



Meeting Notes

Of a Meeting of the Sustainability Advisory Committee

Monday, June 7, 2021 1:30 p.m.
Virtual Attendance

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With Councilor Rory McMillan, Andrew Fafard, Ashley Nordlund, Ben Reynolds, Brittany Bolund, Nancy Wagenaar, Natasha Stoyakovich, Patrick Paulo, Peter Hettinga, Stephanie Charles, Scott Schelske, Teika Newton, Geneva Kejick

Staff Kylie Hissa, Special Projects & Research Officer, Adam Smith, Manager of Development Services, Kelly Galbraith, Deputy Clerk, Mukesh Pokharel, Environmental Division Lead, Tessa Sobiski, Operations Support

Guests Amanda Kennedy, Margo Ursic

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:34pm

2. Blessing and Land Acknowledgment

Delivered by Kylie Hissa

3. Project Goal, Principles and Objectives

Kylie went over the intent of the project, project principles and the project objectives. Total membership is up to 14 with multisector representation. Kylie spoke to the mandate of this group and gave a brief overview of the project timing and phasing. The project is currently in phase 2 which involves going over the shortlisted projects.

Margot gave a brief review of phase 1 and notes that the feedback from the community was excellent. Phase 2 will include narrowing down and confirming selected projects.

Committee member introductions were done including a new member, Geneva Kejick from Grand Council Treaty Three.

5. Presentation

Margot shared an update presentation which included an overview of phase 1. Some key things that came out of phase 1 were ideas about principles, priorities, and project ideas.

Project principles that emerged from the process included:

- Partnerships with local indigenous communities
- Recognizing climate equity
- Sustainability being a shift in thinking and doing
- The power of small actions
- The importance of accountability

Top priorities that came out of phase 1 included:

- Water resources
- Supporting local businesses
- Creating walkable, compact, vibrant communities
- Reduction of local waste including composting
- Local food production and harvesting

Other priorities mentioned were local health care, renewable energy, increasing local greenspace, improving transit and transit alternatives, conserving energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing community relations, fostering growth of the indigenous economy, supporting affordable housing, preparing for climate change and increasing tree cover.

The long list of project ideas was over 60. Margot went over the steps involved to refine the long list into a short list of potential projects for phase 2 engagement. The short list of 13 projects will go out to the public. Criteria for the potential projects was discussed and included mitigation, adaptation, community priorities, reconciliation, partnerships, timing and scope, resources and co benefits.

The potential projects included 2 related to water stewardship, 1 related to local food security, 2 related to waste reduction, 2 related to infrastructure improvements, 4 related to energy conservation, 1 related to sustainable transit, and 1 related to community building.

6. Questions

Teika shared that, for project #2, the program already exists in some form. Kelli Saunders is the International Water Shed Coordinator. Kylie added that her work could be expanded through tourism, marketing, or economic development support. Kelli attended the first workshop and expressed interest in supporting this project and being a potential partner.

Scott noted that a lot of flood plain mapping has been done by Ontario Hydro for land claim settlements.

Andrew shared new energy retrofit grants have been announced by the Federal Government. The government will cover \$600 for an energy audit and \$5000 in energy retrofits. He noted an issue being a bottleneck due to a lack of energy auditors

in the area. Andrew suggests that there is a potential to work with KDSB to develop a service organization to get the energy audits done.

Concern with the lack of representation for future employment for youth was discussed. Adam spoke about a virtual open house or webpage that will be up in the next couple weeks about retention and attraction of youth to the City.

Mukesh shared the upcoming blue box operation where the City will transition to a producer responsibility model. This will allow the community to recycle glass and styrofoam which will be diverted from the landfill.

Struggles trying to provide water to vulnerable populations, especially during heat events were discussed. It was suggested a water bottle filling station project could have ripple effects for other populations in the community as well.

7. Facilitated Group Discussion of Short list of Potential Projects

Members are asked to rate each potential project using a "Mentometer" to gauge the level of support. Highlights from the discussion following the ratings of each project include:

#1 – Watershed management planning project

- Discussion about the scope of this project considering watersheds fall outside of municipal boundaries. Potential partners include Grand Council Treaty 3, International Joint Commission and the City's GIS technologist.

#2 – Outreach program to sustain local water quality

- This is already being done in part and could benefit from additional resources and support.

#3 – Supporting local food production

- Discussion about related projects that are already happening in the community and how to support them. An issue identified is problem wildlife in the community. Fencing can be a solution to this challenge.

#4 – Backyard composting program

- A community group has submitted a proposal to the City recently and there is community support for this project.

#5 – Coordinate construction "waste" re-use, exchange or resale

- Discussion about past challenges in implementing this type of program. The price of lumber/commodities may have created a market for this but buy in from the construction industry and local retailers is necessary. Some examples given include Re-Use store and Repurpia in Winnipeg.

#6 – Support municipal water and wastewater infrastructure renewal

- This project was identified by the City. This could involve a tax reduction to encourage more permeable space but other elements could be involved. Other examples given are rain gardens and water levies.

#7 – Incorporate green infrastructure into the City's asset management process

- This focuses on assets that the City owns and Kylie give the example of the tree inventory that has recently taken place within the City. There is now a requirement for municipalities to have asset management plans by July 2025.

- #8 – Emissions targets and accountability
 - First step for #9 and #10. Kylie discussed having a baseline greenhouse gas inventory for the City as a corporation and then extending it out to the community. Andrew suggested this could tie into the Federal Government grants. Teika shares that Ontario Clean Air Partnership is a resource and that she has researcher working on data collection related to this.
- #9 – Energy retrofits for existing housing and municipal buildings
 - Kylie suggests this could involve expanding the City’s Community Improvement Plan. Andrew offers his and his brothers assistance to help this move forward and suggests that if KDSB became a service organization, energy assessors could be trained for the Kenora area.
- #10 – Support net-zero emission renewable energy systems
 - KDSB is working on a net zero energy project in Lakeside. Discussion about time frames for net zero energy and how accelerated the City would like to be.
- #11 – Demonstration project to showcase delivery of renewables
 - The City is planning on applying to a green and inclusive program and Rec Centre staff are working on this. The City has also discussed a demonstration building in the downtown core.
- #12 – Support and expand small scale mobility options
 - Discussion about the importance of this to support aging and vulnerable populations. Councilor McMillan suggests working with the City’s accessibility committee.
- #13 – Connect Indigenous and non-Indigenous children with each other and nature
 - Discussion about this being the foundation of all projects and not confining it to children.

A bottle filling station is added as a 14th project for the community engagement session. An initiative may already be in the works and Adam will follow up on it.

It is noted that the community may notice that housing has not been addressed on the list and it is suggested that the project list could guide principles on how development happens in the community.

8. Next Steps and Wrap Up

A community workshop will take place Wednesday June 8, 2021 at 7-9 p.m. CST. A survey is also being circulated. The next meeting will focus on implementation of the projects.

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm