



## **MARKHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES**

**Electronic Zoom Meeting  
September 23, 2021**

#### **Attendance**

##### **Present**

Caryn Bergmann, Chair  
Stuart Cumner, Vice Chair  
Kevin Boon, Immediate Past Chair  
Ashok Bangia  
Andrew Hazen  
Karl Lyew  
Frank Vignando  
Paddy Wong

##### **Regrets**

Karl Fernandes  
Victoria Genge  
Phil Ling  
Nadine Pinto

##### **Council**

Regional Councillor Joe Li

##### **Staff**

Gabriela Ansari-Correa, Community Engagement Assistant  
Claudia Marsales, Senior Manager Waste and Environmental Management  
Janet Reid, Community Engagement Program Specialist  
Jennifer Wong, Sustainability Coordinator  
Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Clerk

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) was called to order at 7:06 PM with Caryn Bergmann presiding as Chair.

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

The agenda was accepted as distributed.

### **3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARKHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON JUNE 24, 2021**

It was

Moved by           Karl Lyew  
Seconded by       Frank Vignando

That the minutes of the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) meeting held on June 24, 2021 be adopted as distributed.

CARRIED

### **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Regional Councillor Joe Li advised that a report regarding the proposed installation of infrastructure for an underground waste management system for new developments with over 500 units will be considered by the Markham Development Services Committee on October 12 at 9:30 am. It is hoped that MEAC members might wish to attend the online meeting and possibly make depositions in support of the proposal.

Jennifer Wong, Janet Reid and Gabriela Ansari-Correa reported that:

- The Sustainability department is seeking feedback from stakeholders, such as MEAC, regarding the new page about community energy retrofit for Your Voice Markham, an online forum to engage Markham residents.
- The last HERO (Home Efficiency Retrofit Orientation) workshop in 2021 will be held on October 21. The Sustainability office plans to have the Your Voice Markham page ready for the workshop. Claudia Marsales advised that the waste management newsletter will soon be distributed to all Markham households. A link to the Your Voice Markham page could be included; Claudia Marsales and Jennifer Wong will coordinate this.

### **5. MEAC FOCUS FOR 2021**

Committee members previously voted to focus on one initiative: Reducing or Eliminating Gas Powered Lawn/Garden Equipment. Andrew Hazen briefly described the "Get Your Lawn Off Gas!" project, an initiative whereby MEAC and the Sustainability office would encourage Markham homeowners, large property owners, retailers and commercial property maintenance firms to replace the use of gas powered equipment such as mowers, trimmers, blowers, and snowblowers with plug-in electric or rechargeable versions. It is hoped that retailers might offer discounts towards the purchase of electric or rechargeable models.

It is thought that planning should start soon to ensure a successful launch in spring 2022 to coincide with Earth Week. It was agreed to establish a sub-committee devoted to the project, with the sub-committee reporting regularly at the monthly MEAC meetings. Stuart Cumner, Karl Lyew, Claudia Marsales, and Andrew Hazen as lead, agreed to serve on the sub-committee.

MEAC members would be joined by a group of six students from York University committed to working with MEAC on this project until Earth Day as part of their "Cross Campus Capstone Classroom" (C4) course. A C4 project requires students to apply their

prior academic experience to a "real world" challenge, identified by a knowledgeable partner organization (or business). C4 especially values projects that are community engaged, sustainable, socially impactful, and cross-disciplinary.

Claudia Marsales advised that such a project might qualify for Markham Environmental Sustainability Fund (MESF) funding. She recommended that MEAC identify its goals and targets, and the activities to support them, and then submit an application as soon as possible if funding would be needed in spring 2022. Generally speaking, successful MESF projects are those that are well thought-out and with tangible outcomes. It was suggested that it would be useful to have the C4 students gather data to support the application, research similar programs in other municipalities, and research manufacturers and their products to help identify potential partnerships. It was noted that York University is currently replacing its gas powered equipment and MEAC may be able to learn from the university's experiences.

#### **6. NEW BUSINESS**

None was identified.

#### **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

- Claudia Marsales advised that Markham won two awards: the 2021 P. J. Marshall Innovation Award and the 2021 Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) Environment Award in the 100,000+ population category for its *Taking the Lead – Markham Targets Single-Use Plastics* program. This multi-year plan focuses on reducing the amount of single-use plastic that ends up in landfill. Phase one targeted one of the most common single-use plastics –Styrofoam. Markham has achieved a 150 percent increase in the volume of Styrofoam recycled by banning Styrofoam from garbage pick-up and requiring residents to drop it off at a Markham Recycling Depot.
- Andrew Hazen provided information about, and encouraged MEAC members to participate in, programs of Climate Caucus, a cross-Canada group of Municipal leaders working on the climate crisis, aligned with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). FCM's programs and advocacy help secure new tools that empower municipalities to build stronger communities of all sizes. This item will be discussed further at the next meeting.

#### **8. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, October 28, 2021 at 7:00 p.m., via Zoom.

#### **9. ADJOURNMENT**

It was

Moved by           Karl Lyew  
Seconded by       Stuart Cumner

That the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee adjourn at 8:40 PM.

**CARRIED**