



MARKHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES October 17, 2013

ATTENDANCE

Members

James Lin, Chair
Mark Angelini
Kevin Boon
Marie LeGrow
Philip Ling
Karl Lyew
Adam Poon
Muhammad Rashid
Christopher Sauer, Immediate Past Chair

Regrets

Chuan Li, Vice Chair
Phil Fung
Alexander Karlovski
Amanda Napoli
Carrie Sally
Rodney Yee

Council

Deputy Mayor Jack Heath
Regional Councillor Joe Li

Staff

Prabh Banga, Sustainability Coordinator
Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) was called to order at 7:07 PM with James Lin presiding as Chair.

2. CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

The agenda was accepted with these additions:

- Earth Hour, to be included as part of the Earth Day discussion
- Regional Environmental Advisory Committees (EAC) meeting
- Tour of The Marleigh building
- New Committee Members

3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARKHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 19, 2013

It was

Moved by Muhammad Rashid
Seconded by Karl Lyew

THAT the minutes of the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) meeting held on September 19, 2013 be adopted as distributed.

Carried

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

A. INFORMATION REPORTS – MARKHAM INITIATIVES

Deputy Mayor Jack Heath advised that Markham would soon be moving to Phase Two of the Downspout Disconnection Program. Staff are now considering a city-wide, rather than area-specific, approach. Deputy Mayor Heath will speak with staff about having MEAC members serve as ambassadors to assist staff in educating Markham residents about this program, similar to MEAC's assistance in relation to the new Clear Bag program.

B. FOLLOW UP ON ACTION ITEMS

Chair James Lin reviewed the list and provided updates.

The Markham Clerk's Office has provided a list showing the dates when the terms of Committee members would end; the terms for Phil Ling, Chris Sauer and Carrie Sally will end in November 2013. An open call for volunteers for a number of Markham committees has been published. It was reported that members interested in serving again on MEAC would certainly be considered.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. AIM TO SUSTAIN

Prabh Banga, Sustainability Coordinator, reported on behalf of Warren Rupnarain, Accessibility Coordinator, about a new outreach initiative, Aim to Sustain. It is an art and writing contest for children and young adults to promote the value of a sustainable Markham. The program will run from the second week of January to the end of February, with judging of the entries to be conducted by the GreenPrint Steering Committee in March 2014. Current plans are to announce the winners and display the winning entries at the Earth Day event. Prabh Banga advised that Warren Rupnarain would appreciate the assistance of MEAC to promote the program and coordinate the plans for Earth Day.

Prabh Banga mentioned that Councillor Colin Campbell had expressed interest in having Markham recognize Earth Hour, held on the last Saturday of March. Committee discussion focussed on how Earth Hour could have a lasting impact on Markham residents. It was suggested that residents be encouraged to make pledges for long term conservation e.g. "Beyond The Hour", that competition by street or by ward could have a significant impact on reducing the levels of energy consumption, and that announcement of the winning street/area could be made at the Earth Day event with the award placed in the community centre of the winning area.

Deputy Mayor Jack Heath left the meeting at 7:45 pm to attend another meeting.

B. DISCHARGING NOXIOUS SUBSTANCES INTO SEWER SYSTEMS

Muhammad Rashid presented material entitled “Conserve and Protect Our Water” that he had originally prepared for homeowners, particularly newcomers to Canada. The intention was to educate them about water conservation and preservation since, although 70% of the earth is made up of water, only 0.3% is accessible and the average Canadian uses 326 litres of water each day. The presentation outlined how important water is to the production of crops and consumer goods, with many suggestions on how to conserve water. The presentation also focused on ways to protect the quality of water since it affects the habitat and wildlife.

Committee members were very interested in the material and their discussion focused on what MEAC could do to support initiatives relating to it. One suggestion was the “Yellow Fish” program where groups, often local schools, would place a yellow fish emblem over drain grates to remind residents not to put substances down the drains. The groups would also distribute information with tips on other ways to dispose of substances.

Committee members commented that many MEAC discussions focus on youth; it was suggested that MEAC reach out to schools and eco clubs. It was agreed that Committee members would canvas a local school to find out its environmental plans and whether it would consider working with MEAC on its initiatives.

Chair James Lin thanked Muhammad Rashid for his presentation to the Committee.

C. 2013/2014 BUSINESS PLAN

Chair James Lin reviewed initiatives the Committee might wish to undertake in the coming year. He advised that he felt it best, and Committee members agreed, to focus on the following initiatives:

- Earth Day, with the addition of Earth Hour
- Current topics such as Discharge/Waste Water/Stormwater Management, and Community Gardens

D. EARTH DAY PLANNING

Chair James Lin asked for a volunteer to serve as Chair of the Earth Day Sub-committee; Karl Lyew advised that he would be interested.

It was

Moved by Kevin Boon

Seconded by Adam Poon

THAT Karl Lyew be confirmed as Chair of the Earth Day Sub-committee.

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Carried

Committee members Adam Poon, Chris Sauer, and Mark Angelini will assist in planning for the Earth Day event. It was agreed that the top planning priority was to confirm with Markville Mall that MEAC would be able to reserve space at the mall for one of the

Saturdays close to April 22-Earth Day i.e. April 12, April 19, or April 26. Peachtree Mall was suggested as an alternate venue should Markville Mall not be available.

E. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

Chair James Lin advised that at the end of each year, as per Committee practice to ensure continuity, the Vice Chair assumes the position of Chair and the Committee elects a new Vice Chair. The Vice Chair elected for 2014 would then take over the Chair position in January 2015. James Lin advised he would send Committee members an email asking that, if they were interested in serving as Vice Chair, they submit a short explanation of why they would make a good Vice Chair. The expressions of interest would then be circulated to the Committee members in advance of the November 2013 meeting when the election of the Vice Chair would take place.

Addendum: Chair James Lin emailed Committee members on October 20th and asked that expressions of interest in serving as Vice Chair be emailed to him by October 31, 2013.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

A. REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The next Regional EAC meeting will be hosted by East Gwillimbury on November 5, 2013. Chair James Lin advised that he will be on vacation and unable to attend. Only a maximum of two people from MEAC may attend, so it was thought that Vice Chair Chuan Li should attend, if she's available. He asked that if anyone were interested in attending to please contact Chuan Li and him before October 25.

B. TOUR OF THE MARLEIGH BUILDING

An optional site visit and tour of the 34 Main Street building (The Marleigh) was arranged by Phil Fung for September 26, 2013. This new retirement residence is built to LEED Silver (Equivalent) standard with Markham District Energy connection and one-of-a-kind ORCA Food Digester. The ORCA system is a City of Markham pilot project which will convert on-site food waste to gray water to discharge safely into the sewer system. The ORCA system was on site but had not yet been installed; however, participants viewed a short presentation about how it would work and were impressed.

7. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by Chris Sauer
Seconded by Kevin Boon

That the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee adjourn at 8:57 PM.

Carried

8. NEXT MEETING

The next regular monthly meeting of the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee has been scheduled for Thursday, November 21, 2013 at 7:00 PM in the Ontario Room.