



Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee Minutes

June 4, 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting
Whitby Town Hall

Present: Wenda Abel
Janet Dignem
Brian Kelly, Vice-Chair
Patti Mavins
Catherine Philogene
Bryan Widner, Chair
Zartasha Zainab
Alex Van Camp
Ginette Best

Regrets: Bob Willard

Also Present: Sarah Shields, Staff Liaison, Project Manager, Sustainability and Climate Change
Heather Ellis, Council and Committee Coordinator (Recording Secretary)

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1. Call to Order
 2. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

Recommendation:

Moved by Janet Dignem

That the Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee minutes of May 7, 2025 be approved.

Carried

4. Presentations

4.1 Jeanette Miller, Whitby Resident

Re: Challenging Climate Change Assumptions

Jeanette Miller provided a presentation regarding Challenging Climate Change Assumptions. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the viewpoint advocating for a greater emphasis on scientific inquiry over political influence in climate science;
- the rate of global warming;
- concerns about the reliability of some climate models used in policy-making;
- the role of carbon dioxide in supporting plant growth;
- an interpretation of statistical data suggesting a limited correlation between global warming and the frequency of natural disasters; and,
- a proposal to prioritize climate adaptation strategies instead of mitigation efforts.

4.2 Tara Zupancic, Senior Climate Change and Health Specialist, Regional Municipality of Durham

Re: Durham Region Climate and Health Vulnerability Assessment Updates

Tara Zupancic provided a presentation regarding the Durham Region Climate and Health Vulnerability Assessment Updates. Highlights of the presentation included:

- rising health impacts associated with climate change;
- strategies to prevent climate-related health impacts and reduce health inequities;
- objectives of the Climate and Health Vulnerability Assessment, including improving understanding, reporting on available data, prioritizing equity, and establishing baseline indicators;
- details about the Extreme Heat Report;
- projections for local extreme heat events; and,

- determining priority populations.

A question and answer period ensued regarding:

- information about the delay between data collection and analysis and implementing action programs;
- whether actions were being taken by Durham Region and lower tier municipalities to address the needs of the most vulnerable populations, namely, those living in older apartment buildings with no air conditioning; and,
- initiating action programs focused on the seven low-income priority neighbourhoods identified by Durham Region.

4.3 Lori Tesolin, Principal Planner, Policy and Heritage Planning, Town of Whitby

Re: Official Plan Review: Policy Updates to Prepare for Growth to 2051

Lori Tesolin provided a presentation regarding the Official Plan Review: Policy Updates to Prepare for Growth to 2051. Highlights of the presentation included:

- details about the Official Plan and its purpose;
- information about land use planning in Ontario;
- the four key focus areas of the Official Plan review;
- details about the sustainability policies in the Official Plan and policy considerations for updates; and,
- information about project timelines and next steps.

A question and answer period ensued regarding:

- whether the policy could include guidelines on what types of heating systems are deemed acceptable for new residential buildings;
- whether the policy could require or encourage builders to include air conditioning in new home construction; and,
- whether the policy addresses how to properly clean construction equipment to avoid spreading invasive species when moving excess soil.

5. Delegations

There were no delegations.

6. General Business and Reports

6.1 May Sustainability Events Update

Sarah Shields provided an update regarding May Sustainability events which included:

- the Emergency Preparedness Workshop;
- Home Efficiency Retrofit Orientation Webinar;
- World Migratory Bird Day; and,
- World Bee Day.

6.2 June Sustainability Events and Environmental Awareness Days

Sarah Shields provided information regarding June Sustainability Events and Environmental Awareness Days which included:

- World Environment Day;
- Pollinator Week; and,
- LEAF Community Stewardship Event at Rosedale Park.

7. Council Update

There was no Council update.

8. Other Business

8.1 Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program

Catherine Philogene provided information about the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) loan program for financing home energy upgrades.

8.2 Trees For Life

Sarah Shields advised that Trees For Life had free Butternut Elm and Kentucky Coffee trees available.

9. Next Meeting

Wednesday, September 3, 2025 - 7:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment

Recommendation:

Moved by Brian Kelly

That the meeting adjourn.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.