

MINUTES
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room No. 2
March 25, 2014 at 5:15 p.m.

Present: Chair: Councillor D. Murdock

Members: Kevin Brown, Harry Drage, Al-Nashir Charania,
Mary Haig-Brown, Hal Gibbard, Roberta Hesselgrave, Marie Vander
Heiden

Staff: Cory Manton, Urban Forestry, Horticulture and Natural Areas Manager;
Elizabeth van den Hengel, Committee Clerk

Regrets: Jude Coates

Guests: Ed Johnson, Chair, Farm Lands Trust, George Klima

MINUTES

MOVED by R. Hesselgrave and Seconded by M. Haig-Brown: "That the Minutes of the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee meeting held February 25, 2014 be adopted as amended."

CARRIED

FARMLANDS TRUST SOCIETY

The Chair introduced Mr. E. Johnson, Chair, Farmlands Trust. Mr. Johnson presented the Committee with an overview of the Farm Lands Trust Society and the following was noted:

- The Farmlands Trust Society (FLT) is a community-based organization for facilitating the preservation of Greater Victoria farmland and the enhancement of food security to benefit current and future generations based on ecological, economic, historical and socio-cultural values.
- Decline in local food production
- "Farmlessness" - due to high price of farmland
- Loss of farmland to development and estate properties
- Health and environmental challenges associated with industrial agriculture
- Threats to local biodiversity and agricultural capability
- Lack of whole farm planning and business planning
- FLT has been an active participant and supporter of many local agriculture and local food events.

Committee discussion occurred and the following was noted

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- Prospective farmers are matched to available farmland.
- Neumann Farm in Central Saanich is a recent acquisition. Currently the Municipality of Central Saanich has not finalized a Bylaw to allow for non-owner farmers to live on ALR land.

STRATEGIC PLAN INDICATORS

The Chair and Mr. A. Charania led a discussion around the Strategic Plan Indicators. Key Performance Indicators (KPI) used to benchmark environmental integrity in Saanich should follow the SMART criteria. KPI for the Environmental Integrity portion of the Strategic Plan (SP), were examined with SMART KPI criteria. A document (agenda item #5, attachment) was circulated to the committee for discussion and the following was noted:

- The SP is a sound document, but some improvement in the type of indicators could be considered.
- Urban Forestry with respect to canopy coverage is addressed but loss of biodiversity is not.
- An indicator should not be contradictory.
- Streams, stream health and shoreline function indicators could have higher targets.
- An indicator for storm-water management could be considered.
- A discussion of how indicators are chosen would be useful.
- Indicators are a bottom up approach, maybe taking a top-down approach would be more robust.
- The G14 sustainable report standard is difficult to execute, but is achievable.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE FIRE PREVENTION BYLAW REGARDING OIL TANKS

The Chair provided the committee with an update of the proposed amendments to the Fire Prevention Bylaw as they would pertain to oil tanks and the following was noted:

- Saanich will inform residents deemed at risk.
- A tank that has been idle for 24 months must be removed.
- Follow up inspections following the installation of all oil tanks.
- Renewal requirement would require the tank be re-inspected.

*** M. Vander Heiden left the meeting at 6:45 pm***

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS

The Manager of Environmental Services presented and the following was noted:

- Not as many brochures produced this year as online nominations are being encouraged.
- Committee members are encouraged to nominate and to spread the word.
- New for the 2014 Awards will be a slideshow.
- Staff will only accept completed forms.
- A special meeting is scheduled for May 2014 to review nominations.

Councillor Murdock commented:

- A committee member is invited to join the Chair and Mayor this year to read out the nominations.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE URBAN FORESTRY STRATEGY: TREE PRESERVATION BYLAW, OPERATIONS MANUAL AND COMPREHENSIVE TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

The Manager of Urban Forestry, Horticulture and Natural Areas gave the Committee a verbal update as to the implantation of the Urban Forestry Strategy. The following was noted:

- A new bylaw is being developed and is with the Municipal Solicitor. The new bylaw will be presented to Council for approval in the spring 2014.
- A communication plan is being formulated to help inform the public.
- The Operations Manual, which is a best practices guide is almost ready to be

- released.
- Soil requirements and how to sustain a tree after planting will be included in the Operations Manual.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is Tuesday, April 22, 2014.

Saanich Councillor Murdock, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary