

Samuel Wilmot Nature Area Management Advisory Committee Minutes

February 18th, 2025

Location – virtual via Teams

Present:

Y/N	Person	Y/N	Person
Y	Brian Reid (Past Chair)	Y	Leanne Fernandez
Y	Carmen Aeillo	N	Leo Blindenbach
N	Councillor Margaret Zwart (Council Liaison)	Y	Patrick Bothwell
Y	Kate Potter (Chair)	Y	Tom Hossie (Vice Chair)
Y	Ken Mercer (Staff)	N	Rod McArthur
N	Leah Bourgeois	Y	Meg Vandenbrink
		N	Kayla Stephens

Also Present: List any non-voting members here

1. Call To Order

Vice-Chair Tom Hossie called the meeting to order.

2. Land Acknowledgement Statement

3. Additions to the Agenda / Adoption Of The Agenda

Moved by Meg Vandenbrink, seconded by Leanne Fernandez that the agenda , as amended, be approved.

That the Agenda be accepted, with the following additions:

Item 4c below: Brian noted that a representative from the Communications Department of the Municipality was to be invited to a future meeting.

Carried

4. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no disclosures of interest stated at this meeting.

5. Adoption Of Minutes

Moved by Carmen Aeillo, seconded by Meg Vandenbrink

That the minutes of the meeting of January 21st, 2025, be approved.

Carried

6. Committee Administration

a. Item 1- **Annual report to Council** – Kate. Tom reported that he and Kate had made a presentation to Council on February 3rd and showcased what we have been doing, particularly during the past year. Although time was limited, they were able to provide a good overview and were complimented by the Mayor on the work of the Committee. They were asked about challenges. Tom and Kate noted two:

- 1) Communications – eg projects or activities taking place within the SWNA without our knowledge or input
- 2) By law infractions/enforcement – eg. Removal of plants, camping, littering, etc.

The latter resulted in Rob Maciver, municipal solicitor and Deputy CAO attending the meeting to discuss these concerns.

Tom welcomed Rob to our meeting and invited him to speak.

Rob provided an overview of the structure of the enforcement division, its overall mandate and gave a brief outline of those bylaws most relevant to us, in particular the Public Space Bylaw. He asked us to outline any specific concerns. The committee identified the following issues: removal of plants (eg fiddleheads) camping and campfires within the nature area, off leash dogs, littering, vehicles being driven into excluded areas etc.

Rob advised us to make use of the municipality's on-line portal to bring specific issues to the attention of bylaw enforcement and to identify any patterns of abuse. Committee members suggested some targeted monitoring is needed since most infractions occur at roughly the same time each year around fishing seasons, fiddlehead growth etc. Often, infractions occur on weekends. Infractions such as off-leash dogs happen regularly at any time.

It was agreed that Tom and Kate would meet with By Law Enforcement Manager Christina Bergeron to discuss possible targeted monitoring.

b. Item 2- 2025 draft work plan – see attachment provided previously by Kate and specific comments below. **Note:** In Kayla's absence, we do not have an update on the Photography contest project. Kayla will provide at our March meeting.

- c. Item 3- Guests to future meetings - Re Bylaws - complete
- GRCA/MOC arborists – March 18, 2025
- Communications Department of MOC – TBD

7. **SWNA Workplan:**

Q1

- a. Bird box clean out – on track for early April / late March

Q2

- a. **Earth Day clean up** – tentatively scheduled for April 26th. Meg is taking the lead role on this project
- b. **Planting** – still planned for late May but on the site where watermain work was done adjacent to Toronto Street above the waterfront Trail. Brian and Leah are dealing with the funding request. Kate and representatives from the municipality are to meet sometime in the next two weeks to go over procedural issues relating to receipt of grants etc. Ken will liaise with representatives of the watermain project to coordinate restoration plans with our own.
- c. **Tree Id workshop** – a representative from GRCA was unable to be at this evening's meeting but has indicated he can attend our March meeting to discuss this item further. Ken will invite the municipal arborist to attend as well.

8. **External Projects:**

- a. (Update) Special projects / general update on relevant items from the Municipality of Clarington (Ken)
- i. **Management Plan** – nothing to report
 - ii. **Parks and Recreation Plan** – now posted online and can be removed from future the agendas. Tom will circulate the document to committee members who may be interested in the final version.
 - iii. **Waterfront Strategy** – nothing new to report. The most relevant issue for us involves possible expansion/linkage of SWNA north of Hwy #2 to encompass the site of the original fish hatchery
 - iv. **Stormwater Plant work** – on schedule. Tom and Kate have met with project representatives from the region as reported at our last meeting. They have requested that any signage be put up during the period when the main trail is closed direct people to the north around the treatment plant
 - v. **Newcastle WPCP Upgrades** – as per item “Planting “ above, Ken will liaise with project officials re their restoration plans relative to ours.

9. Other Business

- a. **By-law infractions** (camping, fishing, mountain biking/pits, harvesting) – none reported
- b. Carmen – submitted bird counts to GBBC this past weekend. Brian did the same.
- c. Meg – finding the ploughed portion of the waterfront trail to be well done and has been using it regularly.
- d. Ken advised that some plating on the bridges was slightly damaged by ploughs but will be repaired. Monarch tags for 2025 have been ordered.
- e. Tom – noted there had been several owl sightings in the SWNA as reported through I Naturalist. A long-eared owl had also been spotted in the Port itself.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to be held on March 18th, 2025.

11. Adjournment

Moved by Meg Vandenbrink, seconded by Leanne Fernandez.

CARRIED

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS:

Kate and Tom:

- 1) Arrange meeting with By Law Enforcement to discuss targeted monitoring
- 2) draft letter of appreciation as discussed at meeting

Kate: to arrange meeting with municipal representative re handling funding for planting project

Meg: firm up date for spring cleanup

Ken:

- 1) invite municipal arborist to March meeting to be part of discussions re Tree Identification project
- 2) invite representative from Communications department to a future meeting (April ?)
- 2) liaise with representative of watermain project re coordination of restoration efforts

Brian: contact Councillor Zwart re certificate of recognition as discussed at meeting