

Meeting Minutes

City of Guelph

Water Conservation and Efficiency Public Advisory Committee (WCEPAC)

November 27, 2019

City Hall, Meeting Room D

From 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Meeting Chair: Grant Parkinson (GP)

Vice-Chair: Jaime Boutilier (JB)

Present: Emma Thompson (ET), David Worden (DW), Patty Quackenbush (PQ), Taylor Dorland (TD)

Regrets: Justin Arbuckle (JA), Louise Cottreau (LC)

Staff: Dave Belanger (DB), Arun Hindupur (AH), Alexandra Marson (AM), Stephanie Shouldice (SS), Heather Yates (HY)

Agenda Items

Welcome to all

Item 1

Approval of the September 24, 2019 meeting minutes

Motion: To approve the September 24, 2019 meeting minutes

Motion Approved by DW

Seconded by JB

Carried

Item 2

Introduction to the 2019 Water Supply Master Plan – D. Belanger

PQ: made a declaration of pecuniary interest

Presentation A: Water Supply Master Plan Overview

Discussion

DW: Have any well sites come online since the last plan?

DB: Yes. Wells at the Arkell spring grounds. The process to do so took approximately four years.

JB: Do we practice aquifer recharge?

DB: We do not have the infrastructure to recharge the confined aquifer yet. However, we do recharge a shallow groundwater collection system using water from the Eramosa River during the summer if river water levels are high enough to allow for water takings.

GP: Will you take water conservation limits (i.e. an anticipated plateau) into consideration?

DB: Yes. Conservation is extremely important, but it can only take us so far.

HY: As we approach the limits of residential water conservation potential, we must consider whether we focus on maintaining water use levels or invest in higher cost or new and innovative water conservation interventions.

DB: Water supply alternatives will become more expensive and the cost of water will increase as a result. This represents significant dollars we could spend on conservation to avoid the need for acquiring water supply alternatives.

PQ: How do you assess eligibility for high water users that want to move into Guelph?

DB: We consider current and future community needs, impact on our resources, and the employment opportunities a company will bring to the community.

DW: What maximum daily use factor will you adopt for this plan?

DB: 20%-30% above our average day. This value reflects actual trends.

GP: Is there consideration for optimizing our current supply?

DB: Yes. This practice is something we do already and will continue to do. Optimization will always be a high priority.

Item 3

Water and Wastewater Servicing Master Plan – A. Hindupur

ET: Made a declaration of pecuniary interest.

The City has 11 master plan updates ongoing concurrently. The City is using this opportunity to share resources, study results, and feed off community engagement initiatives. The Master Plan updates will lead to an official plan update. Community growth and the Places to Grow legislation are major influences on the Master Plan updates.

The Water and Wastewater Servicing Master plan was last produced in 2007/2008. The update will include a hydraulic analysis to determine the accuracy of current modelling analysis work. Based on results, the City will adjust models as necessary to improve outputs. The Master Plan update will result in a capital infrastructure program of work. Council will approve a three-year capital planning budget (instead of one-year), providing funding security for multi-year projects.

Discussion

PQ: Anticipates that having multiple master plans updated concurrently will highlight the importance of sustainability well and shed light on the impacts of growth.

AH: The City is also considering all master plans through the lens of the Strategic Plan, including the Sustainability Pillar.

Item 4

Stormwater Management Master Plan – A. Hindupur

The Stormwater Management Master Plan was last produced in 2012. The new plan will have significant updates because dedicated revenue is now available through the Stormwater Service Fee implemented in 2017. The department can now pursue long-term asset management and tackle more progressive stormwater management opportunities. The plan will be more comprehensive than a traditional engineering Stormwater plan and will include, but not be limited to, the following components and considerations:

- Encompass natural systems and incorporate the Natural Heritage Action Plan.
- Retrofits to old facilities and designing new facilities to treat Stormwater. For example, there is a Low Impact Development (LID) community in the south end and the City will retrofit the Victoria Road Recreation Center with a rain garden.
- Establishment of design criteria for development applications.
- Restoration of water sources (e.g. address erosion issues).
- Update model to encompass all City stormwater infrastructure.
- Rainfall intensity and frequency analysis to monitor storms.
- Alternative Stormwater management solutions (e.g. green infrastructure and LID).
- The extent to which promoting infiltration is acceptable in our community. The salt used on our roads could have major implications for our groundwater supply.
- Capital program of work will be an output.

Discussion

TD: Will you consider soft surfacing and permeable pavers?

AH: Yes. The extent of their application may be limited to protect our groundwater. Salt used on roads, walkways and driveways could pollute our water supply if allowed to infiltrate.

GP: Have downspout or sump pump disconnection programs run their course?

AH: These may be programs worth revisiting in our community.

HY: Will you consider blue roofs? Blue roofs are a retention system. The roof holds water that slowly releases from the roof surface into the stormwater system to help prevent peak flooding.

AM: We would look at crediting blue roofs via the ICI credit program.

AH: Other municipalities provide incentives for retaining a certain amount of water on a property (e.g. first 12 mm of rainfall) but do not dictate the methods that must be used. This more flexible approach is another avenue we could pursue.

Item 5

Rain garden rebate pilot program update – A. Marson

Presentation B: Rain garden rebate pilot program

Stormwater and Water Efficiency collaborated to create and pilot a rain garden rebate program in 2019. Reep Green Solutions was hired to conduct workshops for residents and act as rain garden coaches for program participants, providing support via phone, e-mail and site visits. Reep educated residents about rain gardens and assisted participants with site preparation and rain garden design and installation. To participate, residents had to submit a pre-approval application to ensure their property was appropriately suited for a rain garden. Once the rain garden was complete, a site visit was required to verify the installation and rebate eligibility.

The pilot project was successful and 16 rain gardens were installed. The greater than anticipated interest meant a waitlist was required and the pilot was expanded to allow more residents to participate. The greatest challenge was that the pre-approval process placed rebate funds on hold for program participants, but not all participants actually installed a rain garden. This meant not all available funding was spent and could have been used by others on the waitlist to support the installation of even more rain gardens. This challenge will be addressed in the 2020 version of the program. Moving forward, participants will also be required to attend a workshop to qualify for the program. Reep will combine their two workshops and offer more dates for a single workshop to improve program accessibility.

Discussion

PQ: Are downspouts directly connected to the rain gardens?

AM: Yes.

PQ: Did you have applicants that were denied based on location or soil?

AM: Yes. Typically, denied applications were due to no appropriate rain garden site location.

TD: Could you conduct site visits and workshops in the late fall/early winter to prepare people for spring planning? This could allow for doubling up on rain garden installations in the spring.

AM: We can consider how this timing could work to our advantage. Currently, workshops are conducted in the spring when people are excited about the project and ready to plant.

PQ: What typical location do you need for a rain garden?

AM and AH: It depends greatly on variable roof sizes and rain garden designs. We consider these factors along with homeowner preferences and lot size when determining whether a rain garden is appropriate for a property.

HY: Do you have to capture the whole roof area to qualify for a rebate?

AM: No. We build the roof percentage captured into the rebate calculation.

DW: What percentage of the rain garden cost does the rebate cover?

AM: The rebate covered almost the entire cost of the rain garden for participants who constructed the rain garden themselves. Residents who hired a contractor to help had to invest some of their own funding, but the rebate still covered the majority of the cost.

TD: Will the City consider expanding the program to include multi-residential buildings?

AM: Large ICI properties will filter into the stormwater credit program. However, we did allow one small multi-residential building to participate because they only had one billing unit and did not qualify for the credit program. We are still considering how to handle small ICI properties.

AH: This will be important for development in the south end because there are no surface water tributaries in that area. New development applications will have to consider how they will achieve their water balance. This might require the use of infiltration techniques.

Item 6

Thank you to Patty Quackenbush – H. Yates

Tonight is Patty Quackenbush's last WCEPAC meeting. Patty has been on this committee since its initiation more than nine years ago. Thank you Patty for your many years of service and meaningful contributions. **The City's Water Services team sincerely appreciates your** engagement through this committee.

Item 7

Meeting adjourned 8:37 pm

Next Meeting:

The committee indicated that Wednesday nights are agreeable for 2020 meeting dates.

ACTION: Stephanie to create a doodle poll for six dates in 2020. The top four will become our 2020 meeting dates.