

**AGENDA**  
**Sustainability and Climate Action Advisory Committee**  
**Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room No. 1.**  
Wednesday, November 22, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

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*The District of Saanich lies within the territories of the ləkʷəŋən peoples represented by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations and the WSÁNEĆ peoples represented by the Tsartlip, Pauquachin, Tsawout, Tseycum and Malahat Nations.*

*We are committed to celebrating the rich diversity of people in our community. We are guided by the principle that embracing diversity enriches the lives of all people. We all share the responsibility for creating an equitable and inclusive community and for addressing discrimination in all forms.*

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**1. CHAIR'S REMARKS**

**2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

- October 18, 2023

**3. HEAT EVENTS – 2023 RECAP**

- Erin Stockhill, Emergency Program Officer

**4. ECO-FOOTPRINT**

- [Saanich 2021 Consumption-Based Ecological and Carbon Footprint Assessment'](#)
- Glenys Verhulst, Sustainability Specialist and Rebecca Newlove, Manager of Sustainability

**5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF BALLOONS AND SINGLE USE PLASTICS**

- Chair/Councillor Nathalie Chambers

**6. ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION**

\* Adjournment \*

Next Meeting: November 15, 2023 at 4:00 pm

In order to ensure a quorum, please contact Megan MacDonald at 250-475-5494 ext. 3430 or [megan.macdonald@saanich.ca](mailto:megan.macdonald@saanich.ca) if you are unable to attend.

**MINUTES**  
**SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
Saanich Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon Avenue and virtually via MS Teams  
Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Nathalie Chambers, Jake Douglas, Leslie Miller-Brooks, Karin Nelson, and Mattias Spalteholz

Regrets: Jasmindra Jawanda, Kurban Keshvani and Sarah Anderson

Staff: Rebecca Newlove, Manager of Sustainability; Glenys Verhulst, Sustainability Specialist and Megan MacDonald, Senior Committee Clerk

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**TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT**

The Chair read the Territorial Acknowledgement and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOVED by M. Spalteholz and Seconded by J. Douglas: “That the Minutes of the Sustainability and Climate Action Advisory Committee meeting held September 20, 2023, be adopted as circulated.”**

**CARRIED**

**CLIMATE COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP**

The Sustainability Specialist presented the Climate Communications Workshop (PowerPoint on file). The following was noted:

- Staff would like to gain committee members perspective to help shape future community outreach related to climate communications.
- Community involvement is key to Climate Plan success. Many actions are related to communications with residents, including a retrofit communications campaign, and broader initiatives to support individuals, neighbourhoods, and organizations to take climate action and become more resilient.
- Some of the broad communication channels include traditional media (newspaper/radio), social media, transit stops, pop up booths at Saanich events and Saanich owned channels (such as the website, utility bill inserts, displays, posters, brochures, garbage truck images and on-hold messages for phone lines.
- In-depth communication channels include self-study materials (Climate Action Guidebook and Carbon Calculator), industry engagement, school programs, hotline support services, climate action groups and champions, webinars and presentations, events, newsletters and staff availability via phone, email and front counter inquiries.
- Multiple campaigns support focus group areas by providing a nudge towards sustainability at decision points for various audiences.
- Topics for discussion during the focus group will include what is reaching committee members, motivations, ideas and the Saanich Neighbour to Neighbour Program.
- The Saanich Residents Climate Action Guidebook is another tool that can be utilized to empower the public to be climate aware and take steps that are available to them.

Committee discussion ensued with the following comments:

- Generally, the current methods of climate communications are working well. News and e-newsletters are far reaching methods which have been received by members.
- Bill inserts work well, but only for the person who opens/reads the bill. This may leave other household members unaware of information they may be interested in.
- One area where committee members would like to see more noticeable information is at transit stops. These locations are visited by many climate minded individuals who are doing their part to reduce emissions by using public transit.
- More public meetings could be held to share information on initiatives. These could be held in person, at neighbourhood events, or done online. This could include an overview of the item (such as the Climate Plan), as well as actions that individuals or organizations can easily start.
- While staff have done some outreach to schools, it was noted that having more engagement during earlier years would be greatly beneficial. Changing the culture and empowering a generation of climate aware citizens would be in the best interest of all.
- One Planet Saanich is a great asset. This group could be better leveraged to assist with networking and outreach, they have methods to do so and a large audience.
- Staff work to write impressive and lengthy plans and reports. Once approved by Council these plans lay the foundation for future actions and steps to achieve goals. These comprehensive documents are the foundation, but they are often not easily digestible to the general public. It is helpful to break them down into snippets or pieces and share little bits of knowledge. Small steps that can be taken towards the goals can avoid the public being overwhelmed or uninterested due to information overload.
- BC Hydro has examples of short videos that can be shared on social media or other channels, which are clear and concise in sharing the desired messaging.
- Having information available in a digestible manner is of utmost importance. Overwhelming the public can lead to negative thoughts and unwillingness to learn or make progress. Focusing on snippets and small pieces of information is imperative.
- The Residents Guidebook was found to be a useful tool to learn about home efficiencies, the checklist could be expanded upon. It was also noted that it may be challenging for some to use, especially if they are renters or living with parents.
- Having an age-appropriate guidebook to get youth involved may be beneficial. This could open conversations with parents and enable younger residents to be more aware of home energy aspects, as many are unaware of basic information such as what type of energy is used to heat the home. The same often goes for tenants.
- Promoting cultural change includes communicating how to take action and why action needs to be taken. This information will register with the public in a meaningful way.
- Residents are motivated in a variety of ways, each person is unique. Recognition from peer groups can be motivational to some but not others.
- Everybody should be mindful of the fact that the actions taken today can affect those 7 generations from now. Each of us has a responsibility to ensure steps are taken in the right direction. Highlighting how each action can impact helps us change behaviours.
- More education is needed to promote garden fresh produce and edible landscapes.
- Carrying capacity should be considered as well, if there are too many people in an area then life is not sustainable. The environmental impacts of densifying corridors needs to be further examined.

\*\*\* The Sustainability Specialist exited the meeting at 5:21 p.m. \*\*\*

## DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA GUIDELINES

The Manager of Sustainability presented information on the update to the Development Permit Area Guidelines (PowerPoint on file) and made the following comments:

- The *Local Government Act* provides authority to designate DP Guidelines to establish form and character objectives and to designate areas of land as development permit areas (DPA) for certain purposes. DPAs must specify guidelines for how proposals in that area can address the special conditions or objectives of the DPA.
- DP Guidelines support staff in an efficient review of applications, as well as provide direction and guidance to applicants, review committees (e.g., ADP) and Council to support a common understanding of expectations.
- The guidelines should be educative, descriptive, consistent and clear on intent.
- The existing Saanich Development Permit Areas (DPA): Justification and Guidelines document is a patchwork of Development Permit Areas (DPAs) and guidelines that have not undergone a comprehensive review since before the Official Community Plan (OCP) was approved in 2008.
- Since that time there have been a lot of policies and plans approved by Council including the 2008 OCP and multiple planning documents that contain design guidelines, such as garden suites which have their own design guidelines.
- The purpose is to develop a simplified, consolidated Guidelines document that is aligned with the OCP and recent policies, plans and bylaws that have been approved by Council. Their goal is a harmonized, easy to use document with clear language, explanatory visual illustrations, and alignment with other goals.
- The guidelines will be updated more frequently as new policies are approved.
- The new simplified and consolidated document will improve efficiency and aid staff in achieving targets as laid out in various plans.
- A descriptive (vs prescriptive) approach has been taken, with clear statements of design intent including strategies and best practices for implementation.
- More prescriptive guidance such as metrics have been added, for built form, scale, orientation and relationship to public spaces. A more descriptive and educative approach was taken for character, composition, and site planning.

The following was noted in response to questions and comments from the committee:

- The guidelines are a comprehensive document which makes the information much more digestible to the public. The consolidation is appreciated.
- Considerations for items such as the upcoming Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) and the updated Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) are not included yet.
- While draft documents cannot be included yet, it is extremely important to ensure that any policy changes that happen are included once approved.
- The previous design guidelines did not include a mechanism to update or incorporate changes to policy. This meant that many items were not adequately addressed.
- Members expressed concern that important policy considerations such as the BCS and UFS may not be included. A mechanism needs to be in place to ensure that any changes to plans or policies are addressed and added to the Design Guidelines in a timely manner.

**Moved by L. Miller-Brooks and Seconded by K. Nelson: “That the Sustainability and Climate Action Advisory Committee recommends that Council support the Development Permit Area Guidelines and recommend that a mechanism be put in place to ensure that when new plans or policies are adopted that the guidelines are reviewed and updated as necessary.”**

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF BALLOONS**

The Chair gave a brief verbal update on the environmental impacts of balloons on migratory birds and marine life. The following was noted during committee discussion:

- Many examples of the effects of balloons on wildlife are available, most notably in the form of pictures on social media.
- Given the coastal location of Saanich, balloons pose a threat to birds and wildlife.
- Banning balloons could help protect birds and marine life.
- Consideration needs to be made for the impacts of plastic in a more general sense.

**MOVED by L. Miller-Brooks and Seconded by K. Nelson: “That the topic of single use plastics be added to a future agenda for further consideration.”**

**CARRIED**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion from M. Spalteholz the meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday November 15, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.

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Nathalie Chambers, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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Committee Secretary