

Minutes

Wednesday, September 18, 2019

Lake St. Service Centre at 5:00PM

Attendance:

Dick Thomas, Mike Anderson, Mark Jemison, Steve Holmes, Andrew Kretz, Brenda Boonzaijer

Regrets:

Peter Howes, Daya Lye

Staff Liaison:

Andrew Ferguson (TES), Ilyse Norton (PRCS), John Bellehumeur (MW)

Members of Council:

Councillor Bruce Williamson

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1. **Call meeting to order:** 5:00 pm D. Thomas
 2. **Additions / Deletions to the Agenda:** None
 3. **Motion to approve the agenda:** Steve Holmes
 4. **Motion to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting:** Mark Jemison
 5. **Presentations:** None
 6. **Business**

6.1 GAC Term Work Plan Discussion

- Ideas for general themes were circulated to the GAC prior to the meeting. The following themes and sub-themes were discussed and brainstormed with the committee. The numbers next to the sub-themes are to indicate the ranking in

priority to the GAC. This exercise will continue at the October meeting to continue to narrow down sub-themes for potential projects. The themes and sub-themes are as follows:

- **Continuing Commitments**

- Flower pot program (\$0) (10)
- Trillium awards (\$1000) (10)
- Community gardens (\$7600) (10)
- Earth Day Expo (\$1000) (9)
- Tree giveaway – assisting with event (10)

- **Education**

- Tags for trees in Niagara St. Arboretum and potentially other parks.
- Water Bill Insert (10)
 - Continue using this as educational tool
 - Direction is to go paperless - an electronic insert could be used.
- Outdoor Classrooms (7)
 - Funding needed
 - This could also be considered a partnership with school boards.
- Schools in Bloom
- Social Media Page (10)
- Private Tree By-Law (Already Being Done)

- **Partnerships/GC Beautification**

- Flower Pot incentive program (5)
- Walker's Creek (ABD)
- Queenston Round-Table (ABD)
- Port BWC (ABD)
- Friends of Malcolmson Eco-Park (8)
- Landcare Niagara (ABD)
- Niagara Restoration Council
- Wards
 - Send out invitations to councilors to see what the committee can do to help.
- Sports Associations (7)
- School Boards/Brock/Niagara College
- Corporate Sponsorship (Grants) (7)

- NPCA
- TreeOcode (ABD)
- **Urban Forest/Environment**
 - Private Tree By-Law (ABD)
 - Drought Protection program (10)
 - Watering, mulching, soils, fertilizing
 - Threat assessment
 - L.E.A.F (3)
 - Planning and Development – Comment on green issues (9)
 - Engineering – Comment on Engineering projects.
- **Environment**
 - Surface and Roof Greening (9)
 - Suggesting downtown as an area
 - Suggesting it should become a policy to implement this.
 - Vertical Gardens
 - Incorporating vegetables into garden beds
 - Provide education and information to increase usage or interest
 - Naturalization Projects (9)
 - Pollinator Gardens (9)
 - Wildlife Corridors (9)
 - Pathways & Trails
 - Sponsor - Conversion to more sustainable gardens (8)
 - Suggested subsidizing or adding wild seeds into the Tree Giveaway
 - Geo-Caching – social media (7)
 - Enhance education, cleanup, partnerships can be created
 - User friendly app
 - Cost-effective
- **Advisory**
 - New Development (9)
 - Engineering Projects (9)

6.2 Private Tree By-Law Sub-Committee Update

** Steve Holmes report from September 12 telephone conversation with Peter Wynnychuk attached to minutes.*

- Discussed notes from telephone conference with Peter Wynnyczuk
- It was suggested to reach out to council to find out their concerns with the by-law.

7. **Date of next meeting:** Wednesday, October 16, 2019 – Lake St. Service Centre

8. **Motion to Adjourn:** D. Thomas at 7:00 p.m.

Notes on telephone conference with Peter Wynnyczuk of Ontario Urban Forest Council
Sept 12, 2019

Fees

- Need to be revenue neutral
- Cost to administer (typically cost for site visit)
- \$100 probably in ball park

Planning Policy

- Can protect some trees with planning policy. Sometimes done in Heritage districts.
- Planning policy without tree bylaw is not as secure. A planning application has many parameters and trees are only 1 consideration. However, if there is a private tree By-law, the trees cannot as easily be part of a tradeoff.

Implementation

- At Richmond Hill integrated team developed implementation plan
- If you roll out over long period – i.e. Council passes Bylaw but not in force for 6 months some trees will be lost due to owners jumping the gun. However, in 20 years the roll out period will not be noticeable.
- Some Councils enact and enforce on same day. But resources have to be planned.
- Resources for tree permits more available in winter, summer time staff very busy other projects.
- Developer repeat offenders who take down trees before development process is initiated or in defiance of tree bylaws as “a cost of doing business” can be policed using other regulatory means strictly applied by the municipality; eventually the offender will come around if he still wants to do business in the municipality. That is, the cost of doing business that defiant way becomes too high

Other Considerations

Enact a Bylaw in Heritage Zones only – get buy in, learn about costs and resources over time. However, this stepped approach may not be necessary or appropriate in St. Catharines if Council supports the Climate Emergency.

Reach out to individual Councillors regarding support and concerns.

Current Draft Bylaw

- The exemptions and deferrals in current draft are typical of most By-Laws, including the reference to the *Planning Act* in Section 4.1 a. This bylaw in its preamble states it is pursuant to various sections of the *Municipal Act*. Since the

Municipal Act “has a larger voice” than the *Planning Act*, the reference to the *Planning Act* in this exemption provision should not be a concern.

- Unusual to have different DBH. St. Catharines has 20 cm coniferous and 30 cm deciduous.
- Most municipalities have the same DBH diameter for all trees. The public has problems understanding the difference or rationale.
- DBH usually set related to the workload city can manage. Too small and too many trees need review. Need to look at data to determine how many trees affected. Likely that 30 cm the better choice for all
- A straight DBH probably better than protecting species. If you have species in By-law it is hard to change. If you protect by DBH, staff can set policy and update policy (such as allowing Norway Maples to be cut because they are not desired species)
- The Design Review Committee that comments on severances is restricted to design aspects of shape and form of structures. So there seems to be no reason to have an arborist involved. However, the Parks & Rec arborist should be circulated applications for severances which involve removal of trees for review and comment on compliance with tree bylaw