



MARKHAM PUBLIC REALM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES November 9, 2017

PRESENT

Members

Councillor Valerie Burke
Karen Lui
Steven Lusk
Noel Shippey
Alick Siu

Staff

Tanya Lewinberg, Public Realm Coordinator
Yvonne Yeung, Senior Urban Design Planner
Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Coordinator

REGRETS

Jade Lau
Councillor Alex Chiu
Councillor Logan Kanapathi

1. WELCOME and CALL TO ORDER

The Markham Public Realm Advisory Committee was called to order at 6:12 pm with Karen Lui serving as Chair.

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None was declared.

3. CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as distributed.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARKHAM PUBLIC REALM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING ON JUNE 20, 2017

It was

Moved by Steven Lusk
Seconded by Noel Shippey

THAT the minutes of the Markham Public Realm Advisory Committee meeting held on June 20, 2017 be adopted as distributed.

CARRIED

5. PUBLIC REALM CITIZENS UPDATE

Chair Karen Lui reported that the citizen members had met to discuss the mandate and goals of the Committee. It was felt that the Committee should focus on projects relating to: (i) Markham identity and beautification, perhaps through initiatives such as the Gateway Master Plan and Destination Markham; (ii) collaboration with other Markham Advisory Committees, to find opportunities to work together to enhance Markham's public realm; and (iii) Public Realm public education and outreach, perhaps through projects such as the community billboards and the Speaker Series. It was suggested that the Engineering Department be invited to a future meeting to give a presentation on projects relating to the public realm.

It was recommended that Markham increase staffing levels in order to better manage the increasing number of Public Realm projects, that minutes be distributed as soon as possible so that any action items may be addressed before the next meeting, and updates on recruiting new members be shared with Committee members.

Tanya Lewinberg, Public Realm Coordinator, advised about the group Park People, which supports a national network of community park groups. These groups organize volunteers to care for local parks, advocate for park improvements, and host events such as tree plantings, nature walks, and festivals. Over 100 volunteers have been identified via the Park Renaissance survey and Park People has applied for a grant to fund a project involving Markham.

Yvonne Yeung, Senior Urban Design Planner, advised that that the Committee has the opportunity to align its goals with the Economic Development project Destination Markham,. Public art and public realm projects may be realized as a result of contributions from developers in exchange for height and/or density increases, as allowed by Section 37 of the Planning Act. Markham is able to digitally track the number of development applications and the corresponding number of opportunities for developers' contributions. Tanya Lewinberg advised that part of the Public Realm budget is derived from Section 37 funds.

It was

Moved by	Alick Siu
Seconded by	Steven Lusk

THAT a standard paragraph about public realm improvements be included in standard recording reports for development applications.

CARRIED

Committee members discussed the possibility of creating either a survey to learn where Markham residents feel beautification improvements would be beneficial or creating a home owners information package to assist newcomers to Markham. It was agreed to create the homeowners package, available in many languages, with basic information about beautifying Markham's public realm, e.g. grass cutting, mulch for gardens, and the value of trees. Yvonne Yeung will prepare the package.

Tanya Lewinberg requested the assistance of Committee members in identifying topic ideas and the direction for the 2018 Speaker Series. She advised that, in 2016, Markham became the first monarch-friendly municipality in Canada, in partnership with David Suzuki Foundation.

6. PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY DISCUSSION

An update was requested regarding action plans, associated timelines and when the strategy document might be updated. It was reported that research is underway to determine the best approach for the strategy document. Tanya Lewinberg asked Committee members to advise her of specific project updates they would like.

7. PUBLIC REALM 2018 BUDGET UPDATE

Tanya Lewinberg reviewed details of the proposed 2018 Public Realm budget.

8. PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS UPDATE

Tanya Lewinberg provided the following updates:

- Traffic Box Wraps – 40 have been installed in Markham in 2017 and more will be installed on York Region controlled routes;
- An application has been made to York Region for the installation of Artful Bicycle Racks, in the shape of a butterfly to raise awareness of the City's pollinator program; installation is likely to occur in spring 2018;
- The Civic Centre retaining wall and pollinator garden project is currently on hold;
- The Civic Centre signage project has been placed on hold because the important intersection of Warden Avenue and Highway 7 while design challenges are considered;
- Community Posting Boards are in production now and will be installed in spring 2018 at Victoria Square Park and Ray Street Park, German Mills Community Centre, and three Markham libraries;
- Gateway Master Plan – the draft RFP is currently being reviewed by staff. The intent is to identify important gateway locations and provide conceptual direction relating to smart cities so that Markham may qualify for funding grants;
- Mural – the potential locations of Millennium Park or the underpass of Highway 407 at Rouge River have been identified
- The Speaker Series for 2017 has been completed;
- Vendor Box Infrastructure – some locations have been identified but Committee members were also encouraged to suggest locations;
- Pollinator gardens ~~have been~~ will be located in front of gateway signs in the Legacy community;
- The Civic Centre tree planting has been completed;
- Tree Bylaw Review is ongoing. A survey is being developed for residents, responses will assist in strengthening the existing bylaw;
- Park Renaissance Plan - Adult exercise equipment is being added to eight City parks, with at least three parks completed to date;
- ~~A~~ new park renaissance projects will begin in Annswell Park spring 2018 and a basketball court will be installed in Ward 5; Committee members requested more information about the process for selecting parks to receive amenities.

Noel Shippey left the meeting at 7:45 pm.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Public Realm Demonstration Project

It was reported that the South Yonge Street /Yonge and Colborne Heritage Streetscape improvement project, approved in 2013, was recently completed, thereby creating a cohesive public realm promoting sustainability, walkability, and cycling. The improved streetscape acts as a gateway to the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District and has been supported by Heritage Markham, York Region, and Markham Community Services. Streetscape improvements include:

- New seat walls and benches to provide places for gathering,
- An in-ground heritage plaque that informs residents and visitors about the history of Yonge Street and Thornhill Village Heritage Conservation District
- A widened paved boulevard to create an attractive public space,
- Widened curb-ramps to improve accessibility and pedestrian crossing,
- New planters to increase greenery,
- New bicycle racks to promote active transportation; and,
- New suspended pavement system to support tree growth and prevent soil compaction of trees and shrubs.

Councillor Valerie Burke advised that these improvements have encouraged local business owners to also initiate improvements.

Markham Accessibility Design Guideline Update

In 2011, Markham approved the Accessibility Design Guideline. Markham staff will be working on the update. Tanya Lewinberg advised she will research best practices and she encouraged Committee members to offer ideas.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting will be scheduled for January 18, 2018 at 6:00 pm.

11. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by Steven Lusk
Seconded by Alick Siu

That the Markham Public Realm Advisory Committee meeting adjourn at 8:00 p.m.

CARRIED