

Email from B. Samuels

As far as I am aware, the city currently lacks public communications about acceptable parameters for naturalization projects. Residents are increasingly interested in maintaining pollinator gardens and such along roads; this is consistent with other goals of the city and community organizations related to conserving biodiversity. However, because many properties in London currently do not comply with the yard and lot maintenance bylaw, this might suggest that awareness of bylaw requirements is poor. Reduced compliance could lead to more complaints and greater demands of staff time.

So, I am wondering if it might be worthwhile for ESACAC to form a working group to explore opportunities to improve public education about the bylaw as it applies to naturalization projects, such as developing a printed pamphlet or copy for the City's website, or an insert for the waste collection calendar, or social media posts scheduled for the start of gardening season.

If possible, I would like to proceed with having this included as an item for discussion in the upcoming ESACAC meeting agenda. To ensure that our conversation is kept in line with the committee's mandate (environmental stewardship and action) and that we avoid discussing legally confidential matters, I am copying four questions below that I will ask staff to please provide answers for at the meeting:

Question 1: If the required buffer beside a road or sidewalk has not been maintained in a residential yard, what is the procedure that bylaw enforcement staff follows?

Question 2: Under what conditions would failure to comply with the bylaw's buffer requirement trigger staff removing vegetation from an entire garden, versus staff removing vegetation that is occurring strictly within the buffer area?

Question 3: Are safety considerations (e.g., children getting lost in a garden, plants blocking a neighbour's line of sight from their driveway) reviewed with each complaint on a case-by-case basis, or are all violations of the buffer requirement treated equally? For instance, if plantings occur within the buffer area but do not appear to pose a safety concern, will staff still enforce the bylaw all the same?

Question 4: Apart from reading the yard and lot maintenance bylaw itself, where can the public access information about their obligations under the bylaw if they wish to maintain a roadside naturalized garden?