



Energy & Environment Advisory Committee

MINUTES

A meeting of the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee (E&E) was held on February 3, 2022 at 4:00 p.m., electronically.

Committee Members Present: Councillor Jo-Dee Burbach – Chair Presiding, Craig Merkley, Councillor Bonnie Henderson, Vanni Azzano, Sammie Orr, Emily Skelding, Mike Sullivan, Anita Jacobsen, Mike Jorna, Felicity Sutcliffe, Patricia Osoko

Staff Present: Kate Simpson – Waste Reduction Coordinator, Alyssa Bridge – Manager of Planning, Casey Riehl – Recording Secretary

Absent: Geoff Krauter

1.0 Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

2.0 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None declared.

3.0 Adoption of Previous Minutes

Motion by Mike Sullivan

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

THAT the minutes from the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee meeting dated January 6, 2022, be adopted as printed. Carried

4.0 Delegate: Alyssa Bridge, Manager of Planning – 5-Year Review of the City of Stratford's Official Plan

Alyssa Bridge, Manager of Planning, outlined the plans for the required 5-year review of the City's Official Plan (OP). The review is expected to take 18-24 months to complete and will be implemented through an official plan amendment to the existing official plan. It is not a complete review of the entire plan, the primary intent of the

review is to ensure that Stratford's OP is consistent with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement. Some items included in the review relate to long term population and employment growth, policies related to intensification, natural heritage, cultural heritage, climate change and employment areas. Community and stakeholder consultation are an essential component of the review and will occur throughout the review. Staff will be bringing forward a report to the City's Planning & Heritage Sub-Committee that will outline in more detail the scope of the review and the tentative work plan.

The Chair opened the floor for members to ask questions regarding the 5-year review of the Official Plan. Sammie Orr inquired if sustainable development requirements and passive housing standards in redevelopment sites and residential areas could be included in the plan. Ms. Bridge stated that injecting some sustainability and climate lenses into the OP is certainly needed. At an OP level, it is challenging to require certain building components. An overall framework that gives more consideration to climate and sustainability creates the framework for other programs or policies like a green development standard or guideline that would provide more detail to be implemented through actual buildings.

Emily Skelding inquired when public consultation would begin. Ms. Bridge stated the OP review requires employment and population forecasting which is obtained through the 2021 census data. Staff are trying to align the timing of the OP review project with the release of the 2021 census data. Staff estimated the first round of public consultation would occur in the Fall of 2022. The Planning Act also requires a municipality to hold a special meeting of Council, which is the kickoff to the OP review project and gives Council a chance to formally initiate that process and the public can provide input. She estimates the special meeting of Council will take place in the Spring of 2022.

Mike Sullivan inquired:

- if secondary plans created before the climate change emergency being experienced now will be subject to review and strengthening in terms of not having so much sprawl;
- whether Indigenous consultation would be completed as part of the review; and
- whether the annexation of land that took place in 2020, which is no longer required, would be reviewed.

Ms. Bridge stated that the Provincial Policy Statement does require the municipality to undertake Indigenous consultation, which will be part of the consultation plan staff is creating. The annexed lands currently do not have a designation in Stratford's OP. They are designated as agriculture in the County of Perth OP. Part of the OP review project will be to look at residential and non-residential land supply. Staff will look at

growth forecasts for the City of Stratford for the long term and then do an associated lands needs assessment. Ms. Bridge explained that a number of the secondary plans are out of date. The scope of the current OP review is to bring the OP into conformity with the growth plan, complete long-term population and employment growth forecasting, and update the policy framework to align with the Provincial Policy Statement. Looking at the secondary plans is certainly something staff could do but would have to come subsequent to this OP plan review project due to the timeframe and budget allotted for this project.

Councillor Henderson inquired if items such as net zero standards for developers are included in the OP or a green development standard. Ms. Bridge stated that staff would create the overall policy in the OP with language that encourages the use of geothermal and net zero building and then use that future green development standards document to specify the details and incentives.

Sammie Orr stated that under the utilities section of the OP there was no mention of renewable or sustainable energy. She inquired whether this could be incorporated into the OP to open the doorway for future policies. Ms. Bridge stated it is something staff could consider, and these types of suggestions will be focused on and discussed during the public consultation sessions.

Mike Sullivan inquired if the portion of the Provincial Policy Statement dealing with energy supply will be part of the discussions of the OP review. Ms. Bridge stated that the OP amendment that Stratford brings forward must be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. Staff will work with committees such as E&E on potential policy approaches and ultimately Council will have the final decision if items are an "encourage" or "required" type of policy in the OP.

Mike Sullivan questioned if the intensification targets set in the previous OP have been met. Ms. Bridge noted that part of this review will be to measure what intensification has looked like in Stratford to inform whether they have been successful with the current target, if the current target is appropriate and help inform policy approaches going forward. Councillor Burbach inquired if the Provincial Policy Statement states what the intensification targets should be. Ms. Bridge stated that it does not specify a target for municipalities, it just requires that municipalities set an intensification target.

Mike Sullivan inquired if an affordable housing target could be included in the current OP, with a target of affordable as defined in the Policy Statement, which is no more than 30% of income for low and middle income families. He questioned whether there is a way that the City of Stratford can add an affordable housing target into the OP. Ms. Bridge stated that affordable housing is at the top of the list for many people and is definitely worthy of further discussion. There are a number of approaches on how to do it such as embedding a target in the OP or by setting a target in a housing and homelessness master plan which is then referred to in the OP.

Felicity Sutcliffe inquired if the Provincial Policy Statement is something that Committee members could review. Ms. Bridge advised she would send a link to the members for them to review.

Councillor Henderson inquired if accessible housing will be considered in the OP as well. Ms. Bridge stated further discussion could take place in terms of a policy perspective in the OP to try and encourage more ground-oriented accessible housing, as the Ontario Building Code covers multi-residential buildings.

Mike Sullivan inquired about flood lines, as the VPS now only requires that the 100-year timeline be used as a minimum. He questioned whether the potential flood lines and new flood lines will be a part of the official review. Ms. Bridge stated that staff relies on the UTRCA for flood mapping and some updates are required based on changes made to the regulated area and is part of the scope of the OP review. There is no intention to do a wholesale review of new flood limits or regulated areas during this current project.

Sammie Orr inquired if waste reduction could be incorporated into the OP. Ms. Bridge stated that from an OP level, encouraged-type wording could be included, but it may be more appropriate to have detailed information in a green development standard that contains more specifics than OP policies. Sammie Orr further inquired if under the Community Design Strategy/Active Transportation section where it talks about the bus system, could improving or maximizing the bus system be included. Ms. Bridge noted that from an OP perspective they always try to encourage the most dense development possible to make communities walkable and to get people out of their cars. The City has just retained a consultant to work on a transportation master plan and transit is a component of the plan. She will connect E&E with the Manager leading the project for further discussions.

Councillor Burbach inquired if standards for mixed development, such as retail, commercial, and residential all within walking distance are included in the OP. Ms. Bridge stated that the OP uses language about complete communities, intending to have a mix of uses such as residential, jobs, commercial, and schools in proximity to each other. Some municipalities, such as Ottawa, are promoting a "15-minute community". Building a more complete community can be looked at through the OP to create the framework to start to implement it through development applications.

Mike Jorna inquired if the current review will include updating the standards on the amount of green space in the city and the coverage of urban forest. Ms. Bridge stated that there are some existing OP policies that speak to green space in the community. They will be looked at during the review process to see if there are items in the Provincial Policy Statement that need to be reflected in Stratford's OP. Mr. Jorna inquired if the OP will set standards to work from or work towards. Ms. Bridge stated that standards should be set to work towards, and it should be ambitious as a way to grow and move forward.

Alyssa Bridge will contact the Energy & Environment Committee for targeted consultation, as well as include members in the online or in-person community consultations. Members can also be added to the subscribers list to be notified.

Vanni Azzano inquired if looking at projects through a climate lens can be included in the OP. Ms. Bridge stated that having a climate lens in the OP would primarily put that lens on land use planning related items. At some point Council will need to update their strategic priorities, adding a climate lens on the strategic priorities would filter down into all activities happening in the City.

5.0 Updates from Carbon Reduction, Ecological and I.C.I. Waste Reduction Working Groups

Ecological

Craig Merkley reported that the working group has been discussing salt management in Stratford. Staff is in the process of updating the salt management plan and has been invited to attend the March E&E meeting. The group also discussed the need for a management plan for the T.J. Dolan area to try and minimize the human impact in the area, such as side trails from biking, skiing, hiking.

There are plans to do additional shoreline work. Accessibility to the lake will be a focus which could be developed through a combination of shoreline revetement to work in some accessibility for canoes and kayaks. The most practical area would be the area east of the festival bridge. Vanni Azzano will be contacting representatives at Wildwood to consult on a similar project they did there.

Members were also advised the group discussed the need for natural heritage in the City. A suggestion was made to look at some possible land at the airport that could be replanted with native grass and wildflower plantings to increase a pollinator component there. Once some of the annexed land decisions have been finalized, there is possibly some additional areas that could be considered for plantings.

Craig Merkley has submitted an application for funding for invasive species in the T.J. Dolan area, specifically trying to address the phragmites spreading. Councillor Burbach noted that the grant that was applied for does not require any matching funds from the City or Committee.

Carbon Reduction

Emily Sykes reported that the working group is looking forward to focusing their efforts in 2022 on energy as a theme and looking at infrastructure and policy.

I.C.I. Waste Reduction

Sammie Orr reported that the working group will be focusing on single use plastics at grocery stores. Members would like to do informal plastic audits at grocery stores to see what plastic is being used and where it could possibly be reduced. Once complete, they will reach out to managers at the stores to discuss a collaborative effort to reduce

the use of plastics. Emily Sykes noted that the larger grocery stores likely already have sustainability plans and targets that they are working towards and set in motion.

6.0 Update from Active Transportation Advisory Committee

No new updates to report.

Members discussed appointing a member from E&E to participate as the representative on ATAC. Felicity Sutcliffe volunteered to be the representative for 2022.

Motion by Mike Sullivan

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee nominates Felicity Sutcliffe as the 2022 representative on the Active Transportation Advisory Committee. Carried.

7.0 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

a) Land Acknowledgement Update – Councillor Burbach

No new updates to report.

b) Update from Council on Climate Action Plan

Councillor Burbach reported that during budget deliberations she put forward a motion to hire a dedicated staff person and it was passed, becoming part of the budget. The entire budget must still be passed by Council.

c) Update from Council on Trow Avenue Development

No new updates to report.

d) Update from Council on Request to Adopt a Tax Deferral Program to Encourage Green Development in Stratford

Councillor Burbach reported that during initial discussions with staff, the tax deferral program could be considered within the development of a green development standard. Mike Sullivan inquired who is working on the green development standard. Councillor Burbach stated a working group will be formed to work on this.

e) Update on Shared Climate Change Coordinator Position

Emily Skelding inquired if there was an update on the continuation of the shared climate change coordinator's position that Stratford shares with the County. Councillor Burbach reported that it is listed in Stratford's budget, however, has not received an update on whether it is included in the County's budget.

8.0 New Business

a) Waste/Recyclable Collections and Bus Service Concerns

Energy & Environment committee members received correspondence from a citizen regarding waste and recycling collection and concerns about the bus service. Ms. Simpson noted that Stratford is currently in the middle of a contract for curbside waste collection and blue bins. She noted that there will be changes in blue bin collection system in the future.

Mike Jorna inquired if a recommendation could be made requesting Council consider a change to recycling every week, incorporating the changes mandated by the Province and getting ready for a contract that represents and incorporates all these items. Staff would have a couple of years to make arrangements for the new plan to be put in place. Kate Simpson clarified that when Stratford transitions in 2024 with a new contract, they will be adding more material into the program. However, the municipalities do not decide what materials are accepted, those decisions are made by the Province and are producer driven. Producers do have to maintain the status quo moving from the current contract to the new contract. In 2026, Producers can decide if Province-wide they want to do the whole Province weekly/bi-weekly, dual or single stream, etc. Municipalities can however determine what level of service for I.C.I. they have.

Emily Skelding noted that the purpose of the new regulations is to address some of the challenges of finding end markets for the blue box program and to promote innovation.

Councillor Henderson inquired if any municipalities have challenged the regulations. Ms. Simpson stated that the Association for Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) has an entire waste division to deal with waste and recycling issues.

Kate Simpson will e-mail the E&E Committee members the latest statistics on green bin and waste-related information. She will also share it with the City's Corporate Communication Lead to post on the website.

Councillor Burbach reported that Council passed a motion to hire a consultant for the purpose of creating a transition plan to move towards electric buses for Stratford. The plan will be created in 2022 and in 2024 the first electric bus is included in the budget to be purchased.

Councillor Henderson noted that the City has investigated smaller buses in the past, however the smaller buses still take the same turning radius, they tend to have a shorter lifespan and have higher maintenance costs. They do cost an average of \$200,000.00 less than a standard sized bus to purchase.

Mike Sullivan stated that the City of Toronto has a fleet of electric buses, and they are wonderful to ride and have drive by your house, as they are very quiet. The

City of Stratford could gain some real knowledge from Toronto's experience with electric buses, such as charging times and how long the buses hold their charge for various routes. Toronto's electric buses are standard size buses. He also noted that the City of Montreal is intending that their entire fleet of transportation will be off fossil fuels within the next five years. The cost of running the vehicles will go down by a factor of eleven. It is eleven times cheaper to run electric vehicles than it is to run gas and diesel vehicles.

Patricia Osoko reported that there is a Canadian company that retrofits buses, converting gas/diesel buses to electric. She will provide the Committee with some information.

b) City of Vancouver – Fossil Fuel Building By-Law

Mike Sullivan circulated an e-mail from the City of Vancouver's Environmental Planner regarding their new by-law that any residential buildings under three stories built in Vancouver as of January 1, 2022 cannot be built using fossil fuels to heat them or heat their hot water. This was a decision made by the City of Vancouver however this is currently not possible for municipalities here in Ontario as the province sets the building code. This could be a first step in asking the province to give permission for cities to have their own building codes. Mr. Sullivan will confirm availability for the March 3, 2022 E&E meeting to have him attend as a delegate.

c) Paving Across from the Lakeside Drive Bandshell

Anita Jacobsen inquired about the paving in the park area adjacent from the Bandshell and if there was consideration of run off to the river and if a porous surface could be used for the project. Councillor Burbach will review the proposal and clarify if paving is part of the project and if so what type of materials will be used and what types of environmental accommodations they are making.

9.0 Upcoming Events

- Festival Hydro Tree Power Event – Saturday, April 9, 2022 (8-2 p.m.)

10.0 Date of Next Meeting – March 3, 2022 – 4:00 p.m., electronically

11.0 Adjournment

Motion by Emily Skelding

Seconded by Patricia Osoko

THAT the February 3, 2022 Energy & Environment Advisory Committee meeting adjourn. Carried

Meeting Start Time: 4:00 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 5:34 P.M.