



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

A G E N D A

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

April 23, 2009

7:15 p.m.

Esquimalt Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. LATE ITEMS

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

4. GREETINGS FROM MAYOR DESJARDINS

5. MINUTES

- (1) Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Committee meeting, March 19, 2009 Pg. 1 – 5

6. OLD BUSINESS

- (1) From the March 19, 2009 Environmental Advisory Committee meeting
- (a) 2008 Year End Final Report
 - (b) Work Plan Discussion
 - (i) Sub-Committees

7. NEW BUSINESS

- (1) Light Rail Transit Station in Esquimalt
- (2) Waste Free Wednesday

8. REPORT FROM STAFF LIAISON

9. COMMUNICATIONS

- (1) Letter from the Recycling Council of British Columbia, dated November 3, 2009, Re: Plastic Bags Pg. 6 – 10

10. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS / REPORTS

11. ADJOURNMENT



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

MINUTES

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 19, 2009
7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers, Municipal Hall

PRESENT: Edwin Hubert – Vice Chair
Councillor Randall Garrison
Councillor Lynda Hundley
Mark Salter
Eileen Palmer
Jo-Lee Bertrand
Larry Dill
Lorraine Nygaard-Ishizaki (Arrived 7:07 p.m.)
Beth Sobieszczyk (Arrived 7:10 p.m.)

STAFF: Marlene Lagoa – Manager of Communications and Sustainability (Staff Liaison)
Deborah Liske – Recording Secretary

REGRETS: Mayor Barbara Desjardins

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Hubert called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. LATE ITEMS

The following late items were introduced:

1. Move Agenda item (7) Work Plan Discussion under **NEW BUSINESS** to Agenda item (8) and add Agenda item (7) Sustainability Budget

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Councillor Hundleby, seconded by Councillor Garrison that the agenda of the Environmental Advisory Committee meeting of March 19, 2009 be approved with the inclusion of the late agenda item.
The motion **CARRIED**.

4. INTRODUCTIONS

Each committee member provided a brief introduction of their environmental background and activities.

5. GREETINGS FROM MAYOR DESJARDINS

Mayor Desjardins regretfully could not attend the meeting.

Councillor Garrison thanked past members of the committee for their dedication of service and welcomed new members.

6. MINUTES

Moved by Eileen Palmer, seconded by Vice Chair Hubert, that the minutes of the Environmental Advisory Committee meeting of November 20, 2008 be approved as presented.
The motion **CARRIED**.

7. NEW BUSINESS

(1) Review of Committee Terms of Reference (TOR)

The Committee Terms of Reference were reviewed with discussion focusing on the following:

- Scope and purpose of the committee;
- Whether sustainability also includes density;
- Overlap / need for overlap and communication with other committees;
- The need to develop an avenue to recognize / award people who foster environmental awareness.

Moved by Beth Sobieszczyk, seconded by Larry Dill that the Environmental Advisory Committee Terms of Reference be received and approved.

The motion **CARRIED**.

(a) 2008 Year End Final Report

Vice Chair Hubert will prepare the year end final report for 2008. Committee members are requested to provide any suggestions for the report to the Vice Chair via email.

Vice Chair Hubert will forward a draft of the report to committee members via email for feedback. The completed report will be presented to the committee for adoption prior to the report being forwarded to Council.

(2) Membership List Contact Information

A confidential membership contact list was distributed to committee members with the request that any revisions be provided to the Recording Secretary for updating prior to redistribution.

(3) Committee Member Interests – What Each Member Brings to the Table

Vice Chair Edwin Hubert is a cyclist who cycles to work everyday, takes pride in his community to make it a better place to live and is very passionate that he is able to take his children to explore the wide areas of nature. Vice Chair Hubert noted that the driving force behind his initial interest in joining the committee was to work towards the implementation of the pesticide bylaw and improvement to cycling lanes in the community.

Councillor Hundley believes very strongly that a sustainable environment and community is needed. Councillor Hundleby sits on the Capital Region Water Supply Commission and is very proud that Esquimalt has adopted a pedestrian charter.

Councillor Garrison chose to live in Esquimalt because it is a beautiful walkable community. Councillor Garrison noted that he requested to participate on the committee and will be focusing on transportation issues from an environmental standpoint through other external committees which he is involved in such as the Save the Sidney / Anacortes ferry and the Bay Street Bus Service Route. Councillor Garrison is also a Council liaison to the Esquimalt Advisory Planning Commission.

Mark Salter is an organic master gardener with a goal to make his home as sustainable as possible. Mr. Salter walks and cycles everywhere and when it is required, drives a smart truck. Mr. Salter noted that the committee fits into his lifestyle.

Jo-Lee Bertrand is interested in issues of the environment and how they relate to health. Ms. Bertrand walks, cycles and runs, and is very interested in transportation and the environment. Ms. Bertrand is in the process of starting a not for profit group to create a car free Friday to get people out of their cars at least once a week. Ms. Bertrand previously sat on Sannich Bicycle Advisory Committee.

Lorraine Nygaard-Ishizaki cycles everywhere and assists with bike to work week. Ms. Nygaard-Ishizaki believes that environment, health and happiness all go together. Ms. Nygaard-Ishizaki also believes in many environmental initiatives, among them, the pesticide bylaw and community gardens.

Eileen Palmer believes that communities and people are all linked to the environment. Ms. Palmer is interested in assisting Council and the community in becoming carbon neutral.

Beth Sobieszczyk is a former bike tour leader and is interested in the workings of carbon, food security and community gardens. Ms. Sobieszczyk has a background working with environmental issues.

Larry Dill is a professional ecologist who has concentrated on conservation issues; utilizing his training to work for the public to address critical environmental issues. Dr. Dill would like to focus on the marine environment in Esquimalt, education and public awareness.

Marlene Lagoa, Staff Liaison, is the Manager of Communications and Sustainability for the Township of Esquimalt. Ms. Lagoa is currently working on the required commitment of the municipality to be carbon neutral by 2012 as outlined in the BC Climate Action Charter. Ms. Lagoa believes in buying locally and that people need to be informed in order to reduce their environmental footprint.

(4) Meeting Schedule Dates and Times

The Environmental Advisory Committee will meet on a monthly basis on the fourth Thursday of the month. Meetings will start at 7:15 p.m. and will be held in the Council Chambers. As per the committee terms of reference, the committee will not meet in the months of July, August and December.

(5) Agenda Items and Distribution

Alternatives for agenda distribution were discussed. It was requested that committee members provide the recording secretary with the option that they prefer. It was noted that all agenda items must be submitted to the committee Chair for approval prior to inclusion on the agenda. It was also noted by the recording secretary that committee members will receive a monthly reminder via email of the agenda item submission cut-off date and agenda distribution date.

(6) Committee Accomplishments: 2006 – 2008

- (a) 2006 / 2007 Committee Activities Accomplishments Memo [Distributed for information.]
- (b) Pesticide Bylaw [Distributed for information.]
- (c) Pedestrian Charter [Distributed for information.]
- (d) Community Gardens Update

The committee started discussion on their level of involvement with any sewage treatment issues. This item will be discussed further during committee work plan discussions.

The Manager of Communications and Sustainability provided the committee with an update on the status of community gardens. This item is currently being reviewed through the budget process. A site has been determined and the Acting Director of Parks and Recreation will be preparing a report to present to Council upon final approval of the budget.

(7) Sustainability Budget (**Late Item**)

The Manager of Communications and Sustainability reviewed and distributed a copy of the sustainability budget presented to Council on March 17, 2009. Sustainability is a key component of the strategic plan and needs to be a top priority. Sustainability initiatives include completion of an energy audit of all municipal buildings and parks by the fall of 2009 and to work on a corporate

climate action plan in order to fulfill the commitment that municipal operations be carbon neutral by 2012 as outlined in the BC Climate Action Charter. In addition to the noted initiatives, the municipality will be working towards fulfilling requirements of Bill 27, which outlines greenhouse gas reduction targets. Action and policy development is required to decrease community emissions as outlined as an objective of the Official Community Plan.

Councillor Hundleby and Councillor Garrison noted Council's desire to proceed with sustainability issues.

(8) Work Plan Discussion

Work plan discussion will take place at the next meeting.

(a) Sub-committees

New committee members were provided with a brief overview of the subcommittees. A copy of the minutes from the April 17, 2008 meeting when the subcommittees were formed will be distributed to committee members for review.

Urban Landscape – garbage reduction; develop ways to reduce the quantity of items that are placed at the curb, whether it is garbage or recycling.

Pesticide Reduction – development and implementation of a pesticide bylaw.

Gorge Discovery Centre – provided assistance for the Nature House to get off the ground; reported back to committee on educational program offerings.

Driving Reduction – reducing SOV trips; cycling initiatives and increasing bike lanes.

Sustainability – engaging the community to be more sustainable.

Climate Change – development of a greenhouse gas survey.

Solid Waste – reviewed the use of solar garbage trash compactors.

Promoting Successes of Committee – explored options for promoting the accomplishments of the committee.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

- (1) Letter from the Recycling Council of British Columbia, dated November 3, 2009, Re: Plastic Bags

Moved by Councillor Hundleby, seconded by Mark Salter that the communications item be deferred to the next meeting.
The motion CARRIED.

9. ELECTIONS

- (1) Elections of Chair and Vice-Chair

Moved by Councillor Garrison, seconded by Councillor Hundleby that Edwin Hubert be nominated for the position of Chair.
The motion **CARRIED**.

Mr. Hubert accepted his nomination. No other nominations were received. Edwin Hubert was appointed to the position of Chair of the Environmental Advisory Committee by acclamation.

Moved by Lorraine Nygaard-Ishizaki, seconded by Eileen Palmer that Mark Salter be nominated for the position of Vice Chair.
The motion **CARRIED**.

Mr. Salter accepted his nomination. No other nominations were received. Mark Salter was appointed to the position of Vice Chair of the Environmental Advisory Committee by acclamation.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Edwin Hubert, Vice Chair

This day of , 2009

DRAFT



RCBC Backgrounder

Providing information on issues of importance

TOPIC: **Plastic Bags**
DATE: **November 3, 2008**

Council mail
Eniro Comm.
Marlene (public dissem.)

A number of degradable plastic products have emerged in the Canadian marketplace with claims of being more environmentally responsible than traditional plastic. For the most part, consumers are discovering these new plastics in the form of carrier bags from well-known retail, drug and grocery stores which have made the switch from conventional plastic shopping bags.

As the use of degradable plastic increases, so does the confusion surrounding the environmental claims put forward by the degradable bag industry. RCBC has created this backgrounder with the hope of better informing the public, elected officials and the media. This document provides an overview of degradable plastics and outlines some of the principal concerns surrounding the use of oxo-biodegradable plastics, a degradable plastic increasingly being used in disposable carrier bags.

What are degradable plastics?

Much of the confusion surrounding degradable plastics centers on terminology and, more specifically, with the seemingly interchangeable use of the terms "degradable" and "biodegradable". As a start, consumers should be aware that "biodegradable" and "degradable" do not mean the same thing.

The Environment and Plastic Industry Council (EPIC) has carried out considerable research on the use of degradable plastics in Canada. As stated by EPIC, the term 'degradable' broadly describes a material which breaks down into smaller pieces or particles; also referred to as a process of degradation. On the other hand, the term 'biodegradable' refers to the process that takes place after degradation. Biodegradation is the consumption of the smaller pieces or particles by micro-organisms, resulting in water, carbon dioxide and organic matter.

According to EPIC, the degradable plastics available today can be classified into three main categories:

- **Compostable:** materials that are designed to biodegrade in commercial/industrial composting conditions over a period of 180 days into water, carbon dioxide and humus, and which leave no visible, distinguishable or toxic residue.

- Oxo-biodegradable: materials that use a chemical additive to start the degradation process, with the remnants biodegrading over time. These bags oxidize and become brittle in the environment and degrade under the influence of ultraviolet light and heat.
- Water-soluble: materials that degrade in water, usually within a specific temperature range, and then biodegrade through the action of micro-organisms in the sewage treatment system.

For the most part, the degradable carrier bags that have been introduced in B.C. fall into the category of oxo-biodegradable bags. These bags look, feel, and act like a conventional plastic bag since they are similarly composed of petroleum-based plastics such as polyethylene. The difference lies in the chemical additive included in oxo-biodegradable bags which speeds up degradation of the plastic once it comes into contact with oxygen.

A common brand found on these bags is EPI, which claims to be, “the proponent and leader of oxo-biodegradable plastic additive technology” and is the creator of Totally Degradable Plastic Additives technology. Beyond an EPI logo, oxo-biodegradable bags tend to be identifiable by the *claim* of “100% degradable” printed on the bottom of the bag.

Issues of Concern:

Questionable Environmental Claims –

In the past few years, a number of concerns questioning the environmental claims and implications of oxo-biodegradable bags have been voiced. In terms of performance, it has been questioned how long these bags take to biodegrade and if it is possible for the bags to biodegrade in landfill conditions given the lack of aerobic bacteria. More importantly, concerns regarding if toxins remain in the environment after the product has appeared to breakdown continue to arise.

As EPIC has highlighted in relation to degradable bags, the Canadian Standards Association and Competition Bureau recently released a new set of guidelines to prevent businesses from misleading consumers about the green benefits of their products. The new rules require environmental claims to be clear, specific, verified and substantiated with erroneous or broad statements considered unacceptable. Terra Choice, the Canadian environmental marketing agency responsible for Canada’s EcoLogo program, has taken the issue a step further by publishing a document entitled the *Six Sins of Greenwashing*, which some critics may find of relevance to this issue.

Lack of Third-Party Verification –

One way to address and overcome questionable environmental claims is through the development of a certification program that presents third-party verification of a product meeting specified standards. A variety of such certification programs exist for

compostable plastics (e.g. ASTM D6400, ISO 17088, BPI, BNQ 9011-911) however, oxo-biodegradable plastics do not meet these standards and as such would require their own branch of certification. Such a program does not exist at this time.

EPIC is currently in the process of developing a Product Stewardship Guide and Commitment on Degradable Plastics, with plans for release in 2008. The Guide and Commitment is being drafted based on a similar degradable plastics initiative on which the Australian government and Plastics and Chemicals Industry Association partnered.

Unknown Effect on Plastics Recycling Stream –

Beyond concerns about whether degradable bags break down in a timely and clean manner, is the question of how degradable bags may affect the plastics recycling stream. While few municipalities in B.C. currently accept plastic bags for recycling, the introduction of a province-wide stewardship program for packaging could change this dramatically. The B.C. Ministry of the Environment currently has packaging listed as a products category under their list of *New Products Under Consideration*.

In August of 2007, Recyc-Quebec released a study that assessed the potential impact of degradable bags on the recycling of conventional plastic bags. Among the degradable bags evaluated were two types of oxo-biodegradable bags. The study found that while one version was compatible with traditional plastic bag recycling the other was not.

These results suggest that not all oxo-biodegradable bags are created equal and offers additional support for developing clear standards and third-party verification as discussed above. Clearly, more research will be required on the recyclability of oxo-biodegradable bags available in the B.C. marketplace if they are expected to enter the conventional plastic recycling stream.

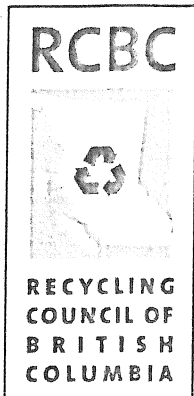
Use of Non-Renewable Resources without Recovery -

A final concern about oxo-biodegradable bags is that the product is composed of non-renewable, fossil fuel-based inputs and there is little difference in regards to energy- and resource-use when compared with conventional disposable plastic grocery bags.

If oxo-biodegradable bags are meant to break down in a landfill environment, as they are largely promoted as doing, the products will not be recovered through recycling, resulting in a loss of resources in the same way these resources are lost through the currently used disposable plastic bags.

The Recycling Council of B.C.
promotes the principles of zero waste through
information services, the exchange of ideas and research.

604-RECYCLE 1-800-667-4321 www.rcbc.bc.ca



Recycling Council of British Columbia
Single-Use Bags Policy

It is the Recycling Council of B.C.'s position that the issue of single-use shopping bags should be addressed through the B.C. Recycling Regulation, which would hold producers responsible for managing these products throughout their entire life cycle.

The objective of this program should be to shift away from single-use shopping bags and encourage reusable options whenever possible, with the remaining quantity of single-use bags collected and recycled through an Extended Producer Responsibility program.

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- An excessive quantity of single-use shopping bags are generated in the province of B.C.
- The extraction and production of the material to manufacture single-use bags acts as another major source of greenhouse gas emissions
- Responsibility has largely fallen upon municipalities and taxpayers to collect and dispose of single-use shopping bags
- Many local governments in B.C. are considering applying bans, taxes and other regulatory tools available to them to reduce the quantity of single-use bags generated within their jurisdictions
- These policies have the potential to drive positive change and encourage senior levels of government and the private sector to tackle the issue of single-use bags
- Many private sector stakeholders have voluntarily agreed to reduce the quantity of single-use bags that are distributed within their stores
- The combination of local government and private sector initiatives, while positive, creates a multi-jurisdictional patchwork of programs that are confusing to both producers and consumers
- Any solution needs to focus on all single-use bags and material types (plastic, paper, biodegradable etc.) and not favor any one material type over the others.

As passed by the Recycling Council of B.C. Board of Directors on December 5, 2008

Subject: Recycling Council info on plastic bags

Dear B.C. Councils and Regional Districts;

This issue of plastic bag bans is continuing to come before councils across B.C. for discussion, so I thought it might be useful for you to have a copy of the Recycling Council's recently developed policy position on single-use shopping bags and also the information backgrounder we produced on so-called biodegradable plastic bags. Our bag policy covers all single-use bags, not just those made of plastic, and will provide you with some information and wording that you may find useful.

If you require any further information or would like to discuss the attached, please do feel free to give me or our Executive Director, Brock Macdonald, a call at 604-683-6009. Brock is at extension 307 and I'm at 305.

Bets regards,
Mairi Welman

Mairi Welman
Director of Communications
Recycling Council of B.C.
604-683-6009 ext.305

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information services, the exchange of ideas and research.

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No one can do everything, but everyone can do something.