

TOWN OF CANMORE
MINUTES
Environmental Advisory Review Committee
Zoom online
4 pm Monday February 7, 2022

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Bob Raina	Chair
Glynis Carling	Public Member
Ken Hodges	Public Member
Ralph Walicki	Public Member
Kevin O'Neil	Public Member
Waverley Birch	Public Member
Jeff Mah	Council Representative

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Amy Fournier	Energy and Climate Action Coordinator
Caitlin Van Gaal	Supervisor of Environment and Sustainability
Whitney Smithers	General Manager of Municipal Infrastructure

BIOSPHERE INSTITUTE OF THE BOW VALLEY LIAISON

Gareth Thomson	Executive Director, Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley
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MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

None

Action items in red.

A. CALL TO ORDER and APPROVAL OF AGENDA

4:03pm

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- Land Acknowledgement – Amy Fournier
- Land Acknowledgment for March meeting assigned to Bob Raina
- Amy Fournier requested that item D. be moved to after item E to accommodate a late member
- Confirmation that the Biosphere Institute Liaison participates in the meetings but is a non-voting member

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4:08pm

1. Minutes from the December 13, 2021 EARC meeting

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

C. INTRODUCTIONS

4:10pm

- Caitlin Van Gaal – Supervisor of Environment and Sustainability (new)
- Gareth Thomson – Executive Director of Biosphere Institute (new)
- EARC Members

D. ELCECTION OF THE VICE CHAIR

4:27pm

- Ralph Walicki elected as Vice Chair of EARC

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Outstanding Questions:

- The Town follows Alberta Environment and Park drinking water quality standards
 - Jeff Mah mentioned a Capital Project from 2022 to evaluate water security in the flats of the Valley
- EARC Bylaw and EIS Policy does not outline timeline requirements for a review
- The original update to the EIS Policy was limited to GHG/Climate Mitigation
- Nick from the Biosphere can attend a future meeting to discuss wildlife and engagement with off leash dog owners

2. Keep Wildlife Alive Campaign – Social Norms Campaign

- Program is lead by the Town of Banff, Canmore provides funding to use the same campaign
- Education signs are placed in areas where there may be Bylaw infractions, last year there were signs at Quarry Lake, Civic Centre, and river trail
- Currently some signs are located in the Three Sisters Area due to an increase in infractions
- Administration is seeking input from EARC on potential locations for 2022 sign placement:
 - Gareth Thomson: pointed out that there are lots of local groups who can support the education, but few that can enforce
 - Question: How is enforcement different between Town Bylaw and AEP staff?
 - Administration Response: Town Bylaw can ticket for off leash dogs and fruit trees, have an education approach first. Are not able to speak to AEP's approach to enforcement.
 - Jeff Mah:
 - Question: Is the campaign targeted towards residents and tourism?
 - Administration response: The program is targeted towards both permanent residents and visitor/tourism
 - Suggest that signs be placed at: Elevation Place, Canmore Rec Centre, Sunny side of the valley by the hockey rink along Cougar Creek
 - Glynis Carling: Suggests that signs be placed at: Market Days in the summer months, areas where there have been complaints around food waste, river paths and Quarry Lake. Recommends that Administration check with Bylaw on placement
 - Kevin O'Neil: Would like to see signs placed at all off-leash dog parks in Canmore.
 - Bob Raina:
 - Question: Have there been any studies on how the signage has been received?
 - Question: How many signs are there around for distribution?
 - Question: Would like to spend an hour at a future meeting, have Bylaw and the Biosphere present. Would like to review the off-leash dog problem and present recommendations to Council

Whitney Smithers joined the meeting

4:43pm

- Waverley Birch:

Question: How were the off-leash areas chosen? Reference the trail loop around Quarry Lake that connects off-leash areas. – tabled for future meeting

- Gareth Thomson: Frame the future discussion around keeping wildlife safe. Also thinks the conversation should include recreationalist. **Gareth will work with Bob Raina to determine a presentation approach for a future EARC meeting.**
- Jeff Mah: **Wants to see Nick from WildSmart as part of this future discussion.** Location suggestion for signage is the Pedestrian Mall coming this summer
- Ralph Walicki: Suggest placing sign around Millennium Park and the Ball Diamond

F. UPDATES

1. Council Update – Councillor Jeff Mah

- Train from Banff to Calgary – Mayors of the Bow Valley Corridor sent a letter in with cautious support and stating the need for more information regarding the project. Have received questions from residents expressing concerns. Currently in a wait and see state regarding the train project.
- CRPS – School board proposing project on the LGMS lands – passed First Reading, Public Hearing on March 1, 2022 (Tuesday)
- Palliative Care: This future development will lead to discussion on changing the urban growth boundary
- Bylaw 2022-26 – CEIP Bylaw – funding from FCM where citizen can apply for a project to help reduce their emission, it is paid back through property taxes. Project funding up to \$50,000/home. Total project funding is \$400,000

2. Roundtable updates

- Gareth Thomson - Biosphere Institute:
 - Biosphere is diving into Strategic Planning with Board members
 - Successfully pitched to the Board taking on a new role around convening – making the right conversations happen around environmental action. This is on the heels of the conversation that happened with the Banff Canmore Community Foundation around climate. Working on hosting a conversation within the Bow Valley with businesses, hotels, NGOs, etc. to look at ways to accelerate climate action within Town. Wanting to target the 96% of GHG emissions that fall outside the municipal control

- Waverley Birch:

Question: Will the Town be looking to regulate new buildings to be more energy efficient?

Administration Response:

- Whitney Smithers discussed National Building Codes and the possibility of a new National Building Code for Net Zero. Administration has a capital project for 2022 to get the Town ready for this change.
- Current approach is mostly to incentivize change through CEIP, EV programs
- Amy Fournier stated that the issues is jurisdictional authority. Larger municipalities have Charters which gives them different authority to require greener building practices.

Question: For incentives around EV program does this look to national funding sources such as NRCan?

Administration Response: Amy mentioned that current funding available is for charging on municipal lands. Also touched on a 2022 project for enabling at home EV charging.

Waverley is looking at EV chargers for clients and has offered her support for Town Strategy.

o Gareth Thomson:

Question: How does EARC help Council review proposals, is there an automatic trigger, or can Council request the support of EARC

Administration Response:

- o Whitney Smithers: Regarding LGMS redevelopment plan, under EARC Bylaw Administration can request the EARC review, regarding EIS it is related to subdivision plans and larger Area Structure Plans.
- o Jeff Mah: followed up regarding the Palliative Care project – was previously reviewed by EARC in fall of 2021

G. NEW BUSINESS

- Whitney Smithers was introduced to EARC as the General Manager of Municipal Infrastructure. Whitney is one of the two main Town liaisons with Stoney Nakoda First Nation. Whitney sits on the Truth and Reconciliation internal committee for the Town.
- Whitney Smithers provided an update to EARC on Truth & Reconciliation in the Town:
 - o Working over the past year on the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) understanding
 - o Stoney Nakoda has indicated that TEK is a relationship and not a document.
 - o Stoney Nakoda has indicated that they need to take more steps to build the relationship before moving towards including TEK within Town policies.
 - o The Town would like to respect the needs of Stoney Nakoda as the Town can appreciate that there is a desire from many organizations to work with them.
 - o Whitney stressed that this work is important to the Town, but that it need to happen in its own time and its own way, which may mean stepping back and letting the Stoney Nakoda First Nation lead. Building a relationship in respect is important.
- The Role of EARC and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) review process:
 - o Administration highlighted the desire to respect the workload and demands put on EARC. Administration opened a discussion with EARC on how the role of the group may have changed since the mid 1990's and what their role in the future could look like now that the Town has dedicated environmental staff and a contracted third-party reviewer of EIS documents.
 - o EARC Comments in response:
 - Waverley Birch:
 - Question: When development application or EIS is submitted, do they get sent out to treaty 7 Nations?
 - Administration Response: Not currently, working on developing the relationship.
 - Question: Has seen as a first step where proponents are asked to write an intro in their policy section about Treaties – this should be included when writing about Provincial and Federal policies. This should go to the Treaty 7 Nations for review.
 - EIS: Previous experience with municipalities that had strong internal capacity to review EIS and had a committee similar to EARC. In these situations, the contentious EISs went to the EARC equivalent.
 - Glynis Carling:
 - It would be appropriate to do a good neighbour approach with the Truth and Reconciliation internal working group. Thinks it would be

appropriate to give neighbouring First Nations a heads up on activities happening in Town.

- Sees the value of EARC with EIS being locally based and providing process suggestions and technical comments. The audience is Council, so it would be ultimately be Council to decide on the value. Suggested presenting information to Council instead of handing off the EIS Review Document. An open dialogue would create awareness with Council on environmental matters.
- Gareth Thomson:
 - 1992 is when EARC was formed, stresses the need to stay up to date, feels the need to review the Bylaw and Terms of Reference for EARC to determine what gives EARC its marching rights.
 - Would like to see recommendations from Administration and EARC on what the best use of the Committee would be.
 - Jeff can take any suggestion back to Council for them to decide.
- Bob Raina:
 - Expressed concerns around using the term redundancy
 - Saw the value of the committee during the TSMV review
 - Doesn't consider the EIS process onerous
 - Stressed the value of the Committee and their qualifications
 - Wants to see the Bylaw align with EIS Policy and that there is an appropriate timeline for review of EISs
- Whitney Smithers:
 - Should look at Bylaws to see if there are other areas of focus EARC could have as there is overlap with internal staff and third-party reviewer for EISs
 - Extending the timeline for EIS review will be a hard sell to industry, especially with the red tape reduction mandate.
 - Need to focus on where EARC can provide the greatest value to the Town
 - Having meetings with Council on a project-by-project basis might not be feasible as the EIS is one input in the process. If the conversation was around the ToR progress, there might be value in a workshop with Council.
- Bob Raina:
 - **Question: What is the timeline for the third-party reviewer? May be able to address the delay in the process if align with third-party reviewer**
- Jeff Mah:
 - As a Councillor appreciate and welcomes the third-party reviewer and EARC review. Would like to see it continue.
- Ken Hodges:
 - Resources present within the Committee that need to be looked after, would like to investigate the timelines with the ToR – but would like to see policy that allows everyone time to review
 - Feels that EARC can assist the Town in developing guidelines and policies in other areas such as recreation impacting wildlife
 - With EIS agrees there is some overlap but that it can be a success
- Whitney Smithers:

- Feels that human wildlife co-existence is a great topic of discussion for EARC
- Feels that in the past two years have only really seen EARC work on subdivision and policy applications with EIS review
- Thinks we need to have the conversation of where EARC can provide the best value – what is the best use of volunteer time
- ToR need to be reviewed from the perspective of where the Committee and local experience provide the most benefit. Feels it is worth asking the question on where the value is
- Ken Hodges:
 - Thinks we need to sit down as a group to determine where EARC fits in. EIS is one piece of the puzzle, if can sit down in the group to come up a solution of where we go from here. Want to represent the importance of the environment for the community
- Caitlin Van Gaal:
 - Shared that there is value and knowledge within the group that can be used to support a broader lens of environmental concerns within the town. Mentioned the potential need to update the environmental mandate for the town through the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan
 - Will look at how to continue the conversation through workshop or future meetings
- Jeff Mah:
 - Feels that EARC does not find the EIS review as too onerous. Feels that EARC does not want to give up the EIS review but wants to find more ways to be helpful. Appreciates more checks and balances
- Bob Raina:
 - Does not want to give up the EIS review process
 - Think that the committee can take initiative on projects and advise Council in addition to questions that are asked of the Committee
 - There is a long list of things EARC can do to be more utilized
- Waverley Birch:
 - Has seen these committees work elsewhere, is the individual expertise that you get from the local committee
- Ken Hodges:
 - As part of the workshop in the future, would want to get into the field and see what the Town is doing. Gave the example of fire preparedness

D. NEXT MEETING

1. **Scheduling the March meeting and additional agenda items**
 - Next meeting scheduled for March 14, 2022 at 4 pm.
 - Keep the agenda for March meeting open to continue the conversation on the EARC mandate and focus from February 7, 2022, meeting
 - Considerations for future in-person meetings will be made by group consensus. As Provincial restrictions change additional discussion will take place
 - Whitney can attend future meetings to support the discussion around EARC mandate and Committee focus areas

E. ADJOURNMENT – MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:58 PM

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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