Mayor's Youth Climate Leadership Team
Minutes

Wednesday, January 15, 2025
4:00 p.m.

Council Chamber, Second Floor
New Westminster City Hall, 511 Royal Avenue

Present:	Mayor Patrick Johnstone, Facilitator Silisha Ali, Youth Services Coordinator Leya Behra, Deputy Director of Climate Action ~~Erika Mashig, Manager, Parks and Open Space Planning, Design & Construction~~ Laura Sampliner, Manager, Climate Action Paolo Zenone, Youth Centre Supervisor Juno Avila-Clark, YCLT Member Uliana Chernykh, YCLT Member Ruqaiyah Clouden, YCLT Member Shreeya Jagadeesh, YCLT Member Curtis Lever, YCLT Member Max MacInnes-Cann, YCLT Member Lili Mizuno, YCLT Member Justine Rosendo, YCLT Member Mahsa Soltani, YCLT Member Lucille Stathis, YCLT Member
Absent:	Elizabeth Cavanagh, YCLT Member Leo Li, YCLT Member Irene Lu, YCLT Member Erika Mashig, Manager, Parks and Open Space Planning, Design & Construction

1. WELCOME & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mayor Johnstone called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. It was acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. It was recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

Mayor Johnstone thanked Councillor Nadine Nakagawa for Chairing the previous Youth Climate Leadership Team (YCLT) meeting.

Paolo Zenone, Youth Centre Supervisor, led an ice-breaker activity and self-introductions.

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

None.

3. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

3.1 Be Heard Platform Update

Leya Behra, Deputy Director of Climate Action, informed the YCLT will be using the City of New Westminster's Public Engagement platform, BeHeard, to facilitate a space for ideas to be shared amongst the Task Force members. BeHeard offers timelines, document uploading, and has an Ideas Board where participants can ask questions and receive answers. The goal is that the platform will be live and ready by the next YCLT meeting.

3.2 In Person Meeting Dates Available at Century House

P. Zenone advised staff will set up a space at Century House for team members to meet between YCLT meetings and discuss Climate Action Team items. Silisha Ali, Youth Services Coordinator, advised that it was up to the group to decide when they want to meet, subject to availability at Century House and there was general support to meet in the week following the YCLT meeting.

3.3 Permission Forms

Permission forms were distributed to the group.

4. EXERCISES & ACTIVITIES

4.1 Brainstorming Summary

Laura Sampliner, Manager, Climate Action, summarized that two groups were formed at the prior meeting, one to discuss the theme of the urban forest, while the other focused on quality people-centered public realm. The two groups re-formed and proceeded to develop a refresh to be presented for each group.

4.2 Youth Refresh and Small Group Presentations

Group One presented the following on the City of New Westminster's urban forest, focusing on flood adaptation and mitigation. The group advised that:

- daylighting streams – when cities are built, streams are sent underground in pipes. Daylighting involves opening a stream up again to the natural environment, and restoring the natural stream as much as possible;
- it is beneficial to add green spaces, plant native plants around schools, and provide access to more educational materials;
- connecting green spaces is essential in order for ecology to prosper, so daylighting streams could create pathways for wildlife to move between spaces.
- daylighting helps with flood mitigation and helps the local ecosystem. It can also be a form of advocacy and education if used as an opportunity to explain what is happening and benefits.
- big rain events are most risky for New Westminster in terms of flooding. Daylighting would help to offset that risk.

In response to the discussion, Mayor Johnstone shared that Glenbrook Ravine is the most obvious example. He expressed that daylighting is complex from an engineering standpoint.

Group Two presented the following on quality people-centered public realm and the challenge of perception, and citizens' belief that there exists a disconnect between themselves and nature. The group advised:

- it can be beneficial to increase awareness by employing social media to inform about climate events and actions around the world. Involving the community in identifying underutilized spaces that could be used for climate initiatives, and identifying roads that could benefit from or harness more foot traffic;
- there are areas such as Queens Park where there are large asphalt boulevards that could provide opportunities for climate initiatives. Removing black asphalt helps to mitigate heat and removing space for cars encourages other forms of transportation, which can lead to a GHG benefit;
- there is need for dialogue with engineering and the public realm;
- public perception and acceptance – social media could be a tool, alongside messaging around ownership of change; and
- Braid station is an example of a space that could be transformed.

4.4 Creation of Be Heard Account Profiles

The Task Force created BeHeard account profiles.

4.5 Project Refinement and Launch of a Project Plan

L. Behra discussed project refinement and the launch of a project plan with smaller milestones that lead to bigger outcomes. Over the next couple of weeks, it was suggested that members consider what a project plan looks like, and what the first research actions could be by next meeting as this will help to identify people of interest to come in and present to members, and to identify resources to support the group.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting concluded at 6:01 p.m.