

**TOWN OF CANMORE
MINUTES**

Environmental Advisory Review Committee
Classroom, Canmore Civic Centre
6pm Tuesday, Monday January 6, 2020

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Bob Raina	Chair
Karena Thieme	Vice Chair
Sari Ohsada	Public Member
Dominique Lagloire-Galipeau	Public Member
Ralph Walicki	Public Member
Richard Daniel	Public Member
Julie Ulan	Public Member (via Skype)
Cheryl Hojnowski	Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley Liaison

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Councillor Esme Comfort	Council Representative
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ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Lori Rissling Wynn	Town of Canmore Liaison, Sustainability Coordinator
Amy Fournier	Town of Canmore, minute recorder, Climate Change Specialist

Action items in red.

A. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- Meeting called to order by Bob Raina at 5:03 pm.
- Agenda approved with no additions.
- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
- Minutes from November 12, 2019 meeting had been sent to EARC members via email on November 20, 2019 and approved.
- **NEW BUSINESS**
 - **Update on paid parking and Integrated Transportation Plan –Andy Esarte, Manager of Engineering**
- A. Esarte provided an overview of [paid parking](#) and how it supports the goals and other priority initiatives in the [Integrated Transportation Plan](#) (ITP). The PDF of the ITP can be downloaded from this [page](#). Paid parking will be implemented in the Town Centre beginning in June 2020.
- K. Thieme asked for clarification on what was covered by the ITP. A. Esarte specified that it is focused on the core area.
- R. Daniels asked if this would provide enough of a disincentive to ease congestion. A. Esarte stated that it is possible that parking may be priced too high or too low and congestion due to people circling while looking for parking spots may continue. Prices will be adjusted to encourage people to park in areas where the data show more availability in peak times.

- K. Thieme asked if moving away from decentralized parking and making Main Street pedestrian only was considered. A. Esarte responded that in the ITP there is consideration of making the two west blocks of main street as “activity streets”, where the infrastructure makes it easier to close down the street for events and initiatives on a more incremental basis. This would give these blocks the flexibility to be a more vibrant and activated space when weather and visitation are more ideal, as opposed to a year-round closure.
- D. Lagloire-Galipeau asked whether focusing on making transit more convenient with higher frequency and additional routes was considered as a strategy to increase ridership as opposed to free fare. A. Esarte responded that our fare recovery is too low to fund any significant increase in frequency, given the cost of new buses and staff to operate them. Ridership has increased 60% with free fare pilots so it has been demonstrated that this is an effective way to encourage transit use.
- K. Thieme asked if Canmore would be getting electric buses. A. Esarte stated he doesn’t support the idea at this time as investment in infrastructure will increase ridership and have an expected higher GHG impact than if those funds are used to switch to EV buses.
- K. Thieme asked if intercept lots are planned. A. Esarte responded that it is challenging to make them an easy and attractive enough option for people to use them instead of driving downtown. He feels it is best to focus on offering a really amazing walking experience from all of the close-by hotels that have ample parking lots and that these, in effect, act as intercept parking for overnight visitors. Groups traveling together in vehicles for day trips are more efficient users of downtown parking spaces.
- B. Raina asked if there is a plan to improve on-street cycling route marking and signage. A. Esarte responded that the focus is to provide more separated cycling and walking paths as that has been demonstrated to more effectively increase mode share, but we will be refreshing the existing white on-street painted route indicators.
- K. Thieme asked about bike sharing. A. Esarte noted that Economic Development had completed a small study on bike sharing and it was determined that the most promising model for Canmore is a hotel-based system focused on tourists. Most residents who would cycle already have bikes and we are not big enough to have larger scale bike share programs such as those in Calgary that aim to compliment commuting and downtown transit. We are still a couple of years out for focusing on bike share because we want to first complete the gaps in the cycling route network.
- K. Thieme asked about better clearing of the roads as icy conditions make it unappealing to cycle, even with studded tires. A. Esarte responded that it is important to maintain a solid winter ridership as it facilitates overall increased cycling mode share. We recognize that we should be doing better in this area but it is challenging with the resources and infrastructure and weather conditions. A continued push is needed if this area is to be prioritized.
- **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
 - **Climate Emergency Letter**
- L. Rissling Wynn read the response to the Mayor’s letter to the premier regarding our Climate Emergency declaration. The response letter was addressed from Jason Nixon, Minister of Environment and Parks. He stated that the province is in a period of fiscal restraint and the government is looking for cost-effective ways to enable communities to address climate change, they are confident that the TIER program will be an effective mechanism and centerpiece of Alberta’s approach to climate change, and directed us to Roger Armstrong, Director of Adaptation and Energy Efficiency.
- C. Hojnowski asked whether we had heard anything about increased federal funding being available, noting that she needs to follow up with her contact in Ottawa, as he had previously said to check back in the new year. L. Rissling Wynn responded that we haven’t, though we’ve been notified that

the Low Carbon Cities Canada funding through FCM will be focused on reducing emissions in Calgary and Edmonton only.

- K. Thieme asked about the Victoria Call to Action that was discussed at the previous EARC meeting and what the Mayor did for his 24 day follow up action. **L. Rissling Wynn to inquire.**

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. 2020 Approved Budget items

- L. Rissling Wynn provided an update on the wildlife-related initiatives approved in December for the 2020 Capital Budget:
 - Centennial Park Wildlife Fence: While the wildlife fencing for Centennial Park was planned for last year there were no proposals submitted in response to our RFP for the fence. The RFP will be re-issued and we are hoping that the fence will be constructed before the summer.
 - [Quarry Lake off-leash dog area](#) : The 1km loop trail will return to on leash zone and there will be two official off leash areas - the meadow area and the pond area. These will have post and cable fencing clearly delineating the on and off-leash areas. All areas outside these two zones will be on leash, including the 1km loop trail. This is viewed as a compromise solution as it allows for continued use of off-leash areas including the dog pond, giving dog owners a place to swim their dogs, but reducing the off-leash zone within wildlife habitat patch acknowledges the importance of use of the area by wildlife. This also more clearly indicates where dogs are allowed off leash as during the pilot project there has been confusion how far away from the forested loop trail dogs are allowed off leash. The change will also make it easier to enforce. C. Hojnowski asked if by-law officers would be monitoring compliance with cameras. L. Rissling Wynn responded that the Town doesn't have the resources for surveillance cameras and there are no Alberta Parks wildlife cameras nearby, but that by-law staff would be enforcing. C. Hojnowski responded that the Biosphere may be able to help get some wildlife cameras in the area to gauge how wildlife are traveling through the habitat patch. R. Daniels stated that after understanding the rationale this change makes sense, but this messaging hasn't seemed to be broadly communicated. L. Rissling Wynn noted that the media article about the change was only a short summary of what was covered in the interview.
 - Wildlife co-existence campaign: There is also approved funding for a campaign with the Town of Banff – social norms campaign with messaging focused on coexisting near wildlife.
 - Fruit tree removal incentive: The incentive will continue to encourage people to remove their wildlife attracting fruit trees. K. Thieme asked if we'd be looking at community gardens as a safer way to still have fruit trees, perhaps install one in the middle of the dog park. L. Rissling Wynn stated that we have two fenced community gardens and the Bow Valley Food Alliance is looking at more community gardens and potentially a greenhouse, though it is challenging in this land-constrained region.
- A. Fournier provided an update on the approved budget items relating to the Climate Action Plan:
 - Renewable Energy Feasibility Study and Plan: The \$50,000 we requested was approved. The Climate Action Plan stated that we will work towards developing a renewable target. Before developing a target and plan we need to have a consultant with expertise in renewable energy systems to evaluate different renewable energy options for both community and corporate energy consumption. The most promising options will undergo a more in-depth cost-benefit analysis. The goal is to provide Council with a high level of confidence when asked to make decisions on investing in renewable energy. FCM has funding streams that cover 50% of the cost of studies and we are seeking to have them match our \$50,000. R. Daniels asked if we thought this would be sufficient given the high number of different options and consulting costs. A. Fournier replied this is why we are seeking the matching funding from FCM and we plan to

triate the different options so that only the ones that seem like they will be technically and economically feasible will undergo significant analysis.

- EV fleet study: \$5,000 was approved for a feasibility analysis on the suitability of EVs for a portion of our vehicle and equipment fleet. Through their [Electric Vehicles for Municipalities Program](#), the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre (MCCAC) will match this funding and has a prescriptive scope and approach for the study, as well as pre-approved consultants. Should the study indicate that EVs are a good option MCCAC also provides funding to help cover cost of EVs and chargers. R. Daniels expressed concern about EVs not providing a GHG benefit due to the Alberta electricity grid being so carbon intensive and asked if hybrids will be covered. A. Fournier replied that there is still a GHG benefit, even with the grid in its current state and that this will increase as the grid continues to get cleaner as coal is phased out. Plug-in hybrids are covered in the scope. K. Thieme suggested that the EV charging sources be considered along with the renewable study.
- Our operational GHG reduction initiatives budget for 2020 was approved, which includes \$10,000 for solar rooftop incentives and \$5,000 for the studded bike tire rebate.

2. BCCF Climate Action workshop

- L. Rissling Wynn advised that the Banff Canmore Community Foundation is convening a discussion on climate action in the Bow Valley on Thursday, January 16, 2020, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm at the Canmore Opera House. The purpose of the meeting is to bring together representatives from municipalities, schools, hospitals, industry organizations, businesses, provincial and federal agencies and environmental groups to better understand what efforts are being made to communicate and address greenhouse gas emissions in the Bow Valley and what opportunities there might be for further collaboration between businesses, across sectors and between agencies and municipalities. The Foundation will be setting aside some grant funding specifically to address greenhouse gas emissions in 2020. If EARC members who aren't already attending would like to, please advise Lori.

C. ROUNDTABLE

- K. Thieme and C. Hojnowski advised of the Canmore Community Solar - The Results event on Feb 11, from 7- 8:30 pm, at artsPlace Theatre. In 2019, the Biosphere Institute and project partners began a feasibility study to find suitable locations for a community-owned solar project in Canmore. During this process, the Biosphere Institute joined with local community members to form a small steering committee, to investigate community financing options. This event will showcase the results of the feasibility study and introduce the community to 'Bow Valley Green Energy'. C. Hojnowski also commented on the level of dedication and effectiveness of the Steering Committee.
- C. Hojnowski shared that the Biosphere has received a grant from the Calgary Foundation for initiatives engaging a broader audience on WildSmart, including Calgary residents and new Canadians. WildSmart materials and resources will be translated into other languages. They will also be conducting research with trail users on their level of knowledge of rules and guidelines regarding wildlife. More work needs to be done on the questionnaire and the Biosphere intends to start this work in April.
- C. Hojnowski provided an update on the Biosphere's Energy Efficiency project, funded by Energy Efficiency Alberta. As part of the project's participatory engagement approach, residents have stated that their preferred way of learning about energy efficiency is through workshops. Three workshops

are planned with content experts being brought in to lead the educational component. Doors will open at 6:30, presentations from 7pm - 8/8.30, with a 9 pm close:

- Workshop 1: Renewables, Thursday February 20 at the Civic Centre
- Workshop 2: Efficient Heating and Cooling Systems, Thursday March 5 at the Civic Centre
- Workshop 3: Financing opportunities, Thursday March 19 Room 212 Elevation Place
- C. Hojnowski noted that a Sustainable Building Symposium targeted to builders, developers and tradespeople is booked for April 16 at The Malcolm and Silvertip. The Biosphere is working with BOWDA on the event.
- L. Rissling Wynn advised that only 7 people have signed up for the January 22 one-day [Passive House technical course](#). If people know building professionals please encourage them to sign up.
- A. Fournier shared that she will be presenting the 2018 GHG Inventory to the Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, February 18. This is the first GHG inventory since setting the 2015 baseline.
- A. Fournier gave the following summary of the studded bike tire rebate:
 - 2020 budget is being used for the program but residents were able to purchase tires as of the launch date on December 11. Rebate cheques (\$50 per tire) will be mailed out after January 16.
 - The \$5,000 budget was fully subscribed in 6 days. The program was not retroactive which brought in some complaints but did seem to effectively enable our target market of people who were thinking about purchasing the tires but needed that extra nudge.
 - A questionnaire was included in the application form. The majority of applicants stated that this was their first time purchasing studded tires, they currently only cycle occasionally/when there is no snow or ice on the roads, they would be using their studded tires for commuting and/or errands and other day-to-day trips, and they were not likely or only somewhat likely to purchase studded tires if the incentive was not offered.
 - Many positive comments came from applicants including, “I’ve been wanting to get these for ages but couldn’t afford them”, “This is so great, with all the snow I’ve been driving my car more than I’ve wanted to these days,” and “This will help with my health and safety while riding. Well done.”

D. ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting adjourned at 6:44 pm.
- Next meeting tentatively scheduled for 5 pm February 3, 2020. L. Rissling Wynn advised that there are two Environmental Impact Statements that EARC members will need to review in the coming weeks.



Bob Raina, Chairperson

Amy Fournier

Amy Fournier, Recorder