

NWEP Minutes

December 10, 2008

Meeting called to order @ 6:30pm

Introduction – 17 people in attendance

Review of minutes

- No issues found, minutes accepted

Guest Speaker: *Jennifer Lukianchuk, City of New Westminster Environmental Coordinator*

Jennifer gave an update of what she's been up to over the past year at the city

- Metro Vancouver has rolled out some Christmas messaging, "Give the gift, not the garbage" about having a low waste Christmas
 - The city is using this messaging and has placed MV's tips for a green Christmas
- Metro Vancouver is distributing stickers for dumpsters or garbage room doors reminding people of banned materials, what not to put in. Very pretty stickers.
- NW Corporate GHG reduction plan
 - Plan to reduce City's GHG emissions by 15% by 2017
 - Largest areas for reduction are fleet and buildings
 - First initiatives are underway, such as switching to LED lights at Canada Games pool, all part of a long term plan
 - Targets set by a consultant that looked at the City's baseline emissions and through an analysis of facilities to determine what was feasible within the City's means
 - High school is not included; it's not under the City's jurisdiction
 - MV did a waste assessment of the high school recent to try and improve their recycling and waste reduction
 - Multi-use facility was included in the City's GHG reduction predictions
- Anti-idling by-law and outreach
 - By-law was adopted on Oct 20th, goes in to effect 6 months later (approximately Earth Day)
 - By-law is very education oriented; the education campaign will begin shortly, working with NWEP
 - After a meeting with the City, NWEP, and Province anti-idling ambassador a plan was developed one who will take on which parts of the education campaign
 - Three parts of the campaign: corporate, schools, public outreach
 - Brigitte is working on school part, she's already met with the NWSS environmental club
 - Public messaging will begin around February
 - Subsidized signage is available from the province and free signs for schools
 - City is deciding how many signs to purchase and where to put them based on surveys and budget
- City had an environmental poster contest for grade 6 & 7s

- This year's theme will likely be energy, save today and tomorrow
- Will likely end on Earth Day this year
- Pesticide by-law has gone to the Environment Advisory Committee
 - City lawyer has reviewed it and signed off on a version to go to council in January
 - Bigger question is, what does the public outreach look like to encourage sustainable landscaping practices
- Rivers Day will be September 27th, Jennifer has been asked to have a City of New Westminster event at Rivers Day
 - Bird walks, nature walks, other possible ideas are welcome
 - Lingering questions, the City we want to link with (Rivershed BC? Fraser River Discovery Centre? Etc) for this event

Non-profit Society

- Why do we need this?
- (from Tristan) it would help our group achieve financial support
- Next step would have a meeting in January to put the documentation and thoughts in place for forming a society
- Results of this sub-committee meeting would then come back to the next NWEF meeting
- January 29th for the sub-committee, likely at the library

Review and Looking Ahead

Advocacy

- NW Station Skytrain crosswalk
- WTE in Sapperton
- Promoting the Farmer's Market
- Supported Cosmetic Pesticide Ban with the Canadian Cancer Society
- Supporting Anti-idling by-law
- Published all-candidates survey during civic election
- Members went to an anti-Gateway rally in Surrey

Outreach Events

- Volunteer Fair in January
- Table at NDP SPP event at the Justice Institute
- Gardening for a Better World at the Library, composting presentations
- Farmer's Market
- (get rest for Andrew)
- Had Jonathan Cote attend a meeting talking about GAP

Community Events

- E-waste event at high school

- Sustainability picnic in Hume Park
- (get rest from Andrew)

Volunteer Coordinator

- Tristan nominated Brigitte to be a volunteer coordinator for event
- Brigitte accepted 😊

Discussion of other ideas/issues

Anti-idling by-law implantation and education (Brigitte)

- Doing anti-idling blitz
- Throughout the city, have volunteers blanket the city in a short span education drivers spotted idling
- Brigitte will be talking to the elementary schools about idling

Waste and recycling (Brigitte, Peter)

- A large percentage of commercial operations don't recycling, plastics, cardboard, etc are put straight in to the waste stream
- This would be municipal jurisdiction, no municipality in MV has any by-law mandating residents or businesses must recycle
- Garbage chutes, should they be legal since most people don't recycle in buildings with chutes

Organics (Matt Lorenzi)

- Mirror PoCo's organic waste pickup
- Work with city to encourage organic waste pickup in multi-family buildings
- How about starting with businesses? There's a lot of waste there, coffee grinds, etc
- How about a resource recovery centre?

Air quality (Gavin)

- Increase in wood burning stoves, burning plastics, etc
- Metro Vancouver has a wood burning stove reduction program, but by-laws aren't really enforceable
- This creates a serious health hazard in typically residential neighbourhoods
- MV is conducting a campaign on wood burning stoves and is encouraging residents to switch to more efficient stoves

Bus Stop Shelter (Matt)

- City has renewed contract for bus shelters and is currently compiling a list for expanded location
- Design of shelters, will they be like Vancouver? Wind, rain and sun
- In front of the hospital, shade for sun?
- Is there a bus shelter budget? Is it sufficient?

High School sustainability issues (Brigitte)

- Bottled water in the high school, getting it out and getting fountains reactivated (with Andrew Murray)
- Water taste-test at the school?

City Park Land (Tristan)

- Primary concern right now is "Save Grimston Park" to protect park from becoming a school
- NW has a significantly lower park space per capita than other municipalities
- Protecting and enhancing park space in the city is a sustainability issue

City Electric Bills via Email (Brigitte)

- Who in the city should we talk to about this issue?
- Terason does, it, BC Hydro does, why can't the city?
- Bills on website?
- Check with the City Utility Commission

Quarterly Challenge (Matt)

- Restart quarterly challenges to council
- Fun challenges to council on short term doable issues

Heritage Density (Martin)

- High rises aren't the only form of density
- Pushing for smaller scale medium-density spread throughout the city instead of just towers
- Infill housing, laneway housing
- Mole Hill development in Vancouver's Westend is a good example of densification that better suits existing neighbourhood

Environmental Expo (Martin)

- An expo that gets people out and shows them how to do things, composting, recycling techniques, etc
- Invite businesses that offer services locally
- More focused theme, ie. Landscaping, avoiding use of pesticides, etc
- Other theme ideas: Saving money by more environmentally friendly, "How to save money through environmental practice"
- "Save green being green"
- The city might contribute to this in some way

Food charter for New Westminster (David)

- With twin problem of global warming and peak oil, one of the big challenges will be feeding ourselves
- One thing to make a sustainable city is being able to feed oneself
- Vancouver has a Food Charter adopted in 2007
- How could we create a sustainable food system in NW
- Community gardens
- Partnering neighbours who have space but no desire to garden with those who want to garden
- SPEC has done a lot of work in this area and is willing to offer resources

- SPEC has developed a seminar on container gardening
- NW electric utility commission does not allow solar power to be sold back to the grid, **unlike** BC Hydro

Action Items

- Meeting for society formation in January
- Brigitte will act as volunteer coordinator
- Meeting with Jennifer on anti-idling next steps in January

Conclusion – 8:40pm