



Minutes of Natural Heritage Advisory Committee

May 13, 2021, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Remote meeting via Cisco Webex

Member: M. Litchfield, Chair
E. Damstra
E. Wilkinson
J. Richardson
L. D'Andrea
M. Puddister
N. McFadden
T. Nicholls

Staff: J. Elliott, Planner I, Environmental
L. Lefler, Planner II, Environmental Planner
M. Gibson, Planner I, Policy
A. Sandor, Planning Clerk - Policy

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

1. First Nations Acknowledgement

The First Nations Acknowledgement was delivered by the Chair.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

There were no disclosures.

3. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: M. Puddister

Seconded by: T. Nichols

The minutes from the December 9, 2020 meeting of the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee be approved.

Carried

2. Committee Items

1. Boards and Committees Diversity and Inclusion Project

Leah Lefler, Planner II, Environmental Planner spoke to this item.

2. Five Year Review of the Official Plan Update

Presentation:

Madeline Gibson, Planner I, Policy

Moved by: T. Nichols

Seconded by: E. Damstra

1. That the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee receive the staff presentation 'Five Year Review of the Official Plan Update.
2. That the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee members provide comments relating to the following questions for consideration by staff
 - a. Do you have any questions regarding the provincial changes?
 - b. What are your thoughts with the proposed policy approaches outlined in the presentation? Do you agree with them?

Carried

The following comments were provided:

- Consider the importance of building strong connections and agreements with GRCA to assist with comprehensive watershed planning and management.
- Consider the need to assess wildfire risk in Guelph.
- We want to see a definition of 'net ecological gain' included as part of the proposed Environmental Assessment policy change.
- Consider the following three items from the policy paper:
 - Introduction to Section 7.4 – ensure consistency between hazard and NHS policy;
 - Section 8.3 – incorporate resiliency into the policies to account for a dynamic situation (e.g. floodplains); and

- Section 8.4.1 – clarify text regarding ecoregions that are not significant.

3. Guelph Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Presentation:

Tiffany Hanna, Park Planner, Parks Department-Open Space Planning

Moved by: E. Wilkinson

Seconded by: N. McFadden

1. That the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee receive the staff presentation 'Guelph Parks and Recreation Master Plan.'
2. That the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee members provide comments relating to the following questions for consideration by staff:
 - a. Do you agree that Natural Heritage System has recreational value?
 - b. How should the City connect people to nature?

Carried

The following comments were provided:

- Consider including 'biodiversity' in the operational definition of the Guelph Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- We want to ensure that increased impacts to natural areas do not result from natural areas being considered 'parks' and/or part of a 'park continuum'.
- We want to have more naturalized spaces and pollinator gardens in the Open Space System to provide 'transition zones' between parks and natural areas.
- We want to build the appreciation and protection of natural areas through education, including the use of signage, technology, community programs, trail ambassadors, Park Rangers and knowledgeable Staff at parks.

3. Chair and Staff Announcements

J. Elliott, Planner I Environment, gave the following announcements:

1. Committee input will be recorded in the minutes.

4. Adjournment

Moved by: E. Damstra

That the meeting be adjourned at 8:30pm.

Carried

5. Next Meeting

Natural Heritage Advisory Committee - September, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.