

**City of St. Catharines**  
**Citizens' Advisory Committee on Community Sustainability**

**Notes of the January 30, 2013 Meeting**

**Committee Room, St. Catharines City Hall**

*Present:*

Marty Mako (Chair)  
Councillor Mathew Siscoe  
Councillor Greg Washuta  
Daniel Romanko  
Bernie Slepko  
Phil Baranoski  
Erin Britnell  
Erin O'Hoski (staff)

*Regrets:*

Vanessa Aykroyd  
Sam Mahboob

**Approval of the Minutes of the November 28, 2012 Meeting**

The minutes of the November 28, 2012 meeting were approved.

**Team Building Exercise**

Members participated in a tour of the *Capturing Culture: Images from Niagara's Cultural Capital of Canada 2012 Program* exhibit at City Hall. The tour was facilitated by Rebecca Cann, Cultural Services Supervisor.

**City of St. Catharines Culture Plan: Sustainability Dimensions**

Rebecca Cann, Cultural Services Supervisor, reported to members on the development of a new culture plan for the City.

Six priorities have been proposed for the culture plan as follows:

1. Communicate the experiences and value of culture to all St. Catharines' residents.
2. Foster participation in arts, heritage and cultural experiences.
3. Cultivate the growth and development of the creative sector.

4. Further develop the planning, management and coordination of heritage assets and historical services.
5. Recognize and embrace the city's cultural diversity as a cornerstone for civic engagement.
6. Leverage culture to strengthen St. Catharines' distinct sense of place and community.

Relationships with priorities in the Sustainability Strategy were discussed, particularly asset management, creative green economy, compact livable neighbourhoods and citizen engagement.

The following questions were presented to members for discussion:

1. Will these priorities achieve our goals?
2. Where does the Sustainability Committee fit into these priorities and initiatives? Are there any specifically that you want to see your Committee's name next to in the final plan?
3. From your perspective, are there any significant issues or opportunities that are not addressable within the priorities and initiatives provided?
4. If you had one piece of advice for staff moving the culture plan forward, what would it be?

Members provided initial feedback on the presentation and agreed to follow up directly with the Cultural Services Office with further comments. The presentation will be circulated to members electronically.

## **Strong Neighbourhoods Event: Partnership with Niagara Region**

Erin Britnell reported on a partnership opportunity through the Niagara Region Housing and Homelessness Action Plan. Regional staff will be hosting workshops in each Niagara municipality and there is potential to expand the event to address wider poverty objectives related to strong neighbourhoods as stated in the Sustainability Strategy:

"Despite the City's lack of involvement in services addressing the immediate needs of at-risk populations, the City plays an important role in creating community prosperity. Services such as community planning, transit, recreation, culture, water and wastewater are all human services that help to ensure basic needs are met and create the conditions for individuals to succeed."

This partnership is also consistent with the vision of the Strategy that states the City must work together with “other municipal governments, like Niagara Region and neighbouring municipalities, recognizing that challenges to sustainability transcend municipal boundaries.”

The event is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday February 20 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Russell Avenue Community Centre. Regional staff are seeking the following from Committee members:

- An event Chair
- Two additional members to ensure the goals of the Sustainability Strategy are represented in the development and execution of the event
- Assistance in promoting the event within the St. Catharines community

Members agreed to consider the opportunity and express interest over the next week.

### **Charles Eisenstein Sustainability Event**

Aaron Berger, event organizer, addressed members on an event planned for May 2013 in Niagara Falls. Organizers have secured Charles Eisenstein, author of “Sacred Economics,” as a high profile speaker on the topic of Sustainability. Seneca Theatre in Niagara Falls has been selected as the venue for the event.

Aaron indicated he would forward further details when they are available and asked members to attend and promote the event among their networks.

### **Themed Meetings, 2013**

Marty Mako raised the concept of themed meetings in 2013. The January 30 meeting explored culture as the fourth pillar of sustainability. The February 27 meeting will look at public transit at both a regional and city level. Themes will be determined two months in advance. Members agreed to asset management as the theme for the March 27 meeting.

### **Other Business**

Councillor Siscoe asked members to follow the budget process, particularly items related to public transit. Councillor Washuta suggested that the transit presentation be circulated to members of the Committee.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 27 from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. at St. Catharines City Hall.

Phil Baranoski reported on a meeting with Minister Jim Bradley, MPP, on the issue of local food processing plants.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.