

ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EnCAC)

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

**Meeting held electronically under Ministerial Order No. M192/2020 and the
current Order of the Provincial Health Officer - *Gatherings and Events***

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor Nadine Nakagawa	- Chair, City Council Member
Karen Crosby	- Community Member
Colleen Gillespie	- Representative, Professional in Environment or Climate Field, Business, Government or Non-Profit
John Lekakis	- Representative, Local Institution (SD40)
Teresa Morton	- Representative, Local Environment Association
John Ragone	- Community Member
Raunaq Singh	- Community Member
Serena Vampa	- Representative, Local Business Association

REGRETS:

Meesh Bono	- Community Member
Patrick Parkes	- Community Member
Bryanna Thiel	- Representative, Professional in Environment or Climate Field, Business, Government or Non-Profit

STAFF PRESENT:

Leya Behra	- Manager, Climate Action
Jennifer Lukianchuk	- Senior Environmental Coordinator
Eugene Wat	- Manager, Infrastructure Planning
Carilyn Cook	- Committee Clerk
Heather Corbett	- Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m.

1.0 HOUSEKEEPING

1.1 Electronic Meeting Reminders and Icebreaker

Heather Corbett, Committee Clerk, provided information on tools available to participate in the electronic meeting.

The Chair acknowledged that the meeting was being held on unceded Indigenous territory.

Members, staff and guests took turns responding to the icebreaker question "What is your springtime delight?"

2.0 ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO AGENDA

2.1 Additions/Revisions to and Adoption of the Agenda

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Agenda of the March 10, 2021, Environment and Climate Advisory Committee meeting be adopted with the removal of Item 5.1.

CARRIED.

All Committee members present voted in favour of the motion.

3.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1 Adoption of the Minutes of December 16, 2020

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the December 16, 2020, Environment and Climate Advisory Committee meeting be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED.

All Committee members present voted in favour of the motion.

4.0 PRESENTATIONS

None.

5.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5.1 Motion from Committee Member presented October 21, 2020

This item was removed from the agenda.

5.2 Environmental Strategy and Action Plan (ESAP) Action Updates

Jennifer Lukianchuk, Senior Environmental Coordinator, reviewed the Environmental Strategy and Action Plan (ESAP) items, and their status by section, with the Committee.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Lukianchuk and Leya Behra, Manager of Climate Action, provided the following information:

- In reference to Item 15.1 (*Increase environmental awareness and education of the community*), there are several strategies in place, with varying levels of current action due to the pandemic. These include:
 - The BC Sustainable Energy Association (BCSEA) delivering workshops to Grade Five students on energy action;
 - The Climate Action Engagement and Communication strategy, which was developed by an external consultant in 2020: Initiatives were put on hold during COVID, however, staff are identifying what could be achievable in 2021;
 - Other areas of raising communication and awareness include:
 - Updating the climate action and Energy Save New West websites;
 - Creating climate action engagement on the City’s Be Heard website;
- In reference to Item 15.3 (*Foster environmental stewardship and education of the natural environment*), cleaning up of natural areas that are overgrown with blackberries in Queen’s Park would be included in this section; and,
- In reference to Item 8.6b (Develop a residential waste strategy for the multi-family sector), staff have received interest from the community to hold additional “Master Recycler” workshops in the future. The City’s Grant program provided support for the first course which took place on-line (due of COVID) for residents last year;

The Committee noted appreciation for the update on the ESAP and, in regards to Item 13.2a (*Develop a work plan for the implementation of the Urban Forest Management Strategy, including a recommended list of tree species, to ensure forest health and longevity*), for the new street trees that have been planted throughout the City, and noticeably in Brow of the Hill.

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Appointment of EnCAC Alternate Chair

Councillor Nakagawa asked for any volunteers to stand as Alternate Chair for the 2020/2021 term.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT John Ragone be appointed as the Alternate Chair of the Environment and Climate Advisory Committee for the 2021/2022 term.

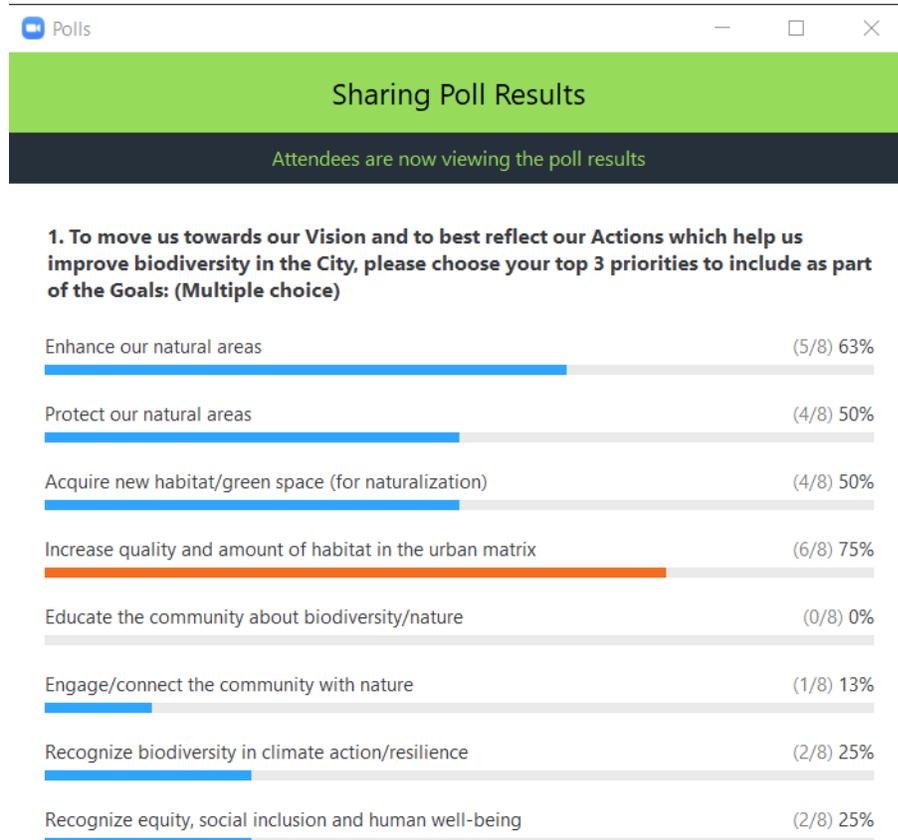
CARRIED.

All members of the Panel present voted in favour of the motion.

6.2 Biodiversity Strategy: Goals and Draft Recommended Actions

Jennifer Lukianchuk, Senior Environmental Coordinator, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the draft goals and actions within the City’s draft Biodiversity Strategy, and requested the Committee’s input into three draft goals for the Strategy.

Within the discussion, the Committee was presented with a poll of priorities to choose from for incorporation into the goals. The results of the poll are included below:



In response to a question from the Committee, Ms. Lukianchuk noted that the City has reached out to several First Nations groups to see if there is interest in engaging with the City in the development of the Biodiversity Strategy, and another City department is undertaking this engagement work.

The Committee provided the following comments on the draft goals presented:

- General support for all three draft goals was indicated;
- Draft Goal 2:
 - Strengthen the language by noting that increasing the value of habitat in the urban matrix is also beneficial to people’s quality of life and health and helps to create a livable City;
- Draft Goal 3:
 - Incorporate mention of climate action and the imperative for the human race to become partners with the natural sphere;
 - Goal 3 should refer back or connect with the City’s climate change actions;
 - Suggestion to change goal wording to “Increase opportunities...to nature and nature-based climate solutions”;
 - Adding the idea of stewardship speaks to Goal 3, in that it could be a call to action for raising awareness of people’s shared responsibility for nature, and it also signals to indigenous sovereignty on the land; and,

- Equity should be an element in the wording of Goal 3 as well, in that not all people have the same access to nature.
- Human actions in natural areas – protecting existing natural areas and human impacts on the areas – putting support for that into the strategy – fencing off areas – there are some actions that speak to the wildlife areas of refuge

Ms. Lukianchuk noted that the next steps would be to incorporate the Committee’s comments into a revised set of goals, and circulate them to the Committee to review, with the aim of finalizing the Draft Strategy in May.

In response to further questions from the Committee, Councillor Nakagawa and Ms. Lukianchuk provided the following information:

- When New Westminster Secondary School is demolished, the space will become a Memorialization Garden, which is being planned in conversation with SD40, First Nations and other groups with relevant ties to the burial grounds. The suggested trees and plantings being considered have meaning for the space as a whole; therefore, it may not be a space for the City to influence the greenspace and advance its biodiversity goals; and,
- Encroachment of residential property into natural areas is being considered and included within the Biodiversity Strategy.

6.3 Motion from Committee Member:

Karen Crosby, Community Member, presented the following Motion to Committee members for their consideration:

THAT the Environment and Climate Advisory Committee recommend that Council increase staffing to Energy Save New West, with the new staff's work focusing on inspiring citizens with a sense of urgency to quickly transition their homes away from fossil fuels toward renewable energy.

Ms. Crosby noted that the idea for the Motion came from personal experience of installing a heat pump at her place of residence. As there appears to be appetite for growth in zero emission energy sources, it seems additional staff resources may be needed to support the growth of Energy Save New West (ESNW), in order to promote the reduction of emissions and achieving targets in future.

Leya Behra, Manager of Climate Action, presented a small overview of the team structure and responsibilities of the Climate Action team to help with background context for the motion.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Behra and Councillor Nakagawa provided the following information:

- It is likely that this request would be deferred to the next budget process, as departments submit staffing requests as enhancements, and these are not usually considered outside of the budget process;
- It would be challenging and expensive for the City to independently roll out the program to multi-unit dwellings because there are individual units and collective items; however, there is a pilot program to advise stratas on overall building systems that are less carbon intensive;
- It would be better to grow a multi-unit dwelling program with regional partners where costs are distributed, which is currently being explored through an inter-municipal working group;
- The end result of such a motion would be to hire additional staff rather than shift staff from another climate change area;
- The ESNW program is a conduit to provide info from the City about all the programs that are available in the Province, including BC Hydro and Fortis BC; therefore, not all incentives are within the City's control;
- The ESNW program is not over-subscribed in general, other than EV charging programs offered by CleanBC; and,
- A shortage in marketing awareness may exist; however outreach strategies are being worked on this year to reach newcomers and those who don't speak English to increase the uptake of the program.

In discussion, the Committee noted the following:

- The motion would still be valuable even if it is considered during the next budget cycle; and,
- Desired outcomes of this motion would be to enhance marketing and awareness of the program, grow community support, and eventually to see a greater number of private and multi-unit residences, and businesses, be less reliant on fossil fuels.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Environment and Climate Advisory Committee recommend that Council increase staffing to Energy Save New West, with the new staff's work focusing on inspiring citizens with a sense of urgency to quickly transition their homes away from fossil fuels toward renewable energy.

CARRIED.

Colleen Gillespie and John Ragone voted in opposition to the motion.

7.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

8.0 None.

9.0 NEXT MEETING DATE

Wednesday, May 12, 2021 – Location details to be confirmed

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Certified correct,

ORIGINAL SIGNED
Councillor Nadine Nakagawa
Chair

ORIGINAL SIGNED
Heather Corbett
Committee Clerk