



## **Minutes of Natural Heritage Advisory Committee**

**September 22, 2022, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm**  
**Remote meeting via Cisco Webex**

Member: L. D'Andrea  
P. Kelly  
T. Nicholls  
M. Puddister, Chair  
M. Young

Absent: M. Litchfield  
J. Richardson  
H. Slater-Eddy

Staff: J. Elliott, Planner I, Environmental  
J. Tang, Planning Clerk - Policy

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### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, M. Puddister, at **6:53pm**.

#### **1. First Nations Acknowledgement**

The First Nations Acknowledgement was delivered by the Chair, M. Puddister.

#### **2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof**

There were no disclosures.

#### **3. Approval of Minutes**

Moved by: M. Young

Seconded by: T. Nicholls

THAT the minutes from the July 7, 2022 meeting of the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee be approved.

Carried

## **2. Committee Items**

### **1. Formalizing an Adopt-A-Space Community Stewardship Program**

The Committee provided the following comments:

#### **Question 1: Are there potential benefits or drawbacks of the program to consider?**

- The Committee indicated the following benefits:
  - Provides an opportunity to leverage funding
  - Helps the City get more things done
  - Enables a strategic approach to community stewardship
- The Committee provided the following questions:
  - Will there be City funding support for groups?
  - Can reporting of 'infractions' be included in the program?

#### **Question 2: Are there key stewardship ideas or activities that are being missed or any issues with the suggested activities?**

- The Committee indicated the following missing activities:
  - Training (e.g. species identification, techniques)
  - Trail maintenance
  - Community science (e.g. ebird, bumblebee watch)
- The Committee also suggested that "people" be included in the definition of stewardship

#### **Question 3: Is a minimum time commitment for participants needed?**

- The Committee indicated the following:
  - Any required time commitment, at least at first, should not be too onerous or it may reduce participation; once

participants are used to the program perhaps can increase the requirement

- A requirement for only one event per year may not be enough to maintain a connection to a space; could define 'event' broadly to improve accessibility / participation

**Question 4: Do you have questions or concerns about the proposed program model?**

- The Committee indicated the following:
  - The need for insurance may appear daunting; make sure the requirements are easy and well communicated to avoid reduced participation

**Question 5: Have we missed something important before rolling this out and communicating about it more publicly? Do you have ideas to help communicate/spread the word of the program?**

- The Committee indicated the following:
  - The City's role in the program should include orientation (e.g. rules, health and safety) and helping groups to develop a stewardship management plan
  - The City should facilitate celebrating success with groups (e.g. bbq, signage, email, newsletter, lunch, gift)
  - The City should consider providing groups with a budget for refreshments during events
  - The City should help connect groups with the partner organizations
  - The City should clearly communicate how groups can sign up to the program
  - There should be a minimum number of people required for a group; suggest three people
  - Outreach to partner organizations will be important; as grant deadlines are often in December, they may need to understand their involvement ahead of then
  - Ideas to help encourage participation:
    - Large activities planned by the City

- Advertise at partner organization events
- Hold an information session

**Question 6: Are there natural areas spaces/projects where community stewardship is needed/would be appropriate?**

- The Committee indicated the following:
  - Howitt Park Phragmites population
  - The City should develop a list of places with associated activities for potential groups to consider

**Question 7: Do you have suggestions for a program name?**

- The Committee provided the following suggestions:
  - Nature Stewards
  - Guelph Caretaker Stewardship Program
  - Greenspace Caretakers
  - Champions of Nature
  - Guelph Neighbourhood Nature Caretakers
  - Space Savers Stewardship Program

Moved by: P. Kelly

Seconded by: M. Puddister

THAT the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee receive the presentation "Formalizing an Adopt-A-Space Community Stewardship Program"; and

THAT the comments provided by Natural Heritage Advisory Committee members on the "Formalizing an Adopt-A-Space Community Stewardship Program" be provided to staff and Council for their consideration.

Carried

### **3. Chair and Staff Announcements**

The following staff announcements were made by Jason Elliott, Planner II, Environmental Planner:

- The last day to apply to be a member of City advisory committees for the next Council term has been extended to September 28, 2022; existing members must re-apply
- [Nature Canada approved the City's Bird Friendly application](#) with Intermediate level status
- The [One Canopy Engagement Summary](#), which includes NHAC's input, on the City's Tree Planting Strategy can be found on the City Website

#### **4. Adjournment**

Moved by: T. Nicholls

Seconded by: P. Kelly

THAT the meeting by adjourned at 8:13 pm

Carried

#### **5. Next Meeting**

Natural Heritage Advisory Committee - to be scheduled