on the Queensborough side and Quayside drive on the other side are heavily populated so the quickest route for residents will be to cross this bridge to reach rapid transit. City has done number of preliminary studies regarding various options and after discussing with the barge operators have decided that the downstream position will be more favorable. Mark stated that design build process is underway and City is working with proponents to build this project within the budget that's available and also hope to have it done within two years. The City is working with Port Metro Vancouver in regards to environment assessment of this area and really needs to protect areas with higher habitat value.

6.3. Waterfront Vision Front Street Projects: Potential Environmental initiatives – Mark Allison

Mark showed pictures of Front Street today and what will it look like in future. He informed that City plans to shift Front Street and demolish west side of the parkade to improve air quality and also for traffic calming purposes. City potentially plans to put in a rain garden and lots of green space once the parkade to the west of Sixth Street has been demolished. This project is part of sustainability initiative by the City and lot of trees will be planted to improve the air quality and storm management in the area. Mark encouraged members to come to the Public Open House that is scheduled for next month. This will be the first new roadway that City has created after a long time outside of Queensborough as Front Street that is now a back alley will be transformed into an actual street. Lots of heritage features and bricks will be incorporated during its design process and City might consider putting LED lights for the first time on its streets. City is planning to provide at least forty parking spots on the street with reverse angle parking which is considered much safer for both pedestrians and drivers. We are working on continuous waterfront greenway and looking for ways to connect Sapperton Landing Park with Westminster Pier Park all the way to Brunette River.

6.4. Mayor's Task Force on Transportation: Priority Capital Program – Mark Allison

Mark introduced Eugene - Manager of Infrastructure and Planning for the City and guiding light behind City's Master Transportation Plan. Mayor's Task force on Transportation have put together a preliminary work plan to implement the Master Transportation Plan where environment is the main focus. He talked about some of its key elements such as working towards making our City walkable and wheelchair accessible along with sidewalk improvements by 2018. We will be the only city that will have its sidewalks fully accessible for wheelchairs in four years' time. Best Routes to school program has been in

works in partnership with New Westminster School District. Crosstown greenway will be emphasized especially in between Fifth Street and Eighth Street where currently lot of traffic goes through and also to promote a continuous route among the parks especially along Braid Street where there is no sidewalk as of now. The Task force is also working on accelerating the installation of bus shelters in the city and install an elevator by Sapperton Skytrain Station. Sixth Street improvements for pedestrians, traffic calming plans for Sapperton as well as working with Royal Columbian Hospital regarding moving emergency vehicles on city streets are all on priority list under this program.

Members discussed:

Reginald stated that he has noticed deficiency of lighting in New Westminster especially in Pedestrian areas. He hopes that it will be addressed in order to make it safer for pedestrians especially in access areas by skytrain stations.

Eugene informed that there is an action plan in place already on improving lighting for pedestrians especially at busy corridors. We would definitely like to focus on it from public safety point of view and will need to look and assess each location more specifically. Eugene also plans to talk with City’s Design and Construction Department to find out if city has any plans to switch over to LED lights for street lighting purposes and will be reporting back at a future meeting.

Amanda wanted to know if City has any plan to deal with brambles particularly Himalayan Blackberries as they seem to be everywhere on East Columbia Street and has seen marked decrease in cyclists and pedestrians due to them. Mark stated that there is no such policy in MTP as of now but would like to look at the whole city and see which areas have more of these invasive species. Mark informed that City has an app called Click Fix where you can report about any hazardous situation or place when you see one.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

8. NEXT MEETING

Date: Wednesday September 23rd, 2015
Location: Meeting Room#2 (Centre Room)
Time: 6:30pm

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8: 51pm.

Councillor Jaimie McEvoy
Chair

Sandy Kalra
Recording Secretary