



**INTERIM TREE BYLAW
WORKING GROUP MEETING NOTES
Tuesday, June 13, 2017, 5:00-6:45 p.m.
Main Floor Conference Room**

ATTENDEES:

WG Members: Craig Bench, Don Harrison, Ian Ferguson, Nic Tsangarakis, Ernest Bodie, Lisa Morris, William Cafferata, Mary Gamel & Debbie Parhar Bevan

Council Liaison: Councillor Mary Ann Booth

Staff: Chris Bishop, Manager of Land Development & Erika Syvokas, Planning Research Assistant

Regrets: Andrew Gitt

1. WELCOME

Debbie opened the meeting at 5:01 PM, welcoming everyone. Jim Adams, a public observer was in attendance.

Debbie let everyone know that she is stepping down as Chair. Nic will fill the role of Chair and a new Vice Chair will be elected. Nic thanked Debbie on behalf of the group for the work that she has done to date.

2. APPROVAL OF JUNE 13, 2017 MEETING AGENDA

The Agenda was approved as circulated with the exception of the following additional agenda item: Institutional Analysis and Planning (under Vision section).

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING NOTES AND REVIEW ACTIONS

The notes of the May 23, 2017 meeting were approved as circulated.

Action items were reviewed. The following items were outstanding:

- 1) DH and WC to look at more plans for the areas that weren't looked at. COMPLETED.
- 2) Look at the plans and get the dates of before and after the Interim Tree Bylaw was implemented. DIDN'T SPECIFICALLY RECORD DATES BUT DID LOOK AT PLANS BEFORE AND AFTER.
- 3) The sub group will continue to work on the Vision and will present at the next meeting. ITEM ON THIS AGENDA
- 4) Debbie to send out process and timeline documents as a draft after making discussed changes. COMPLETED
- 5) Ian to look into cultural aspects of how landscaping is treated by different cultures. COMPLETED
- 6) Don to provide e-mail update on progress of quantifying the problem to the group prior to next meeting. COMPLETED
- 7) Nic to provide e-mail update on progress on the vision to the group. COMPLETED

A proposal was made to strike the procedural requirement brought forward at the last meeting that “future meetings need to be 50% focussed on making decisions”. The group agreed. Minutes to be amended.

4. STAFF LIAISON AND COUNCIL UPDATE

Staff Liaison Update: None.

Council Update:

Councillor Booth is reporting to council regularly to keep them apprised on progress of the ITBWG. Council is keen to start Phase 2 of the housing bulk study, however due to resourcing constraints this is on hold pending the work done by ITBWG. There is a key interrelationship between housing bulk and tree management, however the focus area right now is getting the community clarity on the tree issue and to have a go forward strategy.

Recently Councillors are hearing concerns about erosion, flooding and water damage as a result of tree removal. Councillor Booth has also observed other effects of tree removal. For instance, when trees are taken down weeds start growing so now invasive species are becoming an issue. An example of this is a property Mckechnie Avenue.

5. QUANTIFYING THE PROBLEM

Desired outcome: progress in the formulation of the statement. It was stressed that the group doesn't need to reach consensus this meeting, but rather provide input on the first draft.

Formulating the problem statement:

- 1) Ernie formulated a draft problem statement. Andy and Nic provided some subsequent input.

Problem Statement: *Increased residential development in West Vancouver has caused concern amongst the citizens as treed areas suddenly disappear. Our analysis shows that approximately 700 trees are currently being removed annually. When extrapolated into the future, the District will lose 7,000 trees in the next 10 years which is a significant loss of its “urban forest”.*¹

This trend, combined with an increased awareness of the benefits of an “urban forest”, has driven the need for guidelines and regulations. There are many considerations that need to taken into account as guidelines and regulations are proposed.

- 2) Ian provided his thoughts on the problem statement.
- 3) Mary proposed a combination of Ernie and Ian's problem statements as follows:

¹ Methodology: 150 permits issued in 2016. Before and after site survey plans were used to count the trees removed, i.e. on average 6 trees per property. We estimate that on average 2 trees are replanted. Calculation: 150 permits x 4 trees lost = 600 trees.

Problem Statement:

Increased residential development in West Vancouver has caused concern amongst the citizens as treed areas suddenly disappear. The challenge that the TBWG faces is formulating a design for the future maintenance and development of trees on private property while considering the following important issues.

- 1) *Maintaining the natural aspects of individual properties / community "design with nature" as development progresses.*
- 2) *Housing design to coexist with the need to create a sustainable ecosystem and environment.*
- 3) *Individual desires of property owners for maintenance of sunlight and views.*

Feedback for next draft:

- The group agreed that the problem statement needs stands on its own.
- Remove statistics
- Make more succinct
- Look to include Mary's input
- Describes what currently is the perceived concern
- Can we refer to opportunity (not just a problem)?
- Do not have a way of managing trees on private land – can this be incorporated into the statement?
- Reviewed North Vancouver problem definition:
 - o Key components:
 - Protect, conserve and preserve trees
 - Values
 - o Good but only has one side of the issue. A more balanced approach in relation to the character of DWV is desired.
- Key words: Maintenance and management
- Why we are suggesting changes in behaviour – should explain why we are changing
- Confidence and outcomes

ACTION: Ian, Nic, and Ernie to take these suggestions and work on the next draft of a problem statement.

6. VISION

Institutional Analysis and Planning

- a) Development of a design for research regarding current interim by-law
 - a. Data collection on the effectiveness of Interim by-law
 - i. Planning and Building Departments
 - ii. By-law enforcement
 - iii. Other departments
- b) Management of receipt of comments and categorization
 - a. Utilization Vision statement categories
 - b. Other categories

Discussion:

- The interim bylaw can be used as a basis to see what is working and not working and can serve as input to the vision and problem statement.
- There has not been a lot of rigour around standardization of tree information obtained to date.
- Need to standardize, capture and sift the information and provide it back to the group. Often don't hear about things unless you ask.

- Some statistics can be pulled easily.
- The group supports Ian's suggestion of putting together a prototype of a template for information collection that will help with standardization and consistency. The first step is to understand what information we want to collect/ what are the questions that need to be answered? Determine if it is a worthwhile endeavor. Can staff answer these questions or do we need to engage the community? What information can be gleaned from the community? **ACTION: Chris to talk to staff to see what information can be gathered. Ian and Mary will work with Chris on a template.**

7. SUBGROUPS (BYLAW, EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT) – STRUCTURE, PEOPLE AND PURPOSE

Questions to discuss:

- 1) Are the three focus areas (bylaw, education and urban forest strategy) the correct ones for the subgroups to work on?
- 2) Urban forest management – how does this fit into our work? What subgroup does this fit under?
- 3) How are we going to people resource these teams?

Discussion on Debbie's PowerPoint presentation slide:

- 4 subgroups: engagement, urban forest management, education and bylaw
- "Working groups" on Debbie's PowerPoint should be changed to "sub-groups". ES to amend slide/information.
- Need to share information between sub groups at working group meetings.
- Urban forest management:
 - o Developing the business case, with bylaw and education plan that comes out of it.
 - o Need linkage to bigger picture
 - o Holistic vs specific
 - o Ties into bigger policy (OCP)
 - o Interdependencies with other bylaw
- What does the community want? What are we managing for?
 - o Forest cover
 - o Erosion control
 - o Invasive species control
 - o Viewscapes preserved
- The Vision should guide us and represent all stakeholders' interests. Operative words: maintenance of trees, views, light etc. Can be indicators of work.
- Decision: Support for the 4 groups. Might change and adjust as we move along. How are we going to implement these groups?

Proposal to organize/structure subgroups in one of two ways:

- 1) Sub-groups focus on different components (e.g. bylaw, education)
- 2) Option 2: Sub-groups focus on same component (the most complex one i.e. bylaw)
 - Work independently
 - Outcome: Recommendations
 - Larger WG considers
 - o Similarities?
 - o Differences?
 - Arrive at overall recommendations (draft)

Then, reconfigure subgroups and members to work on remaining components/next steps. There would be a list of outcomes or recommendations that both groups would shoot for. Subgroups would meet in between meetings.

Discussion regarding the proposed subgroups and proposed structure:

- Suggestion that the expertise within the group could be used differently.
- Community development process – responsibility to establish an awareness of the tree bylaw.
- Need to educate people about what they are engaging them about.
- The tree bylaw is the final product.
- At this point we are not ready to make a bylaw. Need to go through a process to get the input so that we have the data to support a bylaw.
- The group agreed to the 4 sub-groups as proposed. **ACTION: continue the sub group conversation at next meeting.**

Discussion regarding public engagement:

- Councillor Booth commented that there is an opportunity to go back to the public because a conversation has been started. The bylaw got people talking about trees. The initial consultation and survey was done just after the bylaw came into effect. Opportunity to now go back out to the community to ask what they think of the bylaw (i.e. how is it working? What would you change about it?)
- options: 1) Engage early, 2) engage later – the working group to come up with recommendations and then get feedback or 3) do some public engaging now and then go back to public with more later (similar to what invasive species group did). The first survey – biggest issue with the first survey was that it asked the wrong questions. Didn't ask if they wanted bylaw or not.
- The majority of the group support a combination of early engagement and then engaging again later in the process.
- Initial engagement – what should it look like? (i.e. stages, methods/tactics, how will we use the information to inform our work?) Can advertise in the paper. Have a way of going back to the people who were surveyed previously. **ACTION: Debbie, Lisa, Craig, Mary volunteered to form the engagement sub group. The group will report back at the next meeting.**
- Need to provide interim report to the CEC before doing any public engagement. **ACTION: Chris to put ITBWG check in on CEC agenda before the end of July.**

8. GOVERNANCE – WORKING GROUP ROLES

Section of a replacement Vice Chair will follow the following democratic process:

- 1) Members have been asked to consider volunteering for the role
- 2) Volunteers to indicate their interest in the role
- 3) The candidates will be asked to leave the meeting room
- 4) The Working Group members vote
- 5) Decision announced

ACTION: Selection of the Vice Chair for the working group to be carried forward to next meeting.

9. HEAR FROM RESIDENTS ATTENDING OUR MEETING/ GENERAL

Jim Adams, a resident at 4709 Rutland Road in Caulfeild, provided some background on his concerns around the Interim Tree Bylaw. He says he is going to lose \$300,000 in

property value due to trees planted on the boulevard across the street from him which are impacting his view. He questioned why the decision rests on 80% of neighbours and rather than simply the majority. He considers it a bad law.

The group thanked Mr. Adams for his attendance at the meeting and for sharing his viewpoint. *Note: Clarification that he was referring specifically to trees on the boulevard which are outside of the group's scope, but his comments provide context to the issue nonetheless.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m.