



**City Of Kingston
Rural Advisory Committee
Meeting Number 01-2016
Minutes
Monday, December 14, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
Councillors' Lounge, City Hall**

Committee Members Present

Mr. Sutherland, Chair
Ms. Conway, Vice-Chair
Councillor Allen
Councillor Boehme
Ms. Davidson, arrived at 6:43 p.m.
Mr. Tolls
Mr. Wolfe

Regrets

There were none.

Staff Members Present

Ms. Blumenberg, Committee Clerk
Ms. Hurdle, Commissioner, Community Services
Ms. Salter-Keane, Manager, Community Projects, Accessibility Compliance
Mr. Shipp, Sustainable Initiatives Coordinator
Mr. Piraino, Asset Management Coordinator
Mr. Van Buren, Director, Engineering

Others Present

Approximately 2 members of the public were present.

Meeting to Order

Ms. Blumenberg, committee clerk, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Election of Officers

Ms. Blumenberg asked for nominations for Committee Chair.

Moved by Mr. Tolls

Seconded by Mr. Wolfe

That Mr. Sutherland be elected as Chair of the Rural Advisory Committee.

Carried

Mr. Sutherland assumed the Chair and asked for nominations for Committee Vice-Chair.

Moved by Councillor Allen

Seconded by Councillor Boehme

That Ms. Conway be elected as Vice-Chair of the Rural Advisory Committee.

Carried

Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Mr. Tolls

Seconded by Councillor Boehme

That the agenda be amended to include an invitation to KEDCO under other business, and as amended be approved.

Carried

Confirmation of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Boehme

Seconded by Mr. Tolls

That the Minutes of the Rural Advisory Committee Meeting Number 07-2015 held on June 22, 2015 be approved

Carried

Mr. Wolfe followed up on business arising from the minutes, specifically on the committee report card and the 23 FIT Solar PV projects in Kingston.

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

There were none.

Delegations

There were none.

Briefings

- a) Mr. D. Shipp, Sustainable Initiatives Coordinator, spoke to the committee regarding the Community Climate Action Plan and the Community Energy Plan.

Mr. Wolfe discussed the Kingston Climate Action plan goal of reducing the carbon footprint. Mr. Shipp stated that Kingston's goal is to reduce the carbon footprint by 15% by 2020 and 30% by 2030 based on a 2011 baseline.

In response to a question from Mr. Sutherland, Chair, regarding costs associated with reducing the carbon footprint, Mr. Shipp responded that if coal burning plants are eliminated and energy was 100% nuclear, people's carbon footprint automatically decreases even if consumers are spending more.

Mr. Tolls asked how much fuel is bought in Kingston. Mr. Shipp stated that the data is gathered through sources of tax and that every fuel retailer and distributor in Kingston sends their data and it makes up the amount of fuel purchased in Kingston which is used to calculate the carbon footprint.

Mr. Shipp explained the climate actions community members can do to reduce the carbon footprint such as increased transit use, carpooling, anti-idling bylaw, landfill waste diversion and an increased local food plan.

Mr. Wolfe commented that the list has a lot of urban focused initiatives. He asked if it could be adapted for the rural area. Mr. Shipp stated that the list is not specific to a geographical boundary in the community but applicable to all residents.

Mr. Sutherland asked about the emergency response plan in the rural area. Ms. Hurdle, Commissioner of Community Services, stated that the committee work plan includes an update on the emergency response plan.

Mr. Wolfe asked why cows, due to how much methane they release are not included in the climate action plan. Mr. Shipp noted that food security is correlated with the negative effects of farming on greenhouse gas emissions and an effective ways to reduce people's personal carbon footprint is to eat less dairy and meat.

Mr. Wolfe encouraged that the plan include how the City is dealing with methane emissions.

Councillor Allen asked how the rural community can play a role in climate action plan and community energy plan. Mr. Shipp responded that the implementation of the action plan is narrowed down to the expectation that the community itself will take responsibility for the plan. He stated that the City will not be able to do everything, and

implementation narrows down to informing the community, making information available and encouraging the community to take action.

Ms. Conway, Vice-Chair asked for clarification regarding climate change shelters. Mr. Shipp responded that if the City lost power or in case of an emergency, the shelters are in place for emergency preparedness purposes so people have a place to go.

In response to a question from Councillor Boehme regarding if there was a climate change shelter during the ice storm of Christmas 2013, Ms. Hurdle responded that there was not a city wide emergency however the Invista centre had to be opened because there were houses that did not have electricity.

Ms. Davidson stated that a lot of proposed solar projects were envisioning cutting a lot of trees, and advised that the City should be preserving the existing foliage.

Mr. Sutherland advised that farmers can do a lot to fight climate change and decrease the carbon foot print. He noted that farms can act as carbon sinks and some farmers have been working on reducing tillage which decreases fuel consumption. Mr. Sutherland suggested that those points be included in the plans and more outreach be done with the rural community.

Mr. Wolfe noted that farmers could feed energy into the grid, and added that the plans need to have a rural component.

Mr. Tolls suggested that food security take into account the bigger farms as well as the small scale farms, as there are agricultural components within the City limits.

Mr. Shipp explained the Kingston Community Energy Plan, noting that it is a fairly urban focused project. He explained that it is a local economic development instrument in the context of energy costs, energy services, energy generation, consumption, and innovative service delivery. He explained that the Kingston Community Energy Plan links energy use and growth, specifically identifying the energy and GHG implications of different types of growth within residential, commercial, industrial and institutional land uses. Mr. Shipp stated that it examines all sectors in the community - residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, municipal, and transportation.

Councillor Boehme asked about taking into account the natural evolution of efficiencies and technologies. Mr. Shipp responded that the LED street light program is an example of the municipality taking into account new efficiencies and implementing them to decrease the total community footprint and a corporate footprint.

In response to a question from Mr. Sutherland about how the City knows which residents take advantage of energy projects such as the program to change lights or barns, Mr. Shipp replied that the City knows based on postal codes, however the information is restricted by privacy laws.

Mr. Tolls asked what a “liveable city” means. Councillor Boehme responded that it has a variety of meanings, such as making a city environmentally friendly. He noted that it can be used as a lens when making policy.

Councillor Allen stated that a liveable city equates being more sustainable as a city. He noted that it feeds into the need to take responsibility for environmental impacts.

Ms. Conway stated that energy can be a sensitive subject because it is highly politicised. She noted how all of the energy measures are put on consumers and not on producers who overload the grid.

Mr. Shipp agreed with Ms. Conway and stated that there is an energy storage problem. He noted that in London they produce energy efficiently and it is an example that could be duplicated in Kingston; perhaps work with Queens University which has a generating facility.

Councillor Boehme noted that part of the problem regarding energy production is that there is always a base line production over generation with wind and solar so a base load cannot be guaranteed. He explained that there is an over generation and it will take a few years for harmonization to happen because the transition to renewable energy causes an overlap of excess energy.

Mr. Wolfe inquired if the Kingston Community Energy Plan is linked to the City's Official Plan. Mr. Shipp responded that there is a link and the language between the two documents has been embedded to align priorities.

Mr. Wolfe stated that the Energy Plan is urban focused and noted that there is a lot of economic activity in the rural area that can be included in the plan. Mr. Shipp stated that consultation will occur in the rural area and many different partners will be involved in the plan.

In response to Councillor Allen about smart grid technology, Mr. Shipp replied that smart grid technology can control energy through monitoring energy consumption and identifying data termination points to control energy.

Councillor Allen asked if street lights can be turned off when they are no longer necessary. Mr. Shipp replied that there are options to have sensors on streetlights to consider.

Ms. Conway suggested that smart technology be used more in municipal infrastructure such as apps that can turn the heat on and off.

Mr. Shipp stated that the plan is a high level document and the next step in implementation. He noted that a good community to aspire to is Guelph with their community energy hub.

Mr. Wolfe thanked Mr. Shipp for his presentation and noted that the committee is advocating for the rural area, and part of that is advising staff on the rural perspective.

Business

a) Road Project Selection Methodology

Mr. Van Buren, Director, Engineering spoke to the details of the report.

Councillor Allen asked about the economic impact of risk and performance categories and wondered if the economic activity on rural roads is considered a part of the equation. Mr. Piraino, Asset Management Coordinator, replied that when risk factors were assessed the data emphasis was not put on agricultural traffic movement to support placing a risk factor on roads in general.

Mr. Van Buren stated that this was the first approach in considering economics as a parameter to evaluate roads. He noted that more detailed information is needed to provide more provisions and that things are constantly changing so the level of industrial investment in economic impact for road selection.

Councillor Allen stated that roads are essential for rural residents, and there is a desire for people to do more things like share the road and use roads in different ways such as active transportation. He advised that there needs to be an approach to the road project selection methodology that serves the community and economy.

Mr. Tolls stated that machinery is getting heavier and wider; however the roads are becoming narrower so it is more difficult to move the machinery around and it becomes a safety issue for vehicles to share the road. He stated that the weight and width of equipment needs to be taken into consideration.

Mr. Van Buren advised that improving engagement with rural residents when road projects are being considered needs to occur so farming equipment concerns can be addressed.

Mr. Tolls explained that equipment weight as well as the use of the road for example if it is the roads for access to the quarry, are variables that need to be considered.

Mr. Van Buren added that more attention to traffic volume and type of traffic when it comes to making a decision on road methodology is necessary.

Mr. Wolfe inquired if there is a connection with the winter control issue and the brush back on rural roads issue. Mr. Van Buren responded that there is a connection because having a well maintained road will extend the life expectancy of a road. He stated that brush back clearance ensures the ditches are operating well, and that in turn makes a for a better functioning road.

In response to a question from Councillor Allen regarding who determines the classification of roads, Mr. Van Buren replied that to determine if a road is arterial, collector or local the Engineering department works closely with Planning and Public Works. The classification is based on road capacity, surface type, and volume of traffic.

In response to a question from Mr. Sutherland regarding if roads used by emergency service vehicles is used as a criteria, Mr. Piraino replied that staff take into account if a road is used by emergency services.

Mr. Sutherland advised that roads should be well maintained and re-surfaced as opposed to reconstructed.

Mr. Van Buren agreed and noted that the goal depending on monetary investments is to resurface the roads every 5-7 years, but the reality is a gap exists. He explained that the City is trying to continue to build financial capacity and keep asset management maintenance so the question becomes how Council can make the wisest choices with the funds available. Mr. Van Buren advised that the surface treatment program is a small component that has to go into road construction, traffic management and other capital needs.

Mr. Van Buren stated that 1% of capital funds is used to improve infrastructure assets, however that 1% cannot be solely used on road projects.

Ms. Hurdle added that the 1% is part of a financing plan and is distributed to other projects like the K & P trail. She advised that there are other funding mechanisms like development charges.

Councillor Boehme asked about speed bumps and other traffic calming measures and if there is a mechanism in place so concerns raised by members of the public regarding road conditions can be referenced.

Mr. Van Buren responded that road condition inquiries are tracked according to location through Contactus and then sent to the appropriate staff. He noted that location can be factored into the analysis. He stated that the multi-year infrastructure programs are created collaboratively with other key departments such as Public Works.

Councillor Boehme advised that Contactus works, however sometimes members of the public want immediate answers and it could be helpful if Councillors have the information to respond to requests, and if a mechanism for how the information is collected and used to make a decision can be explained to concerned residents. He noted that understanding the methodology is key.

Mr. Van Buren stated that receiving input from the general public is important, and that when the input is received it has to be subjective to the decision making process as there are many variables backed by data which encompass road project selection methodology.

In response to a question from Mr. Sutherland on how the public can get access on what projects are being completed, Mr. Van Buren responded that there is a tool on the city website where you can search an interactive GIS map which is colour coded and indicates infrastructure projects.

b) Large Renewable Procurement Process Update

Ms. Salter-Keane, Manager, Community Projects, spoke to the details of the report.

Mr. Tolls inquired if the recent large renewable procurement applications had signed landscaping and site design guidelines to ensure the by-laws can be enforced.

Ms. Hurdle stated that those projects have signed agreements; however money cannot be collected for landscaping until the project is approved by the Province.

Ms. Conway asked what the probability is that a project will be approved in Kingston. Ms. Salter-Keane replied that there were approximately 200 project applications received by the province and only a few will receive approval. She noted that unsuccessful applicants will have to reapply if there is another LRP process.

In response to a question from Councillor Allen regarding what Kingston Solar LP has implemented from the landscape and site design guidelines they signed, Ms. Salter-Keane replied that the required landscaping and buffering have been completed. She stated that the City will hold securities for a period of two years to ensure the landscaping works are maintained and protected in accordance with good arboriculture practices.

In response to a comment from Mr. Sutherland regarding updating and re-visiting the landscaping and site design guidelines, Ms. Hurdle advised that all of the projects which went through the LRP process this summer signed the existing landscaping and site design guidelines so they will not be subject to new guidelines if the committee wishes to revisit the topic. She advised that direction in the form of a motion would be necessary.

Mr. Tolls stated that more tools for municipalities are necessary to ensure large renewable energy projects are located on less usable lands, especially prime agricultural land.

Councillor Boehme advised that it would be premature to review the landscaping and site design guidelines.

Mr. Wolfe stated that there should be a policy that maps out what proponents need to adhere to and consider such as density of the area and proximity to residential zones. He noted that if these parameters are established it would save a lot of time.

Ms. Conway stated that having the criteria and process explicitly stated would be useful and make the next round more objective to be fair to all the proponents.

Councillor Allen suggested the rating guide for natural lands and parkland acquisition would be a great template to establish a threshold of what should be recommended.

Mr. Wolfe suggested that staff and the committee reflect on the LRP process and come up with best practices on how to approach a future LRP process.

Ms. Hurdle stated that it is important to be prepared from the municipal perspective in case there is a future round of municipal resolutions.

Councillor Allen commended staff for their work in the LRP process.

c) Rural Advisory Committee Work Plan – Update

Ms. Hurdle discussed the committee work plan update, specifically the committee priorities and timelines.

In response to a question from Mr. Sutherland on what is anticipated in the first quarter of 2016, Ms. Hurdle responded that an update from communications as well as procedures on brush back on rural roads.

Mr. Wolfe indicated that several items on the work plan are dimensional and can be interconnected such as rural transportation options and the climate action plan.

In response to a question from Ms. Davidson requesting further clarification on the use of the Memorial Centre grounds as it relates to the agricultural fair, Mr. Sutherland responded that the goal is further improvements to the site.

Motions

There were none.

Notices of Motion

There were none.

Other Business

Moved by Mr. Tolls
Seconded by Councillor Allen

That Ms. Donna Gillespie, Chief Executive Officer (Interim) KEDCO, be invited to give a briefing on funding opportunities and programs in the rural area; and

That information be presented on the work and initiatives being completed with businesses in the rural area.

Carried

Correspondence

- a) Correspondence received from Friends of Cataraqui Ridge, dated December 2, 2015 regarding the proposed Cataraqui Ridge Solar Project.
- b) Correspondence received from Gary Gordon, President, Frontenac Federation of Agriculture, dated November 23, 2015 regarding large scale renewable energy projects.

Date of Next Meeting

Mr. Sutherland noted that the tentative date of the next meeting of the Rural Advisory Committee will be at the call of the chair.

Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Boehme
Seconded by Ms. Davidson

That the Rural Advisory Committee meeting adjourn at 9:22 p.m.

Carried