

Minutes

Wednesday, September 20, 2017

Burgoyne Woods Room, City Hall at 5:00 pm

Attendance:

Stephen Holmes, Robin McDonald, John Stevens, Dick Thomas, Peter Thompstone

Staff Liaison:

Ilyse Norton, Kristen Sullivan, Ray Vachon

Regrets:

Mary Jane Clark, Peter Howes, James McWilliam, Scott Ritchie

1. **Call meeting to order** (Peter Thompstone) 5:04 pm
2. **Additions / Deletions to the Agenda:**
 - Para 7: Tree-O-Code
3. **Motion to approve the Agenda:** John Stevens
4. **Presentations:** Nil
5. **Motion to adopt minutes from the previous meeting:** As amended (two amendments): Stephen Holmes
6. **Business arising from the minutes:**
 - a. **Updates on 2016/2017 Projects and Budgets.** Only projects with changes from the last report are included in the updates below.

6: Eastchester at Bunting: The GAC thanked John Stevens for the report he had circulated prior to the meeting on the soil conditions he and Peter Howes had discovered at the site. In essence, without remediation the site would not be suitable for our project. After discussion involving the pros and cons of excavating or of adding soil to create berms, it was decided to seek advice from Dan Cooper, City of St Catharines Supervisor of Forestry, to determine whether either or a combination of these would support growth of the trees and other greenery proposed for the project. Ilyse offered to contact Dan Cooper for this purpose.

10: Eastmount Park Community Garden: Kristen Sullivan advised that this project may proceed but likely at an alternative site (and with a new title).

12: Walker's Creek - Planting Beds: Peter Thompstone advised that he and Dick Thomas had marked the site. Since that time, the Friends of Walker's Creek together with their Ward Councillor had proposed to add a bench in memory of Ben Hannan, a dedicated community volunteer. The site was revisited and the layout for the bed and a pad for the bench determined. Peter and Dick with the help of PRCS staff will again visit and define exactly where the bed and bench will be located so PRCS staff can install the concrete pad and prepare the bed for spring planting and installation of the bench.

14: 360 Niagara Arboretum: Both Ilyse Norton and Kristen Sullivan confirmed that the path plan which had been submitted for review had been approved. The GAC was advised that PRCS is exploring a 'visioning exercise' to determine what the surrounding community would like for this area. It was decided that the GAC should document their 'vision' for the area. The sub-committee agreed to prepare an appropriate information package to present at the 'visioning exercise'.

17: Gator Bags: The GAC wondered if the gator bags were being filled now that 'Mother Nature' is not watering the new trees. Ilyse Norton offered to investigate.

18: Vimy Oaks: Robin McDonald advised signs for the remaining 3 Vimy Oaks had been received. Ilyse Norton added that the Vimy Oaks had not yet been received; however, they would be planted as soon as practicable.

19: Canada 150 - 150 Trees: Ilyse Norton advised the tree identifier plates had been ordered. It was decided to wait for Peter Howes return before pursuing the larger signs.

20: Club Roma: Peter Thompstone circulated a letter received from Club Roma detailing the trees and pollinators they had installed. The GAC requested that PRCS process the previously approved \$2,500.00 grant.

22: Pollinator Water Bill Flyer: Peter Thompstone reviewed some of the pollinator candidates that members had provided. He will compile a list and circulate it to members who may add to the list, should they so wish. Following that, the list will be submitted to Ilyse Norton who will pass it to the graphic designer to marry it with the previously discussed and approved text.

7. Business.

- **Community Gardens Policy.** Kristen Sullivan reviewed the proposed updated Community Gardens Policy. Following discussion, the GAC congratulated Kristen on her work and indicated their support for the update.

Motion: Moved by Peter Thompstone, Seconded by John Stevens:
That the GAC, having reviewed the draft Updated Community Garden Policy, provides its full and unanimous support for the updated policy.

CARRIED

- **Links for Greener Learning Update.** Kristen Sullivan briefed the GAC on the ongoing project. For a variety of reasons, the Eastmount Park Community Garden will be relocated, possibly to another location within the Merritton Community, but perhaps a little further from residential areas.

- **Tree-O-Code.** Ilyse Norton circulated a proposal PRCS had received from Tree-O-Code Niagara. The GAC had previously been briefed by Mr Darren Platakis, Tree-O-Code Niagara Executive Director, so were familiar with the Tree-O-Code work. While the GAC acknowledged the benefit of the Tree-O-Code work, the \$10,000.00 financial outlay proposed was questioned. The GAC considered a few points should be clarified prior to endorsing (or recommending non-acceptance) of the proposal. Specifically the GAC requested information regarding:
 - a. Can the existing City owned and operated GIS not provide exactly the same information (a large portion of the information [boulevard tree inventory] has already been gathered and paid for by the city - could it not be incorporated into the City GIS)?
 - b. Would the Tree-O-Code information be used by the city's Forestry Section and if so, were they now using the previously gathered boulevard tree information which is available to city staff?
 - c. Should it prove impracticable to use the presently owned City GIS and the City owned boulevard tree information; should not the financing for any tree related expense, such as this one, be taken from the Forestry budget rather than source the funds from another avenue?
 - d. As it appears this initiative is a 'Niagara' (Tree-O-Code Niagara) initiative, should not the Region be funding some (if not all) of any associated fees?

After reviewing the Tree-O-Code proposal document, Robin McDonald suggested the information contained on Page 12 of 22, regarding tree eco-benefits should be used when the Tree By-Law is presented to Council.

8. **Correspondence:** Nil.
9. **Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday, October 18, 2017.
10. **Motion to Adjourn:** Robin McDonald at 7:21 pm.