

MINUTES
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room No. 2
October 18, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Councillor Leif Wergeland (Chair), Hal Gibbard, Kevin Brown, Mary Haig-Brown, Jude Coates, Al-Nashir Charania, George Klima, Harry Drage

Staff: Adriane Pollard, Manager of Environmental Services; Rebecca Newlove, Sustainability Manager; Becky Goodall, Parks Planner Designer; Elizabeth van den Hengel, Committee Clerk

Regrets: Roberta Hesselgrave

Guests: Darrel Wick, Friends of Mt. Douglas Park Society; Ed Weibe, Friends of Mt. Douglas Park Society; Graham Shorthill, Friends of Mt. Douglas Park Society

MINUTES

MOVED by M. Haig-Brown and Seconded by K. Brown: "That the Minutes of the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee meeting held September 20, 2017 be adopted."

CARRIED

FRIENDS OF MOUNT DOUGLAS PARK-PARK PLAN 3RD EDITION

D. Wick presented the Committee with the Friends of Mount Douglas Park-Park Plan (3rd edition), and the following comments were noted:

- There is a need for a park ambassador to facilitate user experience at the Park.
- The volunteer Park Ambassadors would help maintain the park and educate the public about issues associated with off-trail adventures, smoking and picking vegetation.
- Many tourists visit Mount Douglas Park and the opportunity to interact with out of town visitors would be beneficial for the municipality.
- Saanich Parks and the Friends of Mount Douglas Park will meet to discuss the possibility of creating the Park Ambassador program for the Park.
- The Park Ambassadors would be in the Park ideally 7 days a week at random times.
- Optimum number of volunteers for the Park Ambassador Program is thought to be 6-12 volunteers.
- Important to educate the volunteers to speak in affirmative language.
- Parks would assist in training of the volunteers.

MOTION: Moved by J. Coates and Seconded by K. Brown: "That the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee recommend that Council ask staff to involve key stakeholders, including the Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society, to develop a proposal for a Park Ambassador Program for Mount Douglas Park to run as a pilot project starting the summer of 2018. The proposal should include information about resources required, rollout timeline and measure of success."

CARRIED

**** A. C. arrived at 5:55 pm****

SIGNIFICANT TREE UPDATE

The Manager of Community Development and Business Systems provided an update on Significant Trees. The following highlights are noted:

- A request for significant tree designation for an Oak Tree at 1585 Rowan Street has been received by Saanich Parks.
- Saanich Parks is recommending the Oak Tree at 1585 be accepted into the Significant Tree Program.
- The report recommending the Oak Tree at 1585 Rowan Street be accepted into the Significant Tree Program will be circulated to the Committee.
- An updated draft of the Significant Tree Tour Guide was introduced to Committee Members.

CRD MODEL BYLAW REGARDING PLASTIC BAG USE

The Chair and the Manager of Environmental Services facilitated a discussion on banning single use plastic bags. The following highlights are noted:

- Saanich is restricted in how to limit/control single use plastic bags.
- Oceans are federally governed.
- Saanich has influence with plastics in areas such as parks and stormwater with the ability to create bylaws.
- Saanich Operations could have a look at the impact single use plastic bags have on the Municipality.
- Single use plastic bags have an impact in numerous areas to varying degrees.
- Conversation with the City of Victoria to discuss what steps and issues The City of Victoria has identified.
- Research on other communities/areas that have implemented a ban on single use plastic bags should be done.
- CRD has no jurisdiction on business. Saanich should investigate how the municipality could ban the use of single use plastic bags in Saanich businesses.
- It would be preferable to have a cross province ban on the single use plastic bag.

Committee discussion occurred and the following comments were noted:

- A Saanich bylaw to ban single use plastic bags would require provincial approval.
- How would a ban on single use plastic bags be enforced?
- Some bylaws become societal norms.
- The CRD bylaw banning single use plastic bags needs numerous clarifications.
- Public needs to be educated about a potential bylaw banning the single use plastic bag.
- “Biodegradable” plastics do not fully degrade.
- Biodegradable simply means that the substance degrades more quickly than a non-biodegradable substance, but the rate of degrading can be very minimal.
- Banning single use plastic bags is a provincial matter.
- Leaving the banning of single use plastic bags to the province to deal with may not be ideal as the province can be slow to respond on some issues.
- If Saanich and The City of Victoria ban the single use plastic bag this two municipalities comprise the majority of the CRD.

- Consider that there may be push back from businesses that lose revenue because of not being able to charge for single use plastic bags.
- Education of the business community and the general public could be an important step in general acceptance of the importance of banning single use plastic bags.

ENA AWARD GUIDELINES

The Chair and the Manager of Environmental Services facilitated a discussion on updating the guidelines for the ENA Awards. The following highlights are noted:

- A letter could be sent to Community Associations and other community groups requesting they consider forwarding nominees.
- Yearly award event to keep the issue of environmental stewardship top of mind.
- Allowing more time to review the candidates would be helpful to the adjudicators.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is scheduled for November 15, 2017.

Councillor Wergeland, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary