

The Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes

Minutes

Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting

CKLEAC2025-004
Thursday, May 8, 2025
1:30 P.M.
Electronic Participation Meeting

Members:
Councillor Pat Warren
Virginia Colling
Kathleen Cooper
Josh Feltham
Danielle Marcoux-Hunter
Jamie Morris
Santosh Patel
Doug Paterson
Deborah Pearson
David Ryrie
Barry Snider
Christine Szabados

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1. **Call to Order**

In attendance: V. Collings, K. Cooper, D. Paterson, D. Marcoux-Hunter (Kawartha Region Conservation Authority), J. Morris, D. Pearson, D. Ryrie, B. Snider, C. Szabados, Councillor P. Warren

Absent: S. Patel, J. Feltham (Fleming College)

Staff: Leah Barrie (Director, Development Services), Robyn Carlson (City Solicitor), Ashtyn Nauffts (Environmental Intern), Sarah O'Connell (Deputy City Clerk), Nancy Ord (Administrative Assistant), Jenna Stephens (Planning Officer—Environmental Policy),

Chair Pearson called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

2. **Administrative Business**

2.1 Adoption of Agenda

EAC2025.023

Moved By J. Morris

Seconded By V. Colling

That the agenda for the Environmental Advisory Committee meeting of May 8, 2025 be adopted as amended to add Item 5.4 Update on Coboconk Lions Park Project.

Carried

2.2 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest disclosed.

2.3 Adoption of Minutes

EAC2025.024

Moved By K. Cooper

Seconded By J. Morris

That the minutes of the Environmental Advisory Committee meeting of March 21, 2025 be adopted as presented.

Carried

3. **Deputations/Presentations**

3.1 Updated Terms of Reference for Committees of Council (Clerk's Division)

Deputy City Clerk S. O'Connell commented on City Council's changes for Advisory Committees of Council referring to the attached PowerPoint presentation that summarized:

- Council's March 18, 2025 resolution that Advisory Committees, Boards and Task Forces remove the establishment of working groups or sub-committees and the holding of working meetings.
- Holding closed sessions for consideration of nominations for awards such as the Bee a Hero and Environmental Hero Awards.
- Requirement to report back to Council by the end of Quarter 2 (2025) on options for working groups, sub-committees or working meetings which will ensure the open nature of meetings and comply with the requirements of the Ombudsman and the Municipal Act.

The presentation addressed questions previously raised by CKLEAC members on:

- why working groups or sub-committees have been removed from the Terms of Reference;
- how Bee a Hero and Environmental Hero Awards be processed;
- options to support the Bee City and Bird Friendly Designations without enlisting volunteers;
- ongoing maintenance of the Broad Street Pollinator Garden;
- options for providing feedback on large projects where a working group or sub-committee needs to be dedicated.

Compliments were extended to CKLEAC on their dedication and Council's appreciation of its work provided.

Additional comments and questions of CKLEAC members included:

- Reference to the City of Guelph and other municipalities that use numerous participants or non-governmental organizations in events and not volunteers.
- Review by appropriate municipal Divisions and the City's Insurer to consider extending insurance coverage to include volunteers.

- The reduced efficiency and cumbersome process of submitting comments for Staff compilation and report rather than enabling CKLEAC members to interact informally for better and easier research on topics. The advancement of any work for any project is always made through motions and discussion at a public CKLEAC meeting.
- The alternative of holding a special CKLEAC meeting on a specific topic which would allow open discussion and still comply with open public meeting requirements (i.e. quorum of members, published agenda, open to the public, staff attendance to record minutes). CKLEAC members meeting informally, even without a quorum, can be considered a closed meeting that does not comply with municipal open meeting requirements.

Discussion followed on rules for spending where CKLEAC has passed a motion to fund projects consistent with Council's approved Work Plans. J. Morris referred to a previously approved motion to allocate funds for students volunteering for the World Migratory Bird Day. L. Barrie indicated Council has approved a budget allocation for "Committees of Council" which enables expenditures for work by members and for projects that implement the approved Work Plans. With Council's changes to exclude volunteers and sub-committees, CKLEAC is in an operational transition period. Details on the City's requirements for mileage reimbursement were also provided.

L. Barrie reported that the 2025 Development Services budget for Development Services Committees of Council has been reduced from \$10,000 to \$8,000 resulting in a 2025 allocation of \$5600 for CKLEAC.

Discussion followed on the importance of supporting the Bird Friendly and Bee City designations and that an alternative strategy may include a contingency fund for specific budget items involving CKLEAC members.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Clerk for the presentation who then offered to attend CKLEAC's June 2025 meeting.

3.2 Tree Preservation By-law - Development (City Solicitor)

The Chair welcomed R. Carlson, City Solicitor who summarized revisions made to the draft Tree Preservation By-law for Development that reflected comments received:

- Shoreline provisions have been added to maintain 75% of existing tree cover.

- Implementation of the By-law has been paused due to the effect of tariffs on the construction industry, increased lumber costs and to ensure the City's housing construction targets can be met.
- New developments on Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) lands (Flato and Bromont Homes) require the payment of \$1500 for any mature tree that is removed, that such payments will be made as the lands develop and that this requirement will come into force and effect when preservicing agreements for earthworks are signed, site plan agreements are signed or Subdivision Agreements between the Developer and the City are signed, whichever comes first. These commitments are included in the Development Framework Agreements between the City and the developers of all MZO property, and are registered on title.
- Inclusion of comments from the City's Supervisor, Forestry and Horticulture Operations and J. Stephens, Planning Officer, Environmental Policy (e.g. protection of and definition of heritage trees).
- The by-law complements the planning approvals process that requires planting of a boulevard tree for every new residential lot created. A requirement for planting on existing private lots is outside of the scope of the by-law but an area for future review.
- Increased public education will be undertaken to educate the public on actions underway for Tree Protection. A "tree program" website will be developed with Staff assistance to provide an overview of the efforts underway.
- Staff have undertaken review of tree cover mapping from 2018 to the 2023, which indicates a 35% tree cover for the City of Kawartha Lakes, and deforestation of 0.2% between 2018 and 2023.

Comments raised by CKLEAC members and further clarification included:

- Ensuring policies of the Healthy Environment Plan (HEP) on trees are reflected into the Tree by-law.
- Boulevard trees are planted in new subdivisions before the City's assumes a subdivision and returns any security deposits. Tree planting is paid for by the developer.
- On new shoreline construction, new lots being created and small cottages being replaced with larger homes; the intent of the by-law is to protect 75 % of existing tree cover within the 30.0 metre buffer to the water.

- When the draft by-law is in place, municipal bylaw enforcement can be used to regulate land owners that claim to be farmers, clear cut trees from farm fields and are in fact developers attempting to avoid regulation. Charges can be laid once there is clear proof of intent for a farmer to develop and not farm.

The City Solicitor was thanked for the presentation and response to questions raised.

4. Correspondence

No correspondence was presented.

5. Action Item Updates

5.1 CKLEAC Work Plan Updates

J. Stephens reported the following:

- The Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Climate Change Update has been posted until the end of May with an anticipated end of June 2025 date for consultant recommendation to Council.
- 2023 City GIS mapping was used to determine City tree cover and will be used in the City's "Tree Program".
- Work is underway to list action items from the HEP and to communicate with various municipal Divisions to check on implementation status.
- On the 35% tree canopy estimates across the City, further report will be provided to CKLEAC to clarify coverage by various canopy categories.

In response to member question on whether the Terms of Reference for CKLEAC contain instructions on budget preparation and on how funds are used, Staff indicated Council's Terms of Reference for its committees are generic, not specific to CKLEAC and staff's role is to advise CKLEAC.

5.2 Enhancing the Urban Tree Canopy

A previously circulated resolution was read and the City Solicitor indicated no concerns from a legal point of view and that the wording complements the efforts of the Tree Program. Compliments were extended to members K. Cooper and J. Morris on work undertaken to prepare the resolution.

EAC2025.025

Moved By J. Morris

Seconded By K. Cooper

Be it resolved that:

Whereas “Trees benefit the community by reducing flooding, controlling erosion, filtering water, regulating climate, removing and storing carbon, and cycling nutrients” (Healthy Environment Plan, page 47) and they also provide shade, reduce heat island effects and increase biodiversity;

And whereas “Increasing the number of trees in Kawartha Lakes can reduce costs to the City over the long term (such as energy demand for cooling, water filtration, etc.)” (Healthy Environment Plan, page 48);

And whereas “Protect and **enhance** our ... urban tree canopy is an action committed to in the Kawartha Lakes 2024-2027 Strategic Plan” (page 8);

And whereas the current tree canopy and, therein, a number of tree species (in particular ashes), are under threat from disease, insect damage, and the impact of the increased intensity of ice and hail storms resulting from the effects of climate change;

And whereas our current urban tree canopy coverage lags behind other Ontario communities measuring their canopy (the only measurement we have for a City of Kawartha Lakes community is for Lindsay and was recorded as 19.2% by Kawartha Conservation, City of Peterborough’s most recent measurement is 29.2%, Kitchener’s is 26%, Toronto is 28.4%);

And whereas there is currently no bylaw controlling cutting of trees on private property (which may lead to reductions in tree canopy);

And whereas the amount of planting that can be done by City staff is limited (the three foresters on staff have a broad set of responsibilities);

And whereas the only incentive program for tree planting, currently, is Kawartha Conservation’s Water Fund program, a landowner and community grant program to support environmental projects that improve water quality in Kawartha Lakes;

And whereas there is a current balance of \$427,019 in the City’s Tree Canopy Reserve:

Therefore:

The Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee recommends that Council direct staff to prepare a plan for implementation of the following action set out in the City's Healthy Environment Plan:

"Promote and increase planting of native tree species or resilience species (e.g. salt-tolerant trees) through initiatives such as community plantings programs and subsidies for planting on private property" (page 48). We particularly recommend the subsidies option as an incentive for property owners, and note that money to fund this could be drawn from the Tree Canopy Reserve.

Carried

5.3 Awards Updates

J. Stephens reported that nominations for the Environmental Hero Awards will be open until May 31, 2025 with four nominations received to date (no students or businesses) and that continued action is underway through new articles/social media to encourage involvement. CKLEAC's June meeting will include a closed session to review the nominations and thereafter report to City Council will seek approval of CKLEAC's recommended award recipients.

Discussion followed on the challenges of encouraging local school participation with Staff to follow up with the Communications Divisions on strategies to encourage student nominations.

5.4 Coboconk Park Update

D. Paterson and D. Marcoux-Hunter reported on an on-site meeting with municipal Horticulture and Parks Staff and summarized the history, actions taken and further actions to control geese at the Park including:

- Existing and potential geese deterrent strategies (armourstone walls, shrubs, fences and ropes, negative and positive feeding stations, off-lead dog areas, etc.) to discourage geese in late June when the geese cannot fly and where geese are looking for easy access spots that are safe and near water.
- Strategies used by other municipalities on geese include relocation and private goose management consulting services where costs may be prohibitive and require fund raising.

The Conservation Authority listed a number of recommended actions with funding through the Kawartha Water Fund Community Grant that will cover 100% of cash costs. Funding approval will require:

- a letter of support from the City to undertake work on municipal parkland,
- 75% of the shoreline project area being naturalized,
- long-term maintenance.

Next steps require the designing of a proposal, determining a project lead and commitment for long-term maintenance (recommended by the Park Division to be a volunteer community group such as the Coboconk Garden Club that currently maintains the Park). Discussion followed on the optimum next steps and CKLEAC's role.

D. Paterson was directed to meet with the Coboconk Garden Group to determine their willingness in writing to undertake long-term maintenance and to prepare and submit a funding application to Kawartha Conservation. This commitment would form the background to a report to Council by J. Stephens to support the project on municipal parklands.

This item was requested to be added to CKLEAC's next meeting Agenda.

6. New or Other Business

6.1 Tree Loss

B. Snider provided the attached PowerPoint presentation and raised a number of concerns regarding loss of trees, hedgerows and shrubs on municipal road allowances by adjacent private property owners and farmers. Highlights included:

- Kawartha Lakes has an estimated 4,500 km of municipal roads which are typically 20.0 metres (66 feet) wide with only a portion taken up by the paved/gravel travelled portion.
- Significant sections of the road allowance shoulder areas have had trees and shrubs removed by adjacent property owners. Examples included Harvest Road, Four Points Road and Monarch Road and areas where the vegetation has been replaced by farmers planting crops/corn.
- The road allowance trees/shrubs are an important biodiverse area where significant bird nesting occurs.
- In the past, the planting of roadside maple trees was encouraged and a significant loss of maple trees is acknowledged.
- In compliance with Federal and Provincial law, the City has stopped roadside brushing during bird nesting season.

- The Public Works Division has by-laws that control adjacent farmers clearing vegetation on the road allowances.
- Solutions could include enforcement of by-laws and public education, consideration of a “Rural Roadside Vegetation Management Policy” and the designation of natural areas with the example of the City of Port Hope referenced.

Several next steps were suggested including B. Snider making a deputation to the City’s Roads Task Force, investigating organizations such as “Maples Forever”, encouraging By-law Enforcement and coordination with the City Solicitor’s Tree Preservation By-law. In conclusion, B. Snider was recommended undertaken further review with J. Stephens to:

- clarify relevant municipal divisions/committees,
- next steps for CKLEAC consideration at a subsequent meeting,
- educational options such as links to the Environmental Farm Plan Program and Communications Division involvement to show the advantages of protecting road allowances trees/shrubs (e.g. costs savings, pollination factors).

6.2 Bill 5, Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025

Several members and staff expressed concern about Provincial Bill 5 that has received second reading. Members were encouraged to register their concerns with the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) before the May 17, 2025 deadline and to copy the Federal Ministry of the Environment for increased effectiveness.

L. Barrie offered to follow up with CKLEAC should a City submission be made and indicated the Bill is under discussion with senior management and among numerous other external organizations that may be directly affected (e.g. Ontario Professional Planners Institute).

D. Ryrie left the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

6.3 CKLEAC Budget Update

This topic was covered in Item 3.1 but J. Stephens recommended CKLEAC keep in mind the reduced budgetary allocation of \$5600 when making requests for budget expenditures.

7. Next Meeting

CKLEAC members will be canvassed for their preferences on the date and time to hold its next meeting.

8. Adjournment

EAC2025.026

Moved By Councillor Warren

Seconded By B. Snider

That the meeting be adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Carried