

Advisory Committee on the Environment Energy sub-committee - report

Meeting date/place: Friday, February 26, 2016 @ London Home Builders' Association

In attendance: Tom Arnos, Mike Bloxam, Lois Langdon

Not in attendance: Ken Birchall, Diane Szoller

The meeting commenced at 08:05.

1. Renewable energy (#3 on 2016 work plan)

a) Hydro-electric power in Thames River

At this month's ACE meeting, Tom Copeland mentioned that a hydro-electric generator at the Springbank Dam would not be feasible because of lack of waterflow and the infrastructure may be too expensive.

Speaking in the general sense of hydro-electric capacity of the Thames River within London, funding for such infrastructure could come from the provincial cap-and-trade program.

It was also decided that co-operation with the First Nations is needed for such projects and to get their input early. Tom Arnos will make connections to reach out and get early feedback.

b) Solar energy for municipal buildings

EEPAC's chair Sandy Levin mentioned at the February 24 budget meeting that the City should be looking at integrating solar power with new builds and retrofits/renovations of City-owned buildings. We fully support EEPAC's recommendation.

With the electricity grid's future in mind, it is expected that net metering and distributed energy will become the norm rather than the exception. Municipal buildings should be planning for the future by implementing green-energy technologies today, both for financial and environmental benefit.

Lois will ask about the carbon footprint of municipal buildings, and what is currently being done to reduce.

c) Carbon footprint of co-generation

The provincial cap-and-trade system is expected to make burning natural gas more expensive, and therefore co-generation may become more expensive to implement. The sub-committee will research the city's electricity supply mix versus the province.

d) Lights in dog parks (powered by dog feces)

Discussed possibility to divert dog waste for anaerobic digestion (similar to the “Your Turn” grease cups) as alternative to powering lighting; comparison needed. We also need to know how the existing bins are being emptied and what is done with the waste.

2. Local improvement charges (#5 on 2016 work plan)

a) Status of LICs for a PACE-style program

Lois shared updated information from Jamie Skimming in January.

b) Energy audits for resale homes

Implementing energy audits for resale homes was discussed, possibly as a tie-in with LIC financing.

The Ontario Home Builders’ Association supports energy audits for resale homes so that purchasers know before buying what to expect in energy costs. It would act as a “fuel consumption” rating (similar as for motor vehicles), and would potentially require upgrades to a home before selling it or reducing the sale price to compensate for poor energy performance.

An LIC program would allow for energy upgrades to take place by allowing the property owner to loan money against the tax assessment, and allow for sale of the property at a fair price.

3. Community Energy Action Plan (#4 on 2016 work plan)

a) Review current plan and monitor progress

Nothing to report.

4. Resignation of Jamie Baxter

Jamie regretfully has had to resign from ACE and its sub-committees.

The meeting concluded at 09:42.