

Windsor-Essex County Environment Committee

Meeting held June 24, 2021

A meeting of the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee is held this day commencing at 4:30 o'clock p.m. via Zoom video conference, there being present the following members:

Councillor Chris Holt, Chair
Councillor Kieran McKenzie
Deputy Mayor Gord Queen, Town of Kingsville
Keri Banar
Derek Coronado
Rosanna Demarco
Katie Kuker
Michael Schneider
Richard St. Denis
Radwan Tamr

Regrets received from:

Deputy Mayor Leo Meloche, Town of Amherstburg

Guests in attendance:

Lyra Sheldon, Sofie Waters, Cameron Chevalier, Jana Jandal Al-Riifai, Karen McClellan, Windsor-Essex Youth Climate Council regarding **Item 4.2**
Chris Schafer, Bird Canada, regarding **Item 4.2**
Lori Newton, Bike Windsor-Essex regarding **Item 4.2**

Also present are the following resource personnel:

Barry Horrobin, Director of Planning & Physical Services, Windsor Police
Averil Parent, Environment & Sustainability Coordinator
Kevin Webb, Manager, Environmental Quality
Emily Briggs, Western Co-op Student
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 4:33 o'clock p.m. and the Committee considers the Agenda being Schedule A attached hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

2. Declaration of Conflict

Councillor Holt discloses an interest on Item 4.1 as he is currently working on a project with Barry Horrobin.

At the request of Councillor Holt, Councillor McKenzie assumes the Chair relating to Item 4.1.

3. Minutes

Moved by R. St. Denis, seconded by D. Coronado,
That the minutes of the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee of its meeting held November 17, 2020 **BE ADOPTED** as presented.
Carried.

4. Presentations

4.1 Via Italia Alley Project

Barry Horrobin, Director of Planning & Physical Services, Windsor Police appears before the Committee. He provides the following comments as they relate to the Via Italia Alley Project:

- With the extensive alley network that is in the Via Italia neighbourhood, are looking at trying to improve the spaces from a public safety perspective with partners that include resident business owners, other physical environments, i.e. schools and the Windsor Essex County Health Unit.
- The Via Italia Business Improvement Association adopted a business plan to enhance the safe functionality of their alleys, which are highly underutilized in terms of their benefit at this time.
- One of the things in that business plan talks about elevating the environmental quality and the environmental awareness of these spaces so they become more assets to the community and not something, that degrades the neighbourhood.
- Have identified 47 locations where additional LED lights will be installed and residents will be assisting in alley clean-ups, which helps to build environmental appreciation.

- These spaces should be seen as outdoor classroom opportunities; and areas of learning.
- In terms of alley lights, encourage abutting owners to supplement that with solar powered lights off their properties.
- Encourage box or vertical gardens in the alleys for growing herbs, spices, flowers vegetables so if many people do this. it will have a collective impact.
- Also suggests the use of rain barrels off the alley space.
- Opportunity for school age children to do community walks in the alleys to learn about features that have an environmental nature.
- Asks WECEC to think about organizing classroom days to do these walks

R. St. Denis suggests that the Horticulture group at St. Clair College be invited to be a resource for this initiative.

In response to a question asked by Deputy Mayor G. Queen, regarding if the success of this project will be shared with the other BIA's, B. Horrobin responds affirmatively.

Moved by R. St. Denis, seconded by Deputy Mayor G. Queen,
That the presentation by the Director of Planning & Physical Services, Windsor Police regarding the Via Italia Alley Project **BE RECEIVED.**
Carried.

4.2 Windsor-Essex Youth Climate Council

Lyra Sheldon, Jana Jandal Al-Rifai, Sofie Waters and Cameron Chevalier appear before the Committee and provide a PowerPoint entitled "Proposal for temporary protected bike lanes on University Avenue", *attached* as Appendix "A". The highlights of the presentation are as follows:

- The Windsor-Essex Youth Climate Council proposes a pilot project to test the viability and popularity of protected bike lanes on University Avenue.
- Pop-up bike lanes would be set up along University Avenue using a contemporary barrier such as flowerpots.
- The goal of this project would be to collect data on the usage of the protected bike lanes that could be used to advocate for permanent bike lanes in that location.
- The City of Toronto in 2020 added 25 km of temporary bike lanes to test their benefit.
- A study from the University of Toronto proved that the bike lanes increased the accessibility of stores by 10.4%, jobs by 22.3% and parks by 6.3%
- The Active Transportation Master Plan as approved by City Council states that its successful implementation will require "ongoing, long-term, significant investment and resources" into new and existing infrastructure, maintenance and education among many things.

Lori Newton, Bike Windsor Essex provides the following comments:

- The World Health Organization recommends riding bicycles or walking as a safe form of transit, particularly now during the pandemic. In response, cities around the world have created emergency measures to implement and expand bike lanes.
- The City of Windsor does not have a single kilometer of protected bike lanes in its downtown core and the residents are riding on the sidewalk, as they are terrified of speeding and inattentive drivers.
- People want to live in a vibrant, healthy creative city that offers amenities like protected bike lanes.
- People who care about the environment, who care about community do not want to live in a city that requires residents to own a car in order to get around.
- Requests that the proposal by the Windsor-Essex Climate Council be endorsed.

Chris Schafer, Bird Canada provides the following remarks relating to this matter:

- In support of the pop-up bike lanes along University Avenue for 2021.
- Moving this forward would have the benefit of having that pop-up bike lane on University during the bike scooter pilot that is currently ongoing.
- Studies show that protected bike lanes protected the riders as it separates them from vehicle traffic and protects drivers as they slow down in the areas of protected bike lanes.
- There is an environmental benefit in terms of greenhouse gas emissions - the more people that are using the bike lanes, the less they are using their car.
- There is an economic benefit, i.e. studies show that e-scooter riders are more inclined to use those protected bike lanes to visit local businesses and to spend money locally.

Councillor McKenzie asks if any discussion has been held with the Traffic Engineering Department regarding the logistics of how this would work and if all of University Avenue is included.

L. Sheldon responds that their proposal includes the area from the University of Windsor to Crawford Avenue. She adds that the cost would be minimal and internal. The only cost would be labour for City of Windsor employees and anything could be used for dividers that already exist in the city, i.e. flower pots. A cost analysis was not undertaken, as the cost would be minimal. No discussion has been held with Traffic Engineering.

K. Kuker concurs that the City of Windsor needs more protected bike lanes. She asks what would be used as a temporary approach.

L. Sheldon responds that they would utilize some form of a temporary barrier as a pilot program to gather data for a few months to bring forward to Council. This information would be used to push for more permanent infrastructure downtown. She suggests that flowerpots and cement blocks could be used as barriers.

M. Schneider notes there may be issues with liability with placing obstacles on the street.

A. Parent states from an administrative perspective, this initiative may not happen this year. When the recommendation goes forward, Council may ask for comments from Administration, i.e. the cost of the project and the materials to be used and notes that the pilot project may potentially begin in the spring of 2022.

D. Coronado reminds WECEC that the City of Windsor did pass the climate emergency declaration.

Moved by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by Deputy Mayor Gord Queen,
That the proposal from the Windsor-Essex Youth Climate Council for a pop-up temporary separated bike lane on University Avenue **BE ENDORSED.**

Carried.

K. Banar voting nay.

5. Business Items

5.1 Essex County Regional Energy Plan

A. Parent advises that the Executive Summary of the Essex County Regional Energy Plan is provided for information. The main difference in this plan versus the City of Windsor's plan is there are more science-based aggressive uptake targets. She suggests reaching out to Claire Sanders, Climate Change Specialist and developer of the Energy Plan, ERCA and request that she attend a future meeting of WECEC.

Moved by R. St. Denis, seconded by M. Schneider,
That the update regarding the Essex County Regional Energy Plan by the Environment & Sustainability Coordinator **BE RECEIVED.**
Carried.

5.2 Draft Municipal Resolution in favour of Federal action to Manage Plastics

D. Coronado indicates that this resolution came out of the Air Quality Subcommittee a few months ago because petroleum products are the feedstock for most plastics and the oil and gas sector is a major emitter of greenhouse gas and air pollution in this country. Plastics are also a major problem in the Great Lakes Basin and plastics are a priority issue for WECEC as well. Last year, the Federal Government completed a science assessment of this issue of plastics and concluded that plastic harms the environment. In June 2021, the Federal Government designated plastic as a toxic substance under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, which* allows for

all of the other components of the Management Plan to move forward due to that designation. He adds that the plastics industry is lobbying hard to stop this process and to slow it down as much as possible. It is important that the municipalities are relieved of the burden of managing the waste that is produced because they are not adequately engineering their products and dealing with extensive dealer responsibility.

Moved by M. Schneider, seconded by Councillor McKenzie,
WHEREAS plastic pollution is recognized by the Government of Canada, as well as governments and scientists around the world, as damaging to the environment; and

WHEREAS Canada lacks a comprehensive and coordinated approach to addressing the growing problem of plastic pollution; and

WHEREAS global annual production of plastic products is expected to double in the next decade, to 800 million tonnes in 2030; and

WHEREAS some 40 per cent of plastic production generates “single-use” items that are used once and thrown away, which runs counter to the principles of a circular economy; and

WHEREAS the majority of plastics produced are not currently suitable for reuse or recycling and some 8,000 tonnes of Canadian plastic waste end up in landfills, incinerators or the natural environment every day; and

WHEREAS municipalities are in the position of managing the end of life of products that are not adequately managed by the producers that put them on the market; and

WHEREAS investing in the circular economy creates jobs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Windsor:

1. Endorse the integrated management plan for plastics proposed by the federal government, which includes:
 - a. Adding plastic manufactured items as a toxic substance to Schedule 1 of the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA)*
 - b. Banning six single-use items: checkout bags, stir sticks, six-pack rings, cutlery, certain takeout containers and straws
 - c. Establishing a minimum requirement for recycled plastic content in new plastic products.
2. Ask the federal government to implement this important management plan as soon as possible and, in any case, no later than the end of the year.
3. Urge the federal government to establish a registry that publicly reports on:

- a. Descriptions of the plastic manufactured items put on the market each year in Canada
 - b. A list of chemicals found in each product
 - c. The amount of plastic that enters the waste stream in Canada each year, broken down by how and where the waste is processed (e.g. landfill, incineration/waste-to-energy, recycling, domestic vs. export)
4. Further urge the government to establish a framework for the adoption of Extended Producer Responsibility regulation across the country to ensure producers are responsible for the full lifecycle of the products they put on the market in Canada;
 5. Further urge the federal government to set a national recycling target for plastic products;
 6. Further urge the federal government to work with municipalities to explore, with a view to investing in, reuse systems to replace single-use plastic products; and,
 7. That the County of Essex **BE REQUESTED** to consider adopting the resolution as outlined above.
Carried.

Deputy Mayor G. Queen indicates that he appreciates the clarification made by D. Coronado regarding the municipalities themselves doing some initiatives which does not tie their hands; it encourages the scope as articulated by the Federal Government.

5.3 Food & Organic Waste & Biosolids Management Project – Recommendations from the Oversight Committee

A. Parent states this matter is provided for information and awareness along with the recommendations from the Oversight Committee that were provided to the Solid Waste Authority at their last meeting. She asks if WECEC is interested in sending a letter of support of the recommendations.

C. McKenzie remarks that he sits on the Solid Waste Authority and this is an important regional environmental issue. It will be extremely challenging and it is imperative for WECEC to endorse a regional approach to this. The City of Windsor will be proceeding with an organics program and curbside collections program. The other municipalities do not have the same obligations for the provincial statute.

Moved by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by D. Coronado,
That a Letter of Support from the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee **BE SENT** to the Windsor-Essex Solid Waste Authority endorsing the following

That the Food and Organic Waste Management Oversight Committee **BE DIRECTED** to proceed with a procurement plan for construction of a new Food and Organics Waste Processing Facility (“the Facility”) with the following minimum criteria:

- a. That the Facility **BE LOCATED**:
 - i. on lands adjacent to the Regional Landfill, or
 - ii. on lands adjacent to the Windsor Biosolids Processing Facility, or
 - iii. at a site supplied by a proponent through the procurement submissions, and;
 - b. That, consistent with the intent of the City of Windsor Community and Corporate Energy Plans and the Essex County Regional Energy Plan, that the Facility **BE DESIGNED** using a technology that produces renewable energy with concurrent recovery of nutrients, in addition to helping municipalities towards their greenhouse gas reduction goals and to meet or exceed waste diversion targets set out in the Organics Provincial Policy Statement, and;
 - c. That the Facility **BE DESIGNED** to accept, at a minimum, source separated organics from Windsor and the participating municipalities (confirmed by September 30th, 2021), through a curbside collection program “”, and;
 - d. That if the Facility is located at the Windsor Biosolids Processing Facility, biosolids from the City of Windsor’s wastewater treatment facilities **BE INCLUDED** in the minimum feedstock, with the costs and revenues related to the processing of the biosolids portion of the feedstock being apportioned to the City of Windsor, and;
 - e. That industry standards **BE EXCEEDED** regarding odour control at the facility and the end product, and;
2. That the 7 County municipalities **BE REQUESTED** to report to each of their respective Councils by September 30, 2021 for direction on whether those municipalities will participate in the Regional Food and Organics Waste Management program at its onset and to what degree, based on the recommendations of the Oversight Committee and endorsed by the EWSWA Board (attached as Schedule “A”), and;
 3. That the Food and Organics Waste Oversight Committee **BE DIRECTED** to report back to the EWSWA Board with a recommended Procurement

Plan outlining project delivery model selection, timing and next steps, and;

4. That the Food and Organics Waste Oversight Committee **BE DIRECTED** to pursue planning and environmental approvals for the municipally owned sites adjacent to the regional landfill in the County of Essex and the Windsor Biosolids Processing Facility in the City of Windsor, and;
5. That, prior to any contract award for design and construction of the Facility, the General Manager of EWSWA **BE DIRECTED** to report back to the EWSWA Board with a Regional Food and Organics Waste Management Plan, such plan to include the proposed funding model including sharing of expenses, revenues and environmental credits and responsibilities of all parties related to the Facility and the food and organic waste collection system.

Carried.

5.4 WECEC 2021 Operating Budget

A. Parent advises that the WECEC 2021 Operating Budget is \$13,108. She suggests holding the Pat on the Back Awards for 2021 (virtual if needed) along with the Green Speakers Series.

Moved by M. Schneider, seconded by R. St. Denis,

That **APPROVAL BE GIVEN** to an expenditure in the upset amount of \$2,000 for the 2021 Pat on the Back Awards.

Carried.

The following members volunteer to assist with the Pat on the Back Awards – R. Tamr, K. Kuker, and R. St. Denis.

Moved by R. Tamr, seconded by Deputy Mayor G. Queen,

That the 2021 WECEC Operating Budget provided by the Environment & Sustainability Coordinator **BE RECEIVED**.

Carried.

6. Subcommittee Report

D. Coronado provides the June 2021 WECEC Air Subcommittee report as follows:

1. Windsor adopted an Ontario gas plant phase-out resolution, not WECEC's resolution, but a similar one. Currently there are twenty-nine municipalities, representing more than half of Ontario, calling for a gas plant phase-out. Public advocacy has resulted in the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) initiating a Gas Phase-Out Impact Assessment. The public consultation portion of the assessment is now closed and the results of the IESO assessment will be available later this year.
2. Public consultation on the 2018 U.S.-Canada Air Quality Agreement Progress Report is now available on the International Joint Commission's (IJC) website. Public comments are being accepted by the IJC until the end of June at <https://www.ijc.org/en/2018-air-quality>

6.2 Environmentally Sensitive Lands and Issues

No report.

6.3 Public Engagement

No report.

7. New Business

7.1 Ojibway Shores National Urban Park Status – Time line & Future Actions

R. St. Denis advises that Windsor City Council at its meeting held June 7, 2021 adopted the following motion:

Decision Number: CR234/2021

*That the correspondence (attached as Appendix A) from Brian Masse, Member of Parliament (MP) for Windsor West dated May 18, 2021 regarding the long-term protection of the environmentally sensitive land referred to as Ojibway Shores **BE RECEIVED** for information; and further,*

*That Windsor City Council **ENDORSE** the request contained in MP Masse's correspondence, and that administration **BE DIRECTED** to petition the federal government to move forward swiftly to establish the Ojibway National Urban Park, as well as to secure the undeveloped shoreline property in Sandwich Town, known as the Dorion property, to mitigate the flood risk to the historic Duff-Baby House.*

Carried.

D. Coronado asks if this is currently an initiative or policy of the City of Windsor, why is it necessary for WECEC to endorse it. He notes he has more interest in the

strategy of the City of Windsor going forward regarding how this will be negotiated. The issue is if Ojibway Shores is not included in the National Urban Park, there is no point in proceeding with the national urban park because all of the other lands in the Ojibway complex have some level of conservation protection with the exception of Ojibway Shores.

Councillor McKenzie indicates that it would be appropriate for WECEC to endorse this proposal, as the Federal Government will have to make a decision to consolidate these properties under their stewardship including Ojibway Shores and to turn it into a national park. The government needs to hear that there is a consensus around this concept.

R. Tamr adds that as this initiative has been endorsed by the city, there is a timeline and specific procedures for implementation.

Moved by R. St. Denis, seconded by Councillor McKenzie,

That the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee (WECEC) supports the creation of the Ojibway Shores National Urban Park, and further, that a letter **BE SENT** to the Federal Government (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities; Minister of Environment and Climate Change) and our local Federal Members of Parliament to encourage the creation of a Ojibway National Urban Park.

Carried.

7.2 Greenhouse Gas & Energy Inventory 2019 - City Wide

A. Parent remarks that both corporate and community greenhouse gas emissions are increasing.

D. Coronado notes that the Community Energy Plan Administrator is only a temporary funded position. He adds that it should be reiterated that the city adopted the Climate Emergency Declaration and this position should be fully funded as a component of this.

Moved by D. Coronado, seconded by K. Banar,

That a Letter of Support **BE FORWARDED** to City Council regarding the Greenhouse Gas and Energy Inventory 2019 City-wide, and further that consideration **BE GIVEN** to upgrading the Community Energy Plan Administrator to a fully funded position.

Carried.

8. Communications

8.1 Notice of Public Information Centre – County Road 22 Design Alternatives and Strategy Study

Moved by R. St. Denis, seconded by Councillor McKenzie,
That the communication relating to the Notice of Public Information Centre –
County Road 22 Design Alternatives and Strategy Study **BE RECEIVED.**
Carried.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at the call of the Chair.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 6:25 o'clock p.m.

CHAIR

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR