



**ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES
June 6, 2019**

PRESENT: Councillor Richard Zurawski, Chair
Councillor Shawn Cleary, Vice-Chair
Councillor David Hendsbee
Councillor Steve Streach
Councillor Lisa Blackburn
Deputy Mayor Tony Mancini

REGRETS:

STAFF: Kelly Denty, Director, Planning & Development
Joshua Judah Q.C., Solicitor
Simon Ross-Siegel, Legislative Assistant

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, information items circulated, and video (if available) are online at halifax.ca.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. The Committee moved into an In Camera (In Private) session at 2:57 p.m. and reconvened at 3:10 p.m. The Committee and adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m., in Council Chamber, 3rd Floor City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 4, 2019

MOVED by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Blackburn

THAT the minutes of April 4, 2019 be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Cleary

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

6. MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION – NONE

7. MOTIONS OF RESCISSION – NONE

8. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

8.1 Councillor Cleary – iMatter Climate Inheritance Resolution

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- An Extract of Minutes of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee Meeting of March 7, 2019

MOVED by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Blackburn

THAT Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council endorse the sentiments in the iMatter Climate Inheritance Resolution, which expresses a commitment to protect our communities and future generations from the risks of climate destruction, and that this resolution be forwarded to staff to consider in the development of HalifACT 2050 (the HRM climate strategy).

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9. NOTICES OF TABLED MATTERS – NONE

10. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

10.1 Correspondence – None

10.2 Petitions – None

10.3 Presentations

10.3.1 Protection of Snapping Turtles in Nova Scotia – *Paul Turbitt, Nova Scotia Association of Turtle Patrollers*

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A presentation request dated March 26, 2019
- A presentation on the Protection of Snapping Turtles in Nova Scotia

Paul Turbitt, President of the Nova Scotia Association of Turtle Patrollers, provided the Standing Committee with a presentation on the Protection of Snapping Turtles in Nova Scotia. Paul Turbitt discussed the organization's work, the nesting sites for snapping turtles and how to proactively protect and preserve nesting sites in areas adjacent to construction and bank stabilization work. Paul Turbitt asked the Committee to support the Nova Scotia Association of Turtle Patrollers by directing municipal staff to proactively contact the association when planning to perform planning work in areas adjacent to bodies of water, installing one-inch of clear aggregate over larger materials for all bank stabilization work, and allowing the association to return in November to provide a seasonal update to the Committee.

Kelly Denty, Director, Planning & Development, suggested that staff engage in internal consultations to determine to what extent the Nova Scotia Association of Turtle Patrollers' requests to the Committee can be incorporated into staff's procedures and return to the Standing Committee, to which Councillors consented. Committee and staff supported scheduling a presentation from the Nova Scotia Association of Turtle Patrollers in November to receive a seasonal update.

Several Councillors suggested including the organization's hotline number in their newsletters to raise awareness and educate residents. Several Councillors asked if the organization has contacted trail associations or trail wardens. Paul Turbitt replied that they are currently trying to get a presentation before the Halifax Regional Trail Association.

Some Councillors asked, when the results of staff's consultations return to the Standing Committee, if staff can return with information regarding the potential for highway wildlife crossings similar to those used in some communities in Ontario or elsewhere.

The Chair thanked Paul Turbitt for the presentation.

11. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD - NONE

12. REPORTS

12.1 STAFF

12.1.1 Halifax Urban Forest Master Plan Presentation

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A staff presentation on the Halifax Urban Forest Master Plan

Crispin Wood, Superintendent of Urban Forestry, provided the Standing Committee with a presentation on the Halifax Urban Forest Master Plan. The urban forest is defined as including every tree in the urban area. Responding to questions from members of the Standing Committee, Crispin Wood detailed changes to the municipality's process for planting new urban trees. Contracts now give contractors one year to see if a tree rebounds following construction, and if the tree does not survive, the contractor is required to plant a replacement. Regarding the urban forest program budget, staff identified challenges to ambitious targets including the rise in costs for planting and labour costs. However, staff added that despite these challenges, since the passing of the master plan the city has seen an increase in the canopy, and growth is exceeding losses. Regarding changes to tree planting location strategies for street

trees, the master plan research and monitoring component leverages sources from academia to identify better planting locations. Staff will be using data to improve the program and are currently prioritizing information to engage in planning regarding snow removal areas, poor soil conditions, and other matters.

Regarding pest management issues, staff explained that systemic pesticides, when compared to redirecting sprays, need to be considered thoroughly in relation to a comprehensive pest management strategy because they are expensive and often do not provide good value to municipalities. Their main value is for preserving beeches in small valuable locations to mitigate removal costs. Staff agreed with Councillors regarding the value of educating residents regarding diseases and tree disposal but clarified that food governing bodies are staff's preferred source of information. Staff noted that the municipality has specific information about emerald ash bore on its website and staff are developing an education and outreach plan for emerald ash bore. Current monitoring has identified infection in Bedford but is being somewhat contained from spreading on the Halifax peninsula. Regarding Dutch elm disease, staff noted that Edmonton has had a great deal of success in mitigating this issue. HRM has a very aggressive diseased elm removal policy which has effectively preserved a lot of elms in the South End.

Regarding the tree inventory strategy, staff stated that they aim to pilot the cost of a general inventory at this time. Staff would like to identify all ornamental trees in the city, which will allow staff to use a software system to address each tree individually rather than by address as is the current approach. Staff also hopes to know how many ash trees there are in order to develop unit rates to identify budget costs for the municipality.

In response to requests from Councillors, staff agreed to circulate infographics alluded to in staff's presentation regarding energy reduction benefits from urban forestry. Staff also agreed to circulate information on the Urban Forest Master Plan for distribution in Councillors' community newsletters.

12.1.2 Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw (Package A)

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated April 3, 2019
- A memorandum from the Regional Watersheds Advisory Board dated May 10, 2019
- A staff presentation on the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw (Package A)

Kasia Tota, Principal Planner, provided the Standing Committee with a presentation on the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw (Package A).

Responding to questions from members of the Standing Committee, Kasia Tota noted that the urban chicken quota was arrived at through consideration of differing standards used in other municipalities and typical regulations for Chickens. Six was chosen as an appropriate initial test number. With respect to the quota for urban bee keeping, planners consulted extensively with beekeepers and took a beekeeping course, both of which informed policy. As of this time, there is no allowance for the installation of chicken coups on green roof spaces, however beehives will be permitted.

MOVED by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Blackburn

THAT Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

- 1. Give First Reading and schedule a public hearing to consider the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, and the Regional Centre Land Use By-law, as contained in Attachments A and B of the staff report dated April 3, 2019;**
- 2. Give First Reading and schedule a public hearing to consider the proposed amendments to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy and the Regional Subdivision By-law, as contained in Attachments C and D of the staff report dated April 3, 2019;**
- 3. Adopt the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, and the Regional Centre Land Use By-law, as contained in Attachments A and B of the staff report dated April 3, 2019; and**

4. Adopt the proposed amendments to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy and the Regional Subdivision By-law, as contained in Attachments C and D of the staff report dated April 3, 2019.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

12.2 MEMBERS OF STANDING COMMITTEE – NONE

12.3 BOARDS AND COMMITTEES – NONE

13. MOTIONS

13.1 Deputy Mayor Tony Mancini – Styrofoam Recycling

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A Request for Consideration form dated June 6, 2019

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Cleary

THAT Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee request a staff report on options for Styrofoam recycling.

Deputy Mayor Mancini, with the approval of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee, withdrew the motion following discussion.

Councillors spoke to the importance of developing a strategy for styrofoam and polystyrene recycling and expanding producer responsibility. Several councillors had had discussions on this item through their contacts with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Councillors stated they would undertake to communicate further with the province regarding waste management solutions for polystyrene and promoting extended producer responsibility.

Laurie Lewis, Program Manager of Policy and Outreach, answered questions regarding staff's review of the recycling strategy for polystyrene items. Staff recently reviewed options to add polystyrene to the municipality's blue bag program. In a staff report brought before Regional Council on Jan 29, 2019 regarding the award of the operation of HRM's recycling facility for the processing and marketing of curb-side materials, staff asked the bidders at that time to review markets and costs. Based on the current conditions, it was identified that the city has weak market conditions for the marketing and recycling of polystyrene and adding polystyrene to the blue-bags program would likely produce a negative revenue. Staff will be seeking an update from plant operator and returning with a staff report in January or February of 2020 with options for additions of new materials. Staff added that when staff previously reviewed market conditions for the addition of new materials to the blue-bin program, staff determined that pots, pans and could be added at no cost to the municipality and the municipality will proceed in July to collect these. Staff also determined that aerosol cannisters could be added at no cost to the municipality, though due to safety concerns, it was recommended that staff not proceed to add these to the blue-bag program.

In response to questions from Councillors, staff outlined recent changes to the municipality's catering guidelines for polystyrene materials and confirmed that staff will be returning with updates.

In response to questions from Councillors, staff stated that were the municipality to refuse to accept polystyrene in landfills this would still not address the production, manufacture and distribution of polystyrene packaging. In pursuing extended producer responsibility policies, staff is aiming to explore options to shift responsibility to the producer. Staff further clarified that in current extended producer responsibility legislation, the producer adds costs to manufacture and responsibly dispose packaging and waste items to the overall cost of a commodity at its final retail destination and pays revenue to provinces with extender producer responsibility legislation for the collection, recovery and recycling of these products. Nova Scotia does not currently have extender producer responsibility legislation and therefore does not collect revenues under this framework.

14. IN CAMERA (IN PRIVATE)

14.1 PERSONNEL MATTER – Citizen Nominations to a Board/Committee – *Private and Confidential Staff Report*

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A private and confidential staff recommendation report dated May 28, 2019

MOVED by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Blackburn

Ratification Motion:

THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee:

- 1. Approve the recommendation made to Halifax Regional Council at the In Camera (In Private) meeting held on June 6, 2019; and**
- 2. That the private and confidential staff report dated May 28, 2019 not be released to the public.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

15. ADDED ITEMS - NONE

16. NOTICES OF MOTION - NONE

17. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair called three (3) times for any member of the public wishing to come forward to address the Standing Committee. There being none, Public Participation was closed.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – July 4, 2019

19. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

Simon Ross-Siegel
Legislative Assistant