



## **MARKHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES**

**Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre  
February 20, 2020**

#### **Attendance**

##### **Members**

Christopher Ford, Chair  
Caryn Bergmann, Co Vice Chair  
Kevin Boon, Immediate Past Chair  
Martin Bush  
Stuart Cumner  
Victoria Genge  
Karl Lyew  
Nadine Pinto  
Diane Ross  
Frank Vignando  
Paddy Wong  
Natasha Welch

##### **Regrets**

Ashok Bangia  
Morgan Davies, Co Vice Chair  
Karl Fernandes  
Phil Ling  
Jennifer Wong, Sustainability Coordinator

##### **Council**

Regional Councillor Joe Li

##### **Guests**

Tanya Lewinberg, Public Realm Coordinator  
Nory Takata, Parks Planner  
Liz Couture  
Andrew Hazen  
Lloyd Helferty  
Mary Louise Prosen  
Sidney Shaw  
Carrie Tai  
David Tan

##### **Staff**

Jacqueline Tung, Community Engagement Assistant  
Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Coordinator

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) was called to order at 7:08 PM with Christopher Ford presiding as Chair. He welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

It was noted that the next meeting is scheduled for March 19, 2020 rather than March 20, 2020. The agenda was accepted as amended.

**3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARKHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 16, 2020**

It was

Moved by           Nadine Pinto  
Seconded by       Martin Bush

That the minutes of the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) meeting held on January 16, 2020 be adopted as distributed.

CARRIED

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**A. INFORMATION ON MARKHAM INITIATIVES AND COUNCIL MATTERS**

- Regional Councillor Joe Li reported that a 3-day workshop about waste and environmental management will be held on February 26 at the Pan Am Center; Caryn Bergmann and Paddy Wong advised that they would be interested in attending. He also noted that a conference about how smart cities deliver services to residents, that he is planning to attend, has been postponed to the summer due to the recent coronavirus outbreak.
- Regional Councillor Joe Li advised that Markham is poised to install the infrastructure for an underground waste management system in a new development. He provided a brief description of the system where residents throw waste into readily accessible chutes, which can either be indoors or outdoors. The waste is temporarily stored above a closed storage valve until the chute is full. Automatic emptying is controlled by a system in the waste collection station located on the outskirts of the development it serves; it is linked to the chutes via a network of underground pipes. When the control system senses that it is time to empty the chutes, a vacuum is created in the pipe network and waste in the chutes is sucked to the waste collection station at speeds up to 70 kph and over distances as great as 10 km. Waste at the collection station is sucked through a cyclone, where it is separated from the transport air. The waste then falls into a compressor where it is compressed and fed into a sealed container.

This system offers many benefits: the waste chutes can be located close to residents, which makes sorting waste at source easier and increases recycling rates. Diverting valves ensure that each waste stream remains separated. Finally, the system is hermetically sealed, so it will not attract pests or insects, or give off unpleasant odours. The system reduces carbon emissions and increases the sustainability of the environments in which it operates. There is no need for garbage trucks to make regular pickups and this reduces the amount of polluting waste collection vehicles on roads. Finally, waste collection cycles can be scheduled more frequently for less cost.

## **B. FOLLOW UP ON ACTION ITEMS**

Chair Christopher Ford reviewed the list of action items and noted that the items reflect agenda items for this meeting.

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. PRESENTATION: BIODIVERSITY**

Nory Takata, Parks Planner, and Tanya Lewinberg, Public Realm Coordinator, provided a presentation on Biodiversity. To provide a conceptual background for their work, Mr. Takata provided information relating to the global context of biodiversity, and the evolution of past research to modern conservation biology. He discussed the causes for loss of biodiversity such as habitat loss, pollution, invasive species, and over exploitation. Mr. Takata provided an overview of ongoing City programs in support of biodiversity such as “Trees for Tomorrow”; in conjunction with Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), York Region, Tree Canada, Forests Ontario and local service clubs, over 400,000 trees have been planted since 2007 to restore forest cover and connect forest fragments. He spoke of invasive species and Markham’s programs such as the Pollinator initiative, the Milkweed and native wildflowers nursery, and being a Monarch butterfly friendly city. Tanya Lewinberg spoke about and displayed pictures of Public Realm initiatives including Answell Park, Butterfly Bike Racks (to remind residents that Markham is a butterfly-friendly city), pollinator sculpture, Shinrin Yoku Forest Therapy (a research-based framework for supporting healing and wellness through immersion in forests and other natural environments), Reusing Resources – carving “old” wood to create sculptures, and the Speaker Series with topics such as the Urban Forest.

Chair Christopher Ford thanked Nory Takata and Tanya Lewinberg for taking the time to attend the MEAC meeting to help Committee members understand and appreciate Markham’s initiatives supporting Biodiversity. Nory Takata and Tanya Lewinberg left the meeting at 8:00 pm.

### **B. REPORT ON INTERVIEW WITH MARKHAM REVIEW**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

### **C. CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION**

Chair Christopher Ford advised that it had been recommended that MEAC finalize the Climate Emergency Declaration at this meeting so that the motion could be submitted to Markham Council for consideration in March 2020.

Committee members discussed the current status of the declaration. It had previously been advised that the term “emergency” might be interpreted to mean that there was an emergency because Markham was not doing enough. Markham Council would not agree with that, and as a result, the declaration might not win the support of Markham Council. The draft declaration was amended to be context sensitive to Markham initiatives and achievements, including a reaffirmation of the leadership that Markham Council and staff have shown via the many sustainability-related initiatives which have been implemented, and to include what action MEAC would expect from Council. The Committee had previously voted to retain the phrase “climate emergency” in the declaration and advised it still wished to include this phrase.

The Committee reviewed the recitals of the draft declaration; one recital was deleted and Natasha Welch agreed to provide text for a recital relating to biodiversity.

The Committee then reviewed the draft declaration resolutions one-by-one; the Committee agreed to make the following amendments:

- #7 – added wording: “commensurate with Markham’s goal of Net-Zero by 2050”
- #10 –including this resolution earlier in the resolutions
- #11 – the date was deleted; added wording: “in particular the climate-related components, with new targets for 2030-2050”
- #12 – this resolution was deleted

It was

Moved by Karl Lyew  
Seconded by Stuart Cumner

That the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) refer the Climate Emergency Declaration as amended to Markham Council for consideration and to staff for analysis and discussion.

CARRIED

### **D. PLANNING FOR MARKHAM EARTH DAY 2020**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

**6. OTHER BUSINESS**

None was reported.

**7. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, March 19, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., in the Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

It was

Moved by	Nadine Pinto
Seconded by	Karl Lyew

That the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee adjourn at 9:15 PM.

**CARRIED**