

Environmental Sustainability Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, August 07, 2019

Ante Room at 4pm

Attendance:

Councillor Bruce Williamson
Councillor Joe Kushner
Dick Thomas, Chair Green Advisory Committee
Jonathan Belgrave, Chair Clean City Committee
Darrell Smith, Director of Municipal Works

Absent:

Councillor Matt Harris
Heather Salter, Director Legal and Clerks Services

Staff Liaison:

Illyse Norton, Staff Liaison, Green Advisory Committee
Pat Conway, Staff Liaison, Clean City Advisory Committee
Frank Bufalino, Incoming Staff Liaison, Clean City Advisory Committee
Julie Hughes, Staff Liaison, Pillar Committee

Guests:

Peter Thompstone, Past Chair, Green Advisory Committee
Peter Howes, Past member Green Advisory Committee

1. Called the meeting to order Councillor Williamson, 4:05pm

- Roundtable introductions
- Recognition of Traditional Territories

2. Motion to Appoint the Chair:

That Councillor Bruce Williamson be appointed to the position of Chair of the Environmental Sustainability Committee

Moved by: Councillor Kushner
Carried

Motion to Appoint the Vice Chair:

That Darrell Smith be appointed to the position of Vice Chair of the Environmental Sustainability Committee

Moved by: Dick Thomas
Carried

3. **Motion to approve the agenda:**

That the ESC agenda be amended to discuss the recruitment of a member for the Green Advisory Committee as the last item on the agenda, item 7.3

Moved by: Darrell Smith
Carried

4. **Motion to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting:**

That the ESC minutes from April 3 be approved

Moved by: Chair Williamson
Carried

5. **Presentation:**

2014-2018 term GAC Report: Peter Thompson and Peter Howes (former GAC members)

- See appendix, GAC Report
- Highlights of accomplishments and recommendations
- Additional recommendations:
 - The City should require landscaping for all infills
 - The City should re-inspect properties in the longer term to ensure that original landscaping on site plans has been maintained and if not, require them to be reinstated

Motion to accept the presentation:

That the Green Advisory Committee term end report be accepted

Moved by: Jonathan Belgrave
Carried

6. **Business arising from the minutes**

n/a

7. Business

7.1 Green Advisory Committee~ Chair Dick Thomas

- Seven Community Gardens have been approved with one more potentially
- The private property tree by law went to Council without the new GAC having the opportunity to provide comment
- However, Council directed that the by law come back to GAC and a subcommittee is being established to review and provide recommendations on the private property tree by law before going back to Council
- Flower pot program with BIAs was a success, 90 pots were distributed at 50/50 cost share
- Trillium Awards will take place on September 23
- Earth Day Expo was held April 26 where the GAC had a booth
- 58 trees were tagged in the Niagara Arboretum
- Trees were planted in the viewing area overlooking Martindale Pond at the parkette on Michigan Avenue
- A partnership is being pursued with the Niagara Horticulture Society
- Niagara College presented a 3 stage study for an overland flooding wetland study whereby the GAC agreed to consider participating in the final stage with the Friends of Walker Creek

Motion to request additional City staff for the GAC:

That the Green Advisory Committee Terms of Reference be amended to include advisory City staff members from Planning and Municipal Works on the GAC

Moved by: Dick Thomas
Carried

Motion to receive the Green Advisory Committee update:

That the update from the Green Advisory Committee be received

Moved by: Jonathan Belgrave
Carried

7.2 Clean City Advisory Committee ~ Chair Jonathan Belgrave

- Clean up with Brock students scheduled for Saturday September 5, Mountain Locks Park
- Fall clean up scheduled for Saturday October 5 throughout the city
- Graffiti Reporting promotion is being pursued through social media, Citizens First and Ping Street app
- Cigarette Butt campaign is continuing with advertising on the back of the St. Catharines transit buses

Motion to receive the Clean City Advisory Committee update:

That the update from the Clean City Advisory Committee be received

Moved by: Darrell Smith
Carried

- Guests, Peter Thompstone and Peter Howes exit the meeting

7.3 Green Advisory Committee recruitment ~ Ilyse Norton

Motion to recommend a new member:

That Brenda Boonzaijer be recommended for membership to the Green Advisory Committee

Moved by: Councillor Kushner
Carried

8. Date of next meeting

Wednesday, November 06, 2019

5pm to 6pm, Ante Room

*Dep Clerk, Kristen Sullivan will present on “work plans” to Advisory Committees

9. Motion to Adjourn

That the Environmental Sustainability Committee adjourn at 5:15pm

Moved by: Councillor Kushner
Carried

Appendix: GAC Report (January 2019)

As the current term of the Green Advisory Committee ends, the GAC is pleased to submit this report to city council highlighting key accomplishments over the past four years and recommendations we believe should be implemented.

Accomplishments:

1. Merritton Bill Wiley Memorial Parkette... The GAC envisioned and implemented this parkette, located adjacent to Mountain Locks Park north of Glendale Avenue, on the route of the First and Second Welland Canals, in partnership with the St. Catharines Horticulture Society, Merritton Lions Club, Grupo Bimbo (Canada Bread), and the City of St Catharines.
2. Canada 150... 25 trees were planted on city land in each of the city's six wards as part of Canada 150 Celebrations.

3. Cindy Drive Park/Walker's Creek Trail... Two gateway planting beds were completed at the Lakeshore Road entrance in partnership with the Friends of Walker's Creek and O'Hara Trucking and Excavating Inc., who provided a generous donation of armour stone.
4. Lester B. Pearson Park... Most of the high fence along Niagara Street at the northern end of Pearson Park was removed thereby making the property more inviting to citizenry. The former Niagara College School of Horticulture's tree collection, north of Buchanan House, was rejuvenated with seven species of native trees planted to replace dead and dying specimens. Subsequently, PRCS undertook a visioning exercise with the neighbourhood residents and other interested citizens to seek to seek advice on the future use of the park. Removal of the fence was seen as a very positive step by participants at the exercise. Also, a systematic numbering and ID system has been commenced which will result in the appropriate tagging of the tree varieties.
5. Bunting Road at Eastchester Avenue... Twenty native trees of five species were planted in a gore at this intersection as an enhancement to this industrial area.
6. Educational Flyers... Two flyers were developed to educate the general public on *Welcoming Pollinators to your garden* and *Plant a Tree*. *Pollinators* was

distributed as an insert in city water bills in 2018, and it is planned that *Plant a Tree* will be distributed in the coming year.

7. Community Gardens... Community gardens were financially supported in conjunction with Links for Greener Learning and other community groups at the following locations: Buchanan House, Lincoln Centennial School, Centennial Gardens, Torosian Park, Grantham Mennonite Brethren, and Scottlea Presbyterian Church. To promote these gardens, the committee allotted 20% of the GAC budget towards development of them.
8. Club Roma... In partnership with the club, the GAC provided funding towards tree planting at their outdoor pavilion garden, a former gravel parking lot now enjoyed by many citizens as it is open to the general public.
9. Gator Bags... In an attempt to combat drought and heat conditions, the GAC purchased 400 'Gator Bags' to help keep young trees watered during these difficult times.
10. Lake Street at James Street Gateway... The committee allocated significant funds towards development of a downtown gateway which would incorporate the door arch from the former Queen

Street YMCA as part of the concept. The arch has been secured from and generously donated by the YMCA. This initiative is contingent upon the plans for road reconstruction at the intersection.

11.Vimy Oaks...The committee arranged the planting of four Vimy Oaks. The trees are descended from English Oaks from Vimy Ridge, France and are planted at the St Catharines Cenotaph, Montebello Park and two at Victoria Lawn Cemetery.

12. Flower Pot Programme...This yearly initiative promotes city beautification. The GAC offers these pots to any businesses in the city at wholesale rate and has partnered with the Downtown Association and the Port Dalhousie Beautification and Works Committee to enhance these areas.

13.Trillium Awards... The GAC continued to promote the annual Trillium Awards and sponsored numerous awards.

14.Tree-O-Code...As a result of GAC encouragement, the city procured a Tree-O-Code membership to serve as another means of enhancing public interest in trees.

Recommendations:

1. As an Advisory Committee we have given advice to council, however, we have rarely received any feedback from council. The GAC reports to the Environmental Sustainability Committee (one of the Four Pillars set up by council). This reporting system did not work well. The GAC needs direct contact at monthly meetings with a councillor (or councillors) to open up communications.
2. The GAC previously had a representative from Planning and Building Services. This person should be reinstated to complement the PRCS and Transportation and Environment staff on the committee. The planning representative would provide information on planning decisions and processes that the committee should be aware of and have input.
3. At the beginning of each term, PRCS staff should clarify budgetary limitations in terms of long-term maintenance resulting from proposed GAC initiatives.

4. The Public Tree By-law was passed and now needs an enforcement officer to be effective.
5. The private tree by-law, which was developed at Council's request by the GAC and its predecessor over the past eight years, should be presented to and implemented by the new council.
6. The City's tree cover is being harmed by tree bark damage due to weed whippers. Tree guards are especially needed for newly planted trees to prevent injury, and an education program about this form of injury is required.
7. The city should assume responsibility for planting trees on Regional Roads within its urban boundaries. These streets generally have significantly fewer trees than city-controlled streets and do not convey the "Garden City" image the city strives to present.
8. At present, the watering of newly planted trees is the contractor's responsibility and the two-year tree guarantee requires the contractor to replace any trees that die. The problem is it could be cheaper to replace a tree than water it, which means the city loses the canopy that should have developed. Since climate change inevitably means hotter and drier summers will be the norm, the city should consider a separate

watering contract when tendering for tree planting to ensure a better survival rate.

9. Alternately, new tree planting could be done by the city, rather than by outside contractors since there are problems with the city's ability to enforce the requirements set out in tree planting contracts.
10. The city should have a policy to protect park trees during public events/festivals, which would include some type of tree protection deposit from vendors. Root and bark damage can significantly set back trees or kill them. This policy, for example, could be similar to that of the City of London, Ontario.
11. The city should create a tree succession plan for its parks to ensure continuity in canopy cover as trees reach their lifespan.
12. The city should consider arranging local nurseries to grow native trees for the city to ensure stock quality and climatic suitability.
13. The GAC investigated various options for green roofs, and we recommend that the city consider green roof technology as part of any new city project.
14. In the same way *Friends of Malcomson Park*, and *Friends of Walker's Creek* operate the city should consider setting up additional "*Friends of*" for other

parks. Volunteer groups have proven benefits for enhancing city beautification.