



Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee Minutes

June 7, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting
Whitby Town Hall

Present: Wenda Abel
Sara Best, Vice-Chair
Janet Dignem
Brian Kelly
Patti Mavins
Catherine Philogene
Bryan Widner, Chair

Regrets: Andrea Cecchetto
Robynne Dunn
Anahita Jami
Judy Rivers

Also Present: Councillor Lundquist, Mayor's Designate
Kristin Palilionis, Staff Liaison, Climate Change Coordinator
Sarah Shields, Staff Liaison, Project Manager, Sustainability and
Climate Change
Suprajha Vaithianathan, Staff Liaison, Energy and Sustainability
Program Coordinator
Heather Ellis, Council and Committee Coordinator

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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 Brian Kelly

That the Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee minutes of May 3, 2023 be approved.

Carried

4. Presentations

4.1 Erin MacDonald, Operations Director, Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests (LEAF)

Re: LEAF Whitby Community Greening Program

Erin MacDonald provided a presentation regarding the LEAF Whitby Community Greening Program. Highlights of the presentation included:

- an overview of the backyard tree planting program;
- feedback received from participants;
- the 2023-2026 Community Greening Program;
- selecting sites for community planting events; and,
- the benefits of the program and community participation.

A brief discussion ensued regarding incorporating Carolinian tree species into the planting program to accommodate shifting climate zones.

A question and answer period ensued regarding:

- suppliers of the trees and shrubs;
- those responsible for identifying tree planting locations and defining the terms shovel-ready and restoration planting;
- whether linear locations could be considered for planting such as several smaller areas connected via trails;
- tracking plant survival rates for the Community Greening Program;
- whether LEAF offered education programs and events regarding removing invasive species;
- whether there were arrangements with municipalities regarding stewardship of trees such as watering during dry season;
- the existence of school planting event programs and planting trees on school property; and,

- how to report LEAF planted trees that require attention.

4.2 Catherine Philogene, Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee Member

Re: Canadians and Climate Change: Knowledge and Perspectives

Catherine Philogene provided a presentation regarding Canadians and Climate Change: Knowledge and Perspectives. Highlights of the presentation included:

- an overview of climate change perspectives including human responsibility for climate change and understanding that greenhouse gas emissions were the primary cause;
- gender variations of perspectives on climate change;
- what Canadians were doing to mitigate climate change;
- how Canadians feel about climate change in relation to other jurisdictions; and,
- considerations for the Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- considering climate change in a broader context and actions residents could implement in their daily lives;
- a two-pronged education initiative that focuses on carbon emissions and daily strategies to combat carbon emissions;
- different perspectives on climate change between South American countries and those countries focused on manufacturing and industry;
- creating teachable moments;
- creating actions based on the impact of climate specific to locations within the Town, such as flooding in south Whitby and fallen trees in north Whitby;
- strategies for marketing and communicating climate change actions to the community; and,
- creating a strategic approach to educating residents on climate change by focusing on how it directly impacts them based on their location within the Town of Whitby.

A question and answer period ensued regarding:

- perspectives about climate change contributors other than carbon emissions;
- whether the Committee's primary focus should be education on carbon emissions and climate change;
- whether national and provincial questionnaires reflect public opinion in Whitby; and,
- increasing awareness of climate change and education about daily actions that may mitigate climate change.

5. Delegations

There were no delegations.

6. General Business and Reports

6.1 Roebuck Street Project Update

Note: The following item was deferred to the next Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting.

It was the consensus of the Committee to hear Item 6.3, 2023 Sustainability Events, at this time.

6.2 Project Planning and Work Plan

Bryan Widner requested feedback regarding the Committee's initiatives.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- developing a community survey over the summer;
- using data from national and provincial surveys;
- creating an education strategy based on data collected from surveys;
- whether the data on the average Canadian's knowledge of climate change represents the average Whitby resident's viewpoint; and,
- research activities for the summer, including:
 - determining the current understanding and awareness of Ontarians regarding climate issues;

- who the target audience would be for an education program, and what motivates them; and,
- current theories of social changes and creating social change.

6.3 2023 Sustainability Events

Pollinator Week - June 19 to 25, 2023

Suprajha Vaithianathan provided a summary of events for Pollinator Week including a LEAF event at Rosedale Park on June 24, 2023, and Wonders of Beeswax workshop at the Rossland Road Branch Library on June 21, 2023.

National Forest Week - September 17 to 23, 2023

Suprajha Vaithianathan provided a summary of events for National Forest Week including a LEAF Tree Tour at Cullen Park, and a Tree Planting event on September 23, 2023.

Kristin Palilionis requested Members to view the Town's Environment and Sustainability Webpage and provide recommendations regarding making the page more community friendly.

It was the consensus of the Committee to hear Item 6.2, Project Planning and Work Plan, at this time.

7. Council Update

There was no Council update.

8. Other Business

8.1 Durham Meadoway Visioning Study

Brian Kelly provided an update regarding the Durham Meadoway Visioning Study. Mr. Kelly stated that the language in the Terms of Reference were modified to include the possibility of green energy as well as high speed internet infrastructure.

9. Next Meeting

Wednesday, September 6, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment

Recommendation:

Moved by Sara Best

That the meeting adjourn.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Note: These minutes were approved by the Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee on September 6, 2023