



MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Langley City Hall – CKF Room
20399 Douglas Crescent, Langley, BC

THURSDAY, JULY 13, 2023 AT 6:00 P.M.

Present: Councillor Paul Albrecht, Chair
Councillor Rosemary Wallace, Vice Chair
Amika Watari, Post Secondary Institution Rep
Ellen Hall, Member at Large
Lisa Dreves, Langley Field Naturalists
Marcela Ferreira, Member at Large
Zana Gordon, Member at Large

Staff: Francis Cheung, Chief Administrative Officer
David Pollock, Acting Director of Engineering, Parks and Environment
Christine Baird, Recording Secretary

Absent: Nichole Marples, Langley Environmental Partners Society, with regrets
Stafford Richter, Member at Large

The Chair acknowledged that the land on which we gather is the traditional unceded territory of the Katzie, Kwantlen, Matsqui and Semiahmoo First Nations.

1) **AGENDA**

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the July 13, 2023 Agenda for the Environmental Task Group be adopted.

CARRIED

2) **MINUTES**

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the June 8, 2023 Minutes of the Environmental Task Group meeting be adopted.

CARRIED

3) **PRESENTATION**

a) Urban Forest Management Strategy, by Camille Lefrançois, Environmental Planning Manager, Diamond Head Consulting

The Acting Director of Engineering, Parks and Environment provided background information on the project, noting that Phase I is almost complete, with public consultation (survey) closing on July 16, 2023. He then introduced Camille Lefrançois (DHC/consultant).

Highlights of the presentation are noted as follows:

- DHC works primarily with municipalities in Metro Vancouver and across Canada. The project with the City of Langley (City) commenced a few months ago.
- Many First Nations groups require that mature trees be retained.
- The strategy will consider components of an urban forest, which consists of trees, forest, vegetation and soil.
- Trees provide many benefits, including providing habitat for wildlife, enhanced air quality and cooling hot spots to reduce AC/fan use.
- The City's Official Community Plan recommends the need for tree protection.
- Trees appreciate in value over time and reach full benefit once they reach their full canopy size.
- Urban trees live 20 to 30 years, due to conditions that limit their growth.
- The project timeline commenced in spring 2023 (background research and urban forest mapping) and will be completed in winter 2023/2024 (finalization of strategy and information presented to Council).
- Inventory mapping and analysis were conducted, which included canopy cover mapping.
- Some emerging challenges have been identified:
 - for inventory and data, minimal information is available for staff;
 - for new development, with less trees on public land, more trees may be required in the public realm;
 - climate change is a compounding impact and many urban trees are starved for water; and
 - resourcing is important; trees need maintenance for survival.

The following interactive poll questions were posed to members, with responses as follows:

- What words come to mind when you thinking about an urban forest?
 - Too many trees to cut; well being; lost; sustainability; protecting; heritage; lacking.
- What urban forest benefits do you value the most?
 1. Climate change resilience, e.g. shade and cooling of streets and buildings, flood protection, role in carbon cycle and storage.
 2. Ecological, e.g. habitat and food for native (local) plants and animals.
 3. Health and social, e.g. improved mental health; places to meet people, recreate, and exercise.

4. Cultural interest, e.g. old, unique or culturally important trees, beautification, spiritual significance/meaning.
 5. Environmental services, e.g. rainwater management, air purification, wind protection.
 6. Economic, e.g. increased property values, tourism, food production.
- How would you like the City's tree canopy cover to change in the next 30 years?
 - Increase (5 votes). *No other votes received.*

ACTION: Staff to provide a copy of the presentation to committee members.

Lisa Dreves joined the meeting at 6:30 pm.

The following information was highlighted during discussion, with questions answered by staff and the consultant:

- 175 survey responses have been received and this could be due to survey fatigue as the City has a few other survey options for the public to consider at this time.
- Public feedback at the Community Day event was positive; people expressed support for the work being done by the City.
- A member suggested that it is good to have multiple ways to provide public information and asked if it is possible to have a poster with a QR code placed at city hall in the fitness area, for better reach.

ACTION: Staff to consider including a poster with a QR code, for future engagement.

- The community engagement strategy involved information being shared in newspaper ads, in the City newsletter, on the City's website and hosting a booth at Community Day.
- A member suggested that door-to-door volunteers may be required in order to achieve optimal reach.

ACTION: Staff to include an agenda item for the September meeting: Communication Strategies for Future Engagement.

- Tree canopy can possibly be increased on areas that are already paved, but it depends if the location is in the public or private realm.
 - Considerations are given for soil volume, streetscape standards, road resurfacing, ensuring enough space is provided to allow larger trees to grow, whether work is being done according to plan (e.g. gravel filled with a small amount of soil on top vs. full volume of soil), acquiring parkland for appropriate use, keeping space on some sites for designated tree use, whether for new or replacement trees, zoning, and standards applied underground.
- The City has a design criteria manual that outlines detailed criteria that is required to be followed.

- The consultant has not reached out to the Indigenous community as it is not in the project scope. Staff are the preferred representatives to reach out regarding participation.
- Kwantlen Park University has a horticulture program; they may have some student resources.
- Grass is not included in the strategy.
- Consideration of a tree bylaw is being reviewed through this process.
- Part of the study includes a carbon neutrality component; there is good rationale for what is in the ground, with soil component as a benefit.
- Best practices information is available with indicators compiled from varied sources.

ACTION: Consultant to provide to staff a copy of best practices information to disseminate to the Committee.

- The Building Code is considered to some extent, mainly with reference to tree canopy.
- A street tree inventory is helpful information to rely on.
- DHC developed a species list for Metro Vancouver, for up to 400 species, to maintain native trees. The City's design criteria also includes a species list.

ACTION: Staff to provide copy of the design criteria manual to members, specifically the tree species list.

- Regarding a tree inventory, the data will show a relationship of tree area and how many trees are growing in area to give a sense of how many trees are on public and private properties.
- Developers do raise issues of biomimicry (i.e. taking inspiration from natural selection solutions) to help complement spaces to help with solar heat gain or acoustics; some applicants provide more than others; examples include sustainability features such as ev charging, green roofs, plantings and garden boxes.
- The Metro Vancouver 2050 plan to increase the tree canopy by 40%.
- Staff are focusing on community plazas, outdoor meeting spaces.
- Trees are assets and we should be able to add valuation, to help raise awareness and recuperate costs for removed trees.
 - It would be good to look into what Victoria is doing, with a tax break offered to property owners that have trees on their property.
- There should be a mechanism to designate a tree as "heritage".
- The future SkyTrain station, alignment/guideway allows for trees.

ACTION: Staff to review the tax benefit option offered by City of Victoria.

ACTION: Staff to invite Diamond Head Consulting back to review the final draft before it is presented to Council. Committee members requested the material prior to the meeting for review purposes.

4) STANDING ITEMS

a) Poster / Flyer – Determine Future Topic Ideas:

- Nil.

b) New Initiatives and Emerging Trends:

- P. Albrecht suggested discussion by the Committee in the fall regarding bike security and bike valet service for community events.

5) ROUND TABLE

- R. Wallace reported that the Langley Global Fest event will be held on July 22, 2023 11am-6pm at Kwantlen Park University in Langley.
- M. Ferreira reported that the Langley Environmental Partners Society had their bike repair event in Walnut Grove and asked if the City should do something similar.
- A. Watari – a student interview was done by a colleague of hers regarding waste stations, which included Mayor Pachal.

ACTION: Staff to share the interview with the CAO with request that the Mayor consider sharing it in a future Mayor's message.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the meeting adjourn at 7:33 pm.

CARRIED

CHAIR

Certified Correct:

RECORDING SECRETARY