

MINUTES
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room #2

October 16, 2019 at 6:04 p.m.

Present: Chair: Councillor Rebecca Mersereau

Members: Kevin Brown, Al-Nashir Charania, Ryan Senechal and Carmel Thomson.

Staff: Adriane Pollard, Manager of Environmental Services; and, Jeff Keays, Committee Clerk

Regrets: Alfred Birch, Kyle Empringham and George Klima

MINUTES

MOVED by K. Brown and Seconded by A. Charania “That the minutes of the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee meeting held September 17, 2019, be adopted as amended.”

CHAIR’S REMARKS

The Chair reminded the members that this was the second-to-last meeting of the term, before providing a brief overview of the agenda and updates on related Council activities. The following was noted:

- The University of Victoria’s Environmental Law Centre will attend and present at the November meeting.
- Lesley Hatch and Ben Bowker from Engineering (Storm and Waste Water) will also be in attendance and present on the District’s initiatives and programs.
- The CRD Elk/Beaver Lake Project Coordinator will be back to provide the committee with a status update on the project.
- The Mayor’s Working Group on Advisory Committee’s will be submitting their report to Council in October.
- The review stems from a recommendation in the Governance Review Committee.
- The previous Council did not action the GRC recommendations; however, several Councillor’s expressed interest in reviewing the recommendations, and resulting in the working group.
- There are no further updates on the Panama Flats.

ENA AWARDS GUIDELINES & RECEPTION WRAP UP

The Manager of Environmental Services provided the committee with an overview of Environmental Awards Guidelines process and the proposed amendments as presented in the September 17, 2019 draft document.

The following was noted:

- These guidelines were typically reviewed during the committee’s nomination review meeting.
- The guidelines should be considered in open session of the committee.
- There are a number of proposed amendments, which are highlighted in yellow.

The Clerk noted that the budget for the awards reception was lower than previous years; however, the photography charges were higher due to the length of the event.

Committee review of the proposed amendments followed. The following was noted:

MOTION

MOVED by A. Charania and Seconded by C. Thomson, “That the Environmental and Natural Areas Advisory recommend that the Draft Saanich Environmental Award Guidelines be amended to include the following recommendations:

- A. Recommendation 1: Add ‘These guidelines are intended to be a dynamic document which is reviewed annually. The Environment and Natural Areas Committee reserve the right to adjust the guidelines as needed’ under the new heading Purpose; and,**
- B. Recommendation 3: Insert ‘including an environmental business’ to Section 2 – Award Eligibility, No. 7; and,**
- C. Recommendation 4A: Insert ‘individual/group/school initiative’ to Section – 2 Award Eligibility, No. 11; and,**
- D. Recommendation 4B: Insert ‘Teachers can play a mentoring role only’ into Section 2 – Award Eligibility, No. 11; and,**
- E. Recommendation 6: Delete ‘Econews’ from Section 4 – Call for Nominations/Advertising, No. 2; and,**
- F. Recommendation 7A: Add ‘The award winner to be informed via letter and that no further communication occur until after the Council agenda containing the awards package is published’ to Section 5 – Selection Process; and,**
- G. Recommendation 8: Insert – ‘successful’ into Section 7 – Awards Presentation, No. 3.**
- H. Recommendation 9: Add ‘Attend reception if possible’ to Section 10 – Responsibilities.”**

CARRIED

STREAMSIDE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA ATLAS AMENDMENTS & PROCESS

The Manager of Environmental Services gave a presentation on the recommended amendments to the Streamside Development Permit Area (SDPA) Atlas. The following highlights are noted:

- The SDPA process requires Streamside Development Permits to be issued to for development activities within 30 m of the high watermark for all identified streams
- The Atlas is used to identify fisheries sensitive streams and specifies the Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area (SPEA), or riparian setbacks, required to ensure healthy and productive fish habitats.
- A Qualified Environmental (QEP) undertakes a field assessment of the subject property/area to determine if it is fish bearing. Their findings are then submitted to Saanich in a report format.
- Staff analyze the findings of the QEP and bring forward a report and recommendation to Council.
- Environmental Services staff visited the all of the affected properties

- The forthcoming report to Council recommends the following amendments to the SDPA:
 1. **Plate 1/11:** **Bowker Creek** (Reduce SPEA from 15m to 10m)
 2. **Plate 2/39:** **Goward Springs Creek** (Remove non-existing tributary, change boundary of wetland to reflect assessment of the high water mark.
 3. **Plate 3/44:** **Wray Creek** (remove 3 ditches that were either misidentified or no longer exist)
 4. **Plate 4/45:** **Revans Creek** (Replace stream and 10m setback with a watercourse based on the reach being intertidal.

Due to a network outage the committee was not able review the Manager of Environmental Services’ presentation; accordingly, they committee felt that they did not have enough information to consider an endorsement of the proposed amendments.

Committee previously endorsed the proposed amendments (as noted above) for items 1, 2 and 3 as noted above at the February 21, 2018 meeting.

UPDATES

The committee received brief updates on the following items:

- Climate Action Plan
- Uptown Douglas Corridor Study
- Natural Saanich

The following was noted:

- Council considered the Climate Emergency Declaration Accelerated Actions at their September 30, 2019 meetings
- Council approved a number of accelerated actions including:
 - Home Energy Retrofit Municipal Funding Program
 - EV Requirements for new buildings
 - Establishment of Climate Action Reserve Fund
 - Double the rate of corporate tree planting
- The Uptown Douglas Corridor Study is available on Saanich.ca
- A link to the plan was embedded in the agenda package.
- Council will consider a revised draft upon the conclusion of the public engagement/feedback process. It is anticipated that this will come forward in Early 2020.
- Council will receive 3 reports regarding Natural Saanich at their October 29, 2019 meeting, including:
 - "Natural Saanich" Technical Committee – Draft Terms of Reference
 - "Natural Saanich" Environmental Policy Framework - Expedited Work Plan
 - "Natural Saanich" Proposed Interim Measures - Implications, Administrative Costs, and Likely Effectiveness

COMMITTEE ROUNDTABLE

The Chair invited committee discussion on the Amphibian Migration item that was brought forward by member C. Thomson.

Member C. Thomson provided the committee with a brief overview of the matter. The following was highlighted:

- The issues pertains to mitigating the road deaths of migrating amphibians.
- The matter stems from engineering's summer works on Prospect Lake Rd.
- There were concerns that a previous study undertaken by Habitat Acquisition Trust with regard to areas of highly concentrated amphibian road deaths was not considered during the departments design phase.
- Community members advocated for the appropriate infrastructure to mitigate these deaths after the start of construction.
- The community felt that they were not adequately consulted along the way, and that there was a missed opportunity.
- Staff acquiesced; however, the culverts that were installed by the contractor were not the correct type. The appropriate material was not readily available, which in turn would have created further delay in the project completion.
- The culverts that were installed were not oriented in the appropriate manner.
- The community learned that earlier engagement and review of planned projects is necessary to ensure community input.

Committee discussion ensued, the following was noted:

- The learning curve associated to construction projects in environmental sensitive areas are quite steep.
- How can we improve this process, and ensure that local voices are heard going forward

The meeting adjourned 8:22 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is scheduled for November 20, 2019

Councillor Mersereau, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary