

**MINUTES**  
**ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room No. 2

**April 28, 2015 at 5:15 p.m.**

Present: Councillor Dean Murdock (Chair), Al-Nashir Charania, Mary Haig-Brown, Harry Drage, Hal Gibbard, George Klima, Kevin Brown, Roberta Hesselgrave, Nalin Dhillon, Student Youth Council Representative

Staff: Adriane Pollard, Environmental Services Manager; Cory Manton, Urban Forestry, Horticulture and Natural Areas Manager; Tania Douglas, Senior Committee Clerk

Regrets: Jude Coates

Guests: Gillian Montgomery, Surfrider Foundation of Vancouver Island and Carol-Lynne Michaels; Larry Leyne; Pat and Griff Tripp

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The Chair advised that due to the new start time for Council meetings, he will have to excuse himself just before 7:00 p.m., and an alternate Chair can be appointed by members. He also moved item five (Microplastics) to the beginning of the agenda for the presenters' convenience.

**Minutes**

**MOVED by M. Haig-Brown and Seconded by K. Brown: "That the Minutes of the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee meeting held March 17, 2015, be adopted as amended."**

**CARRIED**

**MICROPLASTICS**

The Chair introduced Carol-Lynne Michaels and Gillian Montgomery, Chairperson, Surfrider Foundation Vancouver Island Chapter (SFVI), who presented information about plastics and micro-plastics pollution. The following was noted:

- Information was provided regarding SFVI programs including the Blue Water Task Force, Combing the Coast, and Rise Above Plastics programs. These programs include testing water, beach cleanup, and waste analysis and data collection.
- Information was provided about the Hold On To Your Butt and the Ban the Bag campaigns that are also organized by SFVI.
- In addition to larger portions of garbage, they are finding that microplastics and microbeads are a huge pollution problem.
- Samples of collected debris were circulated for information, along with nurdles (pre-production microplastic pellets that are melted into larger plastic products).
- Information is collected at all cleanups (at 100 metre transects for items larger than a quarter) and includes the amount of plastic, metal, glass, lumber, rubber, and cloth that is collected. Plastic is overwhelmingly prevalent at these cleanups.
- A goal is to educate the public on their consumption habits and available alternatives as microbeads can be found in cleansers, and fleece clothing sheds microfibers, etc.
- They would welcome the support of local governments, which could be in the form of policy change, plastic bag bans, funding etc. The City of Victoria is working on a draft Bylaw to this effect, and they have meetings scheduled with the Capital Regional District and with Synergy Enterprises.
- July 3<sup>rd</sup> is International Plastic Bag Free Day; businesses in support of this initiative will be highlighted on social media by Surfrider.

A discussion occurred and the following comments were noted:

- Saanich does recognize organizations for being green and have Environmental Awards in this regard.

- This committee has previously discussed a plastic bag ban; maybe this needs to come back to the table for more discussion.
- Change needs to start at the manufacturing level.
- It would be useful if the presenters could create a list summarizing the products containing offending plastics. This could be published in the newspaper for information.
- The suggestion was made that placing warning labels on shelves with products containing plastics may be a good way to raise awareness. Existing examples were noted: eg. Home Depot currently has signage surrounding banned pesticides and some grocery retailers label eggs by cage-raised hens versus cage-free.
- It was suggested that Lana Popham may be a good person to approach as a resource.

Ms. Michaels and Ms. Montgomery were thanked for their presentation.

## **DRAFT NOXIOUS WEEDS BYLAW**

The Manager of Environmental Services presented information regarding the proposed Invasive Species Bylaw which is to replace the Noxious Weeds Bylaw of 1906. The following was noted:

- The proposed Bylaw is much more defined than the previous Bylaw.
- Two years of public process was undertaken in preparing this Bylaw. Highlights of public input was provided.
- Included in the new Bylaw are schedules that list plants banned from trading, sale or propagation, invasive animals, control or removal of ivy and other invasive plants.
- Complaints and reporting is included, and a maximum of three complaints per year per household will be received by the District.
- Education will be the first step in approaching a residence that is not in compliance with the Bylaw. A Best Management Practices will be provided as well.
- Saanich may offer assistance (eg. free disposal; bins to drop invasive plants into; a municipal pick-up day). In some cases residents may elect for staff to complete the work for them at their own cost.
- Information was provided about the good neighbour provision within the Bylaw.
- It takes a few years to fully eradicate an invasive plant. Some invasives can be composted however seeds may not be destroyed and will continue to spread.
- Provincial assistance is unlikely unless a province-wide eradication program has been mandated.
- Stopping the sale and trade of invasive plants is a high priority for residents, based on the input received.
- A discussion regarding ground cover, nature-scaping, and using ivy as building cover occurred. It was noted that ivy is on the 'control' list, not on the 'eradicate' list.
- A timeline was provided to committee members; there will be at least a six-month delay in adopting the bylaw in order for staff to prepare. The report to Council will include budget information for an education/eradication program.

Committee members suggested that in order to receive Council's support for materials and resource requests, staff include cost information on achieving the targets for the various programs within the Bylaw.

Members were encouraged to review the draft materials and prepare comments for discussion at the next meeting or send them directly to the Manager of Environmental Services.

\*\*\* Councillor Murdock excused himself from the meeting at 6:57 p.m. Committee consensus was that Mary Haig-Brown Chair the remainder of the meeting. \*\*\*

## **ESA MAPPING INITIATIVE**

The Manager of Environmental Services provided information regarding the third phase of the ESA Mapping initiative, and noted that this work will likely be included in the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the ESA Atlas.

The following was noted:

- Phase 1 of the project (2011-2013) was described: it included creating a Technical Advisory Group, setting criteria, standards and priorities with the given resources, and the hiring of a Biologist who undertook field work. A land owner contact program was also undertaken to obtain permission to access private lands for the field work.
- The results of Phase 1 and 2 were given, which recommended new sensitive ecosystems, isolated watercourses/wetlands, wildlife and veteran tree sites, old growth forests, and undeveloped rights of way.
- The results of the landowner contact was 43% giving permission to access private property, 14% denial of access and 44% not responding to the request for access. Strata buildings were counted as one landowner.
- An explanation was given about the criteria for site evaluation, which includes factors of the ecological integrity of areas as well as the function and biodiversity values of areas.
- The project timeline for Phase 3 and 4 (2014-2016) was given and includes using aerial photo analysis and LiDAR technology to identify sensitive areas where landowners did not give permission to access lands; applying for federal grants, and publishing results so far. It was noted that Phase 3 of the project was not originally anticipated.
- Road Rights-of-Way are in various locations in order to avoid land-locking parcels. Sometimes Council can close these ROWs if it is felt they are not needed.
- Staff will have to analyze the data; the potential uses of data were presented.
- It will be a very long time before any appropriate areas will be recommended for inclusion in the EDPA or the SDPA. The public needs to receive and consider the information first.

Staff will present Phase 4 results after its completion in the future. Committee members commended staff on the work done on this project and suggested that it may be worthwhile to re-approach the non-responsive landowners for the next phase as there may be more interest considering the results found to date.

## **ANNUAL ENA AWARDS**

This item will be discussed at the June 2015 meeting; at this time the information about the successful nominees is confidential.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for, May 26, 2015.

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Councillor Murdock, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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Committee Secretary