



City of Port Moody

Minutes

Environmental Protection Committee

Minutes of the electronic meeting of the Environmental Protection Committee held on Monday, October 19, 2020 via Zoom.

Present

Councillor Amy Lubik, Chair
Elaine Golds (joined at 7:16pm)
Andrew MacLellan
Gregory Pepler
Damian Regan
Jutta Rickers-Haunerland
Connie Smith
Judy Taylor-Atkinson

Absent

Councillor Meghan Lahti, Vice-Chair
Margaret Birch (Regrets)
Javney Mohr (Regrets)

In Attendance

Karen Devitt – Environmental Coordinator
Philip Lo – Committee Coordinator
Julie Pavey-Tomlinson – Director of Environment and Parks

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:08pm.

2. Adoption of Minutes

Minutes

2.1 EPC20/018

Moved, seconded, and CARRIED

THAT the minutes of the Environmental Protection Committee meeting held on Monday, September 21, 2020 be adopted.

3. Unfinished Business

4. New Business

**Environmentally
Sensitive Areas (ESA)
Strategy Update**

4.3 Committee member Damian Regan expressed concerns with the ESA Strategy update, which was considered and endorsed at the Committee's September 21, 2020 meeting, noting the following:

- the revised mapping of entire neighbourhoods is done with a broad brush, with exaggerated distances;
- the revised map is more accurate in some areas, but incorrect in other areas, and includes some areas outside of the City's jurisdiction;
- the proposed map requires more revision before it can be released for public review;
- there are many onerous restrictions proposed in the update which may be unnecessary due to the current state of harmony with nature, and which are likely to negatively impact property values;
- there are redundancies in the update, due to existing provincial and federal regulations;
- this may not be a good time to introduce obstacles to development;
- the City should consider grandfathering for Alderside Road residents;
- the objective of the strategy update is unclear, as most lots in these areas are already developed;
- the strategy update could be costly for impacted residents; and
- the City should stop work on the ESA update, and rely on the current OCP until more accurate mapping is available.

Staff noted the following:

- the update to the existing strategy reflects the City's current landscape with accurate mapping, which has been done using LiDAR and verified by Diamondhead Consulting;
- the update is intended to align with changes to provincial and federal regulations since 2003 as well as the Zoning Bylaw, which was updated in 2018;
- more accurate mapping provides clarity on Zoning Bylaw setbacks with regards to riparian areas;
- an assessment area is not the same as a setback, and is used as a flagging tool for staff to determine what level of guidelines is required, depending on the scope and scale of the development;
- assessment areas are in existing, developed areas that are located adjacent to ESAs, as work in these areas could impact the ESAs;
- development can still occur in these areas with professional guidance through a Qualified Environmental Professional, and provide opportunities for shorelines and ESA to be protected or restored;
- a letter was sent out to property owners which includes a reference to the proposed tiered approach;

- the intent of the new Development Permit guidelines is to recognize that upland development can have impact on the shoreline; and
- the City aims to develop a strategy which can consistently flag properties to reduce encroachments into ESAs over time, and to protect and restore ESAs.

The Committee noted the following in discussion:

*Amended by resolution
EPC20/020*

- concerns were expressed regarding unofficial information about the ESA updates circulating in the community; there is an email circulating in the community which makes assumptions about the ESA updates that may not be accurate;
- the City can provide accurate information on “what the ESA Strategy update means to you”, similar to New Westminster’s approach to introducing its Tree Protection Bylaw; and
- the update is for the best interest of the environment; however, there are ambiguities that need to be clarified.

Staff noted the following:

- an FAQ about the update is being prepared;
- information included in the letter sent to property owners about the ESA update can be posted on the City’s website;
- contact staff for any mapping inaccuracies; particular features on the map can be confirmed via field work.

The Blue Communities Plan

4.1 Presentation: Environmental Coordinator

Staff gave a presentation on the Blue Communities campaign, noting the following:

- Council of Canadians initiated the Blue Communities campaign in 2009, focusing on water and sanitation as human rights, and it is now a global initiative;
- the campaign includes a community-based approach, which encourages local governments to: recognize human rights to water and sanitation; ban the sale of bottled water at municipal facilities and events; and promote publicly financed and owned water and wastewater services;
- Canada recognized water and sanitation as a human right in 2012;
- some Canadian Blue Communities include Vancouver, Victoria, Burnaby, Nanaimo, and Montreal;
- learnings from other Blue Communities include the challenge of phasing out of bottled water at facilities and replacing water fountain standards to include bottle refilling;
- plastic bottled water is currently available for sale at the Recreation Complex and the Inlet Theatre;

- the City can advocate to the federal and provincial governments to enshrine the right to clean water into legislation; and
- the City had prior initiatives to promote the consumption of tap water, and had also replaced many water fountains to include water bottle refilling stations.

The Committee noted the following in discussion:

- this initiative is relevant to First Nations that do not have access to clean water;
- Victoria continues to discharge effluent into coastal waters;
- this initiative could go against the Committee's previous resolution to retain the sale of bottled water at the Recreation Complex; and
- people could get used to bringing their own water bottles, similar to reusable bags.

Karen Devitt left the meeting at this point and did not return.

Urban Forest Management Strategy

4.2 Presentation: Director of Environment and Parks

Staff gave a presentation on the Urban Forest Management Strategy, noting the following:

- the City is currently at the early stages of strategy development, and will issue an RFP for a consultant to be involved in the work;
- the protection of greenspaces and urban forest have been priorities in the City's public consultation in the past;
- the City currently has two full-time arborist on staff;
- there are approximately 5,500 street trees in Port Moody (per 2012 inventory), worth \$3.6 million in replacement value at \$600 per tree;
- there is a trend in local governments to place financial value on ecological services provided by forests in the area, which is currently estimated to be between \$11.7 million and \$48 million, based on estimates per hectares using 2017 Canadian data;
- every tree at each stage of its life cycle has a role in the ecosystem, and can provide habitat for wildlife;
- the urban tree canopy can provide natural stormwater management; field work in the North Shore using 60 stations found that douglas fir intercepts 40% of rainwater, and western red cedar intercepts 66%;
- the strategy includes the development of a community vision of what the urban forest should look like far into the future, recognizing that trees have a much longer life cycle than humans;
- the strategy would include publicly and privately owned trees and vegetation in the urban area;
- the urban forest management strategy would be considered a higher level plan in line with the Climate

Action Plan, ESA strategy, and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan;

- the development of a comprehensive strategy is needed to implement best management practices, and to ensure that policies and bylaws meet the goals of the community;
- the City has a corporate policy for tree management on City property, to protect and retain trees;
- the Climate Action Plan has two objectives related to urban forest management strategy, to help with mitigation and adaptation by providing carbon storage and sequestration, natural shading and cooling, and improving air quality;
- Metro Vancouver developed the urban forest adaptation initiative in 2016/2017, including an adaptation framework for trees species selection, planting, and management; a design guidebook was issued to maximize climate adaptation benefits with trees;
- the Community Wildfire Protection Plan managed by Port Moody Fire and Rescue provides a framework to review and assess areas of identified high fire risk within the City, and is part of maintaining forest health; the plan protects homes from forest fires, but also protects the forest from house fires;
- the City's tree canopy cover has decreased by 10% between 1999 and 2018, but remains stable in parks and protected ESAs;
- the strategy is expected to include considerations for tree retention and removal plans in development projects to minimize tree loss;
- the average canopy coverage in Metro Vancouver's Urban Containment Boundary was assessed for member municipalities at an average of 54%; Port Moody is at 53%; and
- the strategy components typically included in urban forest management strategies or plans include: land cover and canopy cover analysis, urban forest report card, public engagement; action plans and recommendations.

Staff noted the following in response to Committee questions:

- Council had passed a resolution to update the Tree Protection Bylaw in February 2020, which the Planning department is taking the lead on; other departments are also involved and are working together;
- ecological services and benefits can be quantified using recent studies and existing data for the area as a basis, and connecting it to natural asset management; and
- the Naturescape policy would be one of the context documents for the strategy.

The Committee noted the following in discussion:

- milestones and indicators for the strategy are important;
- regarding funding and cost, there may be opportunities to partner with businesses, community groups, and volunteers;
- there are 6 species of local bats that are important, and they roost in the trunks of trees;
- tree diversity is a challenge with stratas, as stratas often prefer to plant a monoculture of trees;
- dead and dying trees are just as important as living trees, and are critical to animals and insects;
- the strategy should include targets for provision of shading on public parking lots to mitigate the urban heat island effect;
- Library should do a section on trees during public consultation;
- Concerns were expressed about CP Rail's fire-smart and vegetation management practices, including manual clearing and cutting, often at a 45-degree angle which creates a sharp hazard; CP Rail should be advised to change their clearance standards;
- the underbrush should not be too aggressively eliminated for fire management, as they provide benefits as well; and
- it would be important to also provide education on preservation;

EPC20/019

Moved, seconded, and CARRIED

THAT the meeting be extended for 15 minutes.

- in preparation for public consultation, the City should provide an FAQ regarding what property owners are allowed to do with trees on private property;
- identification, recognition, and protection of significant stumps of heritage value would be important to provide a snapshot of what the forest was like before construction; and
- the City of Vancouver is conducting a threat analysis to capture the reasons why trees are removed, for data collection and analysis purposes.

Staff noted that this item can be included for consideration on the Committee's 2021 work plan.

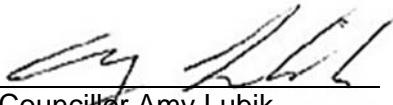
5. Information

Staff Updates


5.1 There were no staff updates.

6. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:18pm.



Councillor Amy Lubik,
Chair



Philip Lo,
Committee Coordinator