



## **MARKHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES**

**Ontario Room, Civic Centre**

**May 18, 2017**

### **Attendance**

#### **Members**

Phil Ling, Chair  
Ashok Bangia  
Karl Lyew  
Aamer Mohammed  
Elvis Nurse  
Carrie Sally

#### **Regrets**

Kevin Boon  
Jocelyn Cheung  
Vikas Gautam  
Chuan Li, Vice Chair  
Fanny Luk  
Adam Poon  
Diane Ross, Immediate Past Chair

#### **Council**

Deputy Mayor Jack Heath  
Regional Councillor Joe Li

#### **Guest**

Graham Seaman, Director, Sustainability  
Ryan Ness, Senior Manager,  
Research & Development, TRCA

#### **Staff**

Jennifer Wong, Sustainability Services Coordinator  
Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Coordinator

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

The Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) was called to order at 7:12 PM with Phil Ling presiding as Chair. New members, Aamer Mohammed and Kaushi Ragunathan, were welcomed and introductions were made.

### **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 MARCH 16, 2017 AND APRIL 20, 2017**

It was

Moved by           Carrie Sally  
Seconded by       Elvis Nurse

That the minutes of the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) meeting on April 20, 2017 be adopted as distributed and that the minutes of the MEAC meeting on March 16, 2017 be adopted with the following changes *in italics*:

**March 16, 2017**  
**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Earth Hour**

Jennifer Wong reported that Earth Hour will be celebrated on March 25, 2017 at the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham. The event is a bit smaller in scale than in previous years and will have more of a community feel. The event is being promoted on the City page and through social media. At the event there will be four to five City *exhibitors*, art activities, milk bag weaving, a lantern walk, and a live DJ at the end of the night. Committee Members were encouraged to volunteer to assist with the event. Jennifer Wong will circulate a volunteer sign-up sheet to the Committee.

**B. Earth Day**

Jennifer Wong reported that the Earth Day event will be held at the Cineplex complex at Birchmount and Enterprise from 10:00 am to 4:00 p.m. At the event there will be eight booths inside the facility, passport activities, a BMW i3 electronic vehicle in the parking lot that patrons can test drive, and free carousel rides across the street. Staff are also trying to get a hydrogen fuel car that patrons can test drive. A floor plan of the complex was displayed to the Committee. The Committee discussed how to best utilize the space.

A suggestion was made to ask the *Lions Club* if it would like to collect e-waste at the event. Carrie Sally will contract the *Lions Club* to see if it is interested in participating in the event. The Committee discussed sending messaging to the retail stores in the Cineplex complex encouraging them to participate and to provide any merchandise, gift certificates or coupons that could be put in the gift baskets, which will be raffled off at the event. Carrie Sally will email Jennifer Wong the messaging for approval prior to proceeding.

Volunteers will be assigned two or three hour shifts with a lead person assigned to each booth. Members will be able to sign up for the volunteer shift through Google Drive. A teleconference will be scheduled if required to discuss the volunteer schedule and roles. *Exhibitors* are being encouraged to bring their own tables and chairs this year. This should help with the set-up and take down of the event.

CARRIED

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

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

Deputy Mayor Jack Heath thanked MEAC members for serving as ambassadors to promote Markham's Textile Recycling program on April 29, 2017 and reported that the event was a success. He also reported that Markham currently has four large smart recycling bins and 70 smaller bins, and another 75 smaller bins will become available over the next six months.

Deputy Mayor Jack Heath distributed and reviewed materials relating to the Markham Rouge Valley Trail Phasing Plan, which shows current and planned trails extending from the Warden Avenue/16<sup>th</sup> Avenue area to the Steeles Avenue/9<sup>th</sup> Line area. There may also be a possibility of extending the trail route north of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Elgin Mills Road.

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

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

#### **5. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **A. TRCA PRESENTATION - THE LIVING CITY REPORT CARD**

Ryan Ness, Senior Manager, Research & Development, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), provided a presentation about The Living City Report Card, a progress report on environmental sustainability in the Toronto region. The first Living City Report Card was released in 2011; the 2016 report card is a five-year progress report.

Both reports considered six themes – Carbon, Air Quality, Water, Waste, Land Use and Biodiversity– and identified positive changes and areas for improvement within the themes.

- Carbon dioxide is one of the primary greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted to the atmosphere by human activities. Ontario produces 2x the world average of GHG emissions; however, it was the first area in North America to eliminate coal generated electricity.
- Air pollution is responsible for significant negative health impacts. Over the past decade, concentrations of most common air pollutants have declined across Ontario. In order to improve air quality in the GTA, all levels of government need to continue to encourage the development of clean industry, energy and transportation.
- Waste is often stored in landfills which produce carbon emissions, take up valuable land, and represent a wasted use of valuable materials. The Living city Report Card found that waste management for the GTA as a whole has not improved over the past five years and that more than two thirds of residential garbage could be diverted from landfill. It recommends making waste diversion easier for residents and building tenants of multi-unit residential buildings by increasing opportunities for recycling, reduction, and reuse of materials.
- Clean, safe water is critical to economic, social, and environmental health. Despite the fact that water is a limited resource, Canadians are among the highest consumers per person in the world. Opportunities to improve water management include full-cost

- pricing for water to encourage water conservation, and incorporation of low impact development (LID) techniques into stormwater management.
- In the GTA, the rate of urban sprawl has decreased and “green building” has increased since the last report card. But farmland in the region and the amount of greenspace per person has declined. The urban forest has limited diversity and has been affected by insect pests and extreme weather events. To improve regional sustainability, the Living City Report Card recommends compact communities, investment in green infrastructure, and maintaining greenspace and farmland.
  - Biodiversity - In the Toronto region, biodiversity is changing: tolerant stream fish seem to be replacing more sensitive species, and the biodiversity of native plants and animals appears to be declining. the Living City Report Card feels that better stormwater management is needed to help enhance water quality and flow, protect and restore cold-water streams, and protect more forest and wetland.

Mr. Ness advised that the TRCA is happy to support MEAC, and welcomes MEAC involvement in Evergreen and TRCA events. Mr. Ness and Committee members discussed ways to reduce and improve, how communities could help, and possible incentives that would engage residents.

Mr. Ness left the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

## **B. DEBRIEF - EARTH DAY EVENT**

Committee members discussed the results of the Earth Day event held at the Cineplex complex at Birchmount Road and Enterprise Blvd. Results of the survey revealed:

- Overall participants were 400-500; 301 passports were completed
- Attendees heard about the event via social media, the Markham website, newspaper ads, mobile signs around the city, and posters
- Attendees liked the information provided about wildlife and renewable energy, free carousel rides, children’s activities, and library activities such as robotics
- Attendees thought that Markham should concentrate on environmental issues such as recycling, preserving trees, water conservation, energy conservation, and waste management.

It was agreed that attendees came prepared to discuss environmental issues, they were engaged, they had been attracted by the Facebook ad, were there even before movies opened. It was suggested that future events might include more activities for children, possibly using the Remington carousel as an attraction but use signs or other means to encourage attendees to check out the exhibitors’ booths. The teenage demographic was missing from the event; future events should consider how to interest them in attending. It was agreed that the communications and promotion efforts were very effective. It was suggested that the survey might be more in-depth in order to provide better data, and that consideration be given to providing materials in other languages.

Committee members applauded Jennifer Wong for her tremendous efforts in coordinating the myriad event details.

Jennifer Wong will contact the Remington Group to enquire about reserving space at the Cineplex venue for the 2018 Earth Day event. It was agreed that a subcommittee will be established to begin planning.

## **6. OTHER BUSINESS**

- Deputy Mayor Jack Heath reported that the Deputy Mayor's Annual Walk will be held on June 11, 2017. The walk route is still to be finalized but he is hoping to create a circle route of the Rouge Valley.
- Carrie Sally reported that a 15 second advertisement for Alectra Utilities will run in local Cineplex movie theatres for a five week period and movie patrons will receive a brochure with coupons for energy efficient light bulbs. The brochure was also distributed to Committee members.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

It was

Moved by           Karl Lyew  
Seconded by       Aamer Mohammed

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

CARRIED

## **8. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday, June 15, 2017 at 7:00 p.m., in the Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre.