

## **NWEP Minutes**

**May 1, 2007**

**Meeting called to order @7:00pm**

### **Introduction – 17 people in attendance**

Review of items touched on in previous minutes; please see previous minutes for further details

### **Sub-committee presentations:**

#### **Transportation**

- Main tangible development is Skytrain station development
  - Bus stops were moved across the street and to a dark alley a block away, causing jaywalking
  - City solution was to erect a barrier; however this doesn't solve the underlying problem of stop location
  - Seems contrary for a city that wants to promote pedestrian walkability
  - Matt L. Presented to city council about the problem, city council directed staff to find solutions
  - Staff's #1 recommendation was for a barrier
  - All but one council rejected this proposal
  - NWEP would like to do pedestrian counts to give hard figures on usage of the street should the barrier idea resurface
  - Marion sent a letter to staff the bulk of people use the 106, 112 and the city should do a count themselves
  - Another issue raised by Marion was the stop in front of the police station has been removed due to the reroute; the first stop is by city hall
  - The city has said two weeks ago there would be an open house about the 5 suggested solutions within 2 weeks; we have yet to hear about this open house
  - NWEP should seek the Construction Management Plan from the city for the project
  
- Queue jumper lanes on the Queensborough lanes in limbo right now
  - Andrew is waiting for some ridership numbers from Translink

**Action Item:** *Do passenger counts at NW Station*

#### **Energy**

- Peter has been trying to build a list of links, organizing by companies, types of solutions, productions available
  - The hope is to create a community resource on solutions and community partners
  
- Marshall presented that the conservation side of "E" would be the easiest to address first
  - There are government rebate programs available to help in this effort

- The One Day Vancouver website has a lot of resources about companies, types of retrofits that could be done
- Testing your house for drafts, low flow shower heads, etc
- EnerGuide which was axed, but a new, lesser program has been put in place, but still could create incentives for people to retrofit their houses
  
- Create a travelling presentation that could be taken to groups (RAs, school groups, etc) about possible energy conservation measures, programs available, etc
  
- A suggestion was made to lobby the city to change from New Westminister Electrical to New Westminister Energy, and change their mandate to get in to more than just electrical distribution
  - Generating electricity through sustainable means, vertical windmills,
  - Challenge council to implement the Merton Rule within 10 years, 10% of all energy must be created within a building
  
- Smarter Buildings Alliance (Toronto)
  - They looked at your electrical bill
  - They put in energy efficiency measures in to the building
  - They keep your bill and continue to charge you at the original rate while you have a lower energy footprint
  - Once the cost of the retrofit was paid off, your energy bill would drop
  
- Peter has talked to NWEF about getting joint bags with both our logos
  - He has found a company which will supply hemp bags for \$4 a piece

**Action Item:** *To sift through the information that's out there and put together a relevant presentation to give the residents and businesses of New Westminister*

## **Agriculture**

- NW Library Gardening for a better world event
  - NWEF presented on conventional composting (Scott), worm composting (Beth & Matt Lorenzi), and the possible municipal composting programs (Matthew Laird)
  - Well attended, packed room
  
- Matt Lorenzi was looking in to strata composting issues
  - A challenge to get condos to compost until a regional ban on organic waste is put in place
  
- NW commercial businesses, what is their organic and cardboard recycling
  - Currently things like cardboard, which are a banned item, are being put in the solid waste stream

- GVRD currently has no inspectors who enforce bans on items like cardboard in regional dumpsters
- Not only would large scale composting save on garbage management costs, it would create jobs in the region
  
- Gavin has taken on the idea of an cosmetic pesticide ban by-law
  - Burnaby is looking to enact such a law, phasing it in over a year
  - Ashley, with the Canadian Cancer Society, has also been active in this regard and has been communicating with Gavin
  - Ontario has put in a province wide ban
  - Home Depot has stopped selling cosmetic pesticides
  - A recent study connecting pesticides to Parkinson Disease, another good reason to push for a ban
  - Educating the public about the matter is an important first step, a presentation with the Cancer Society, the Burnaby group pushing it
  - Embarrass council to take action
  
- Vladimir presented a sample anti-idling by-law to the Environmental Advisory Committee
  - Vlad's presentation was extensive, showing examples from other municipalities, hard research data, top notch work
  - The committee accepted the recommendation and it will be taken to council to consider implementing such a by-law
  
- Royal City Farmer's Market is kicking off at the beginning June 26<sup>th</sup>
  - NWEF will have a booth at the event to inform visitors about issues like worm composting
  - RCFM has a fundraiser at Brooklyn Pub on Thursday, June 12th, 6pm until closing; \$20 gets you a beer and a burger ([www.rcfm.ca](http://www.rcfm.ca))

**Action Item:** *Begin assessing opportunities for community gardens*

**Action Item:** *Gavin is working with Ashley from the Cancer Society to make a sample cosmetic pesticide by-law for the city*

## **General Discussion**

### **Recent NWEF Events**

#### **Sapperton Invasive Species Removal**

- Members attended and spent the day removing blackberry bushes and planted trees

#### **Queensweep**

- Members attended and helped pick up garbage in Queensborough
- Did outreach with the community the at the BBQ afterwards

## **Metro Vancouver Solid Waste Management**

- Peter and Marshall attended this event, it's a complex issue with a lot of emotion involved
- A suggestion to draft a response from NWEF about issues such as incinerators
- Concerns locally about particulate matter, trucks, how do we address these concerns and help build consensus?
- Any for-profit facility could become a hungry hog, there would be an incentive to incinerate more waste rather than reduce it, since this creates revenue
- Efforts must be made to ensure reduce and recycle are at the top of the priority and all these efforts aren't undone by a "burn everything, let's make money!" attitude
- Concerns about traffic, there are rail lines directly adjacent to the Canfor site
- Energy group could take this on and work on a well informed response
- Why not use rapid transit lines at night for things like waste transfer, it's done in some European cities, better use of rail capacity

*Action item: Energy group will develop a position paper on waste to energy*

## **Sustainability Saturday**

- E-waste event at high school, NWEF members attended and assisted at this event

## **Future Events**

### **A night time film event**

- Screen sustainability related films in a public open space
- David Maidman is investigating

### **Have a sustainability policy forum near a playground**

- Idea to have it near a playground, so kids can play while the adults discuss sustainability matters, and the parents are within earshot
- "Bring your top 4 issues in the city" and have an open discussion
- Would get parents involved who are normally too busy with young children to get involved
- Gets families out of the house, meeting people in the community
- Are there any parks department programs in the summer that we could get involved with to create an environmental theme?
- Show the kids a worm composter, mmm, worms

## **Organization Structure**

- Ken has been looking in to how to become a society, and discuss the pros, cons, etc
- There is a step by step guide, including all the forms available from the province

*Pro:*

- Allow us to be more organized
- Allow us to make a safeguard against anyone who wants to take over the organization
- Creates more credibility within and outside the group
- If you want to get a grant from the City, you must be an incorporated society

*Con:*

- There is a burden for paperwork and meetings
- May stifle ideas with organizational and meeting structure requirements
- Small financial cost (\$150) to register each year

*Other Facts:*

- Easy to do, can do in about a month
- First do a name registry, ensure the name is available
- Register the name (\$30 cost)
- Must create a constitution and by-laws, register those with the province, pay to register those (\$100)
- Must have an AGM once a year
- Rules about how you advertise the meetings
- Sample by-laws and constitution are available from the government

**Meeting adjourned @8:55pm because the library closed**