



**MARKHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CANADA ROOM MARKHAM CIVIC CENTRE**

September 26, 2024

7:00 PM

Minutes

<p><u>Present</u> Stuart Cumner, Chair Paddy Wong, Vice-Chair Robert Willatts Sarena Karpouzis Karl Lyew Christina Wong Victoria Choy Cliff Chan Catherine Jeffrey Yash Kapur</p>	<p><u>Staff</u> Laura Gold, Committee Clerk</p> <p><u>Regrets</u> Frank Vignando Jack Heath Jennifer Wong, Manager, Sustainability Councillor Amanda Collucci Councillor Ritch Lau</p>
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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Environmental Advisory Committee convened at 7:03 PM with Stuart Cumner in the Chair.

2. CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

**3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARKHAM ENVIRONMENTAL
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MAY 30, 2024**

Moved by Yash Kapur
Seconded by Cathie Jeffrey

That the minutes of the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee meeting held on on May 30, 2024, be adopted.

Carried

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

5. UPDATE ON PROGRESS TO OBTAIN BIRD FRIENDLY CITY CERTIFICATION

<https://naturecanada.ca/defend-nature/how-you-help-us-take-action/bfc/>

Victoria Choy introduced the item.

The Committee discussed whether the City would consider obtaining bird friendly certification, and it hoped to learn more about the City's bird friendly practices due to there being a considerable drop in the bird population.

Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator, noted that ensuring new developments meet bird friendly guidelines is considered as part of the development process.

Catherine Jeffrey's advised that she had reached out to Planning Staff to get more information on the City's Bird Friendly Guidelines.

6. WHETHER MARKHAM WOULD CONSIDER BECOMING A BLUE COMMUNITY? SEVERAL COMMUNITIES SUCH AS AJAX AND NIAGARA HAVE OBTAINED DESIGNATIONS

<https://canadians.org/resource/bluecommunities-guide/>

Victoria Choy advised that to be a Blue Community a municipality must abide by the following guidelines: 1) recognizes water and sanitation as a human right; 2) banning or phasing out of the sale of bottled water in municipal facilities and at municipal events; 3) promoting publicly financed, owned and operated water and wastewater services.

The Committee noted how the City appears to be already following these guidelines, such as water bottles have been banned at municipal facilities, the City's Wow truck promotes public water at events, and the City is continuously ensuring the safety of the communities water supply. Members suggested that it may be fairly straight forward for the City to apply for this certification if it was interested in obtaining it, as it seems to be already abiding to many of the guidelines.

Members also discussed encouraging Members of Council to include articles on environmental matters in their newsletters, particularly articles that would be of value to the community, such as having an article on Green Energy Promotion. Victoria Choy advised

that she has a background in Corporate Communications and agreed to prepare a draft article as a sample of an environmental article that could be included in the Councillors newsletters.

Moreover, Members discussed the possibility of attending events to promote environmental initiatives, providing an example of having a booth at Markham Fair or participating in Earth Day.

7. UPDATE ON BIKE LANES

The Committee discussed bike lanes and the role they play in providing alternative modes of transportation to transit hubs and other places. Members felt that bike lanes and places to lock up one's bike should be included in all major transit hubs and that there should be as many connections as possible to Markham's trail network. They also noted the importance of having groups such as Markham Cycles that help with bike repairs and that offer bicycle-lending libraries. The Committee questioned what Markham's strategy is with respect to providing alternative modes of transportation, and bike lanes.

Cliff Chan, Member of both the Cycling and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (CPAC) and the Environmental Advisory Committee, advised that the City is working towards building a cycling network and solving some of the issues noted above. Mr. Chan agreed to provide regular updates on CPAC's activities at Committee meetings.

Moreover, the Committee discussed recent news articles on how the use of bikes and bike lanes has increased in Toronto due to the City's crowded streets, and the implications the bike lanes are having on stores and traffic congestion.

8. SENIORS FOR CLIMATE ACTION RALLIES IN NEWMARKET AND IN TORONTO

Victoria Choy advised that the Seniors for Climate Action rallies will be held across the country on October 1, 2024. On this day, a rally will be held in Newmarket and David Suzuki is scheduled to attend. The rally will also be livestreamed.

9. FOOD WASTE AND FOOD INSECURITY SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE

Christina Wong and Stuart Cumner provided an update on the Food Waste and Food Insecurity Sub-Committee. Some of the highlights of the update included:

- Working with York University 4th year students regarding reducing food waste and food insecurity in Markham.
- Holding 7 meetings with the students throughout the year, noting the next meeting will be held on October 11th.
- Prior to the December break - Students will first research what is causing food waste and food insecurity in Markham.
- After the December break – Students will look at what actions can be taken to help

resolve the problem.

- The Committee is also looking into building a relationship with the University of Toronto in relation to food systems and the environment.
- Noted that high school students may also be interested in conducting environmental research for the Committee.
- Sub-Committee Members visited grocery stores and discussed with their managers what they were doing to address food security, some of which included freezing food if close to expiry, cooking it and making it a ready-made meal, selling surprise boxes, and providing food to the Second Harvest Group. The stores noted that technology is also playing an important role in reducing food waste, as it allows for better forecasting with respect to the supply and demand of food products.
- Advised that it is no longer common to see food waste in the back of large grocery stores but noted that smaller businesses may still be struggling with food waste.

The Committee discussed food waste going into the garbage, noting that having food waste in the garbage creates methane. A Member advised that Markham's clear bag and organics program has greatly reduced the amount of food waste that is put in the garbage.

10. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next Markham Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting will be held on November 28, 2024, at 7:00 PM.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The Environmental Advisory Committee adjourned at 8:55 PM.