



– MAY, 2011 –

ONGOING INITIATIVES

1. Black Oak Video

A representative from Axxess Design met with Phil at Black Oak to explore the area where they will be shooting video. Filming will commence shortly and a storyboard will be written and shared with WECEC for approval. Editing will occur and the video should be completed sometime in the summer.

2. Regional Growth Strategy

During the presentation by City of Windsor's Environmental Coordinator, Karina Richters, the Committee discussed re-introducing the concept of a smart, sustainable regional growth strategy for Windsor-Essex County. This has already been discussed in part by the Inter-Municipal Planning Consultation Committee (IMPCC). However, in previous years a regional approach to growth has not moved forward successfully.

WECEC can discuss how to approach this issue and speak with city and county planners to get started. Funding opportunities may be looked into in order to conduct an independent report on possible strategies for this area. Examples should be studied from Waterloo-Kitchener and the Niagara Region to gain a better understanding of regional approaches to Smart Growth principles.

3. Renewable Energy Strategy

Further to the Notice of Motion being brought forward by Mark Bartlett, I have spoken with Sergio Grando (Manager Real Property Asset Planning for the City of Windsor) at length about a renewable energy strategy for the City of Windsor. A meeting will take place later this month with Sergio as well as various community partners to discuss this strategy further.

The renewable energy projects taking place on three municipal buildings (South Windsor arena, Forest Glade arena and Parks and Recreation Administrative building) later this year has selected a local solar company to install solar panels on the roofs of the buildings.

4. EnviroExpo

I have spoken with Karina Richters (City of Windsor) and Sandra Hogan (DRCC) about splitting the cost of booth space at the EnviroExpo in November. We would like to propose that the City buy a 10X10 space and WECEC and the DRCC split the cost of a 5X10 space right beside Karina. The cost of the 5X10 space is \$675, therefore WECEC would spend just under \$340.

5. Community Project Fund

The Community Project Fund sub-committee met to discuss the structure and application process of the fund. This outline is attached to the June agenda and suggests that WECEC put \$2000 aside to give to local, not-for-profit environment and sustainability groups. A maximum of \$500 will be awarded to each group. The application form will be available online and the top groups will present their project idea to the sub-committee. Winners will be selected and the prize money will be distributed.

IMPORTANT UPDATES AND INFORMATION

1. Government of Ontario Policy Proposals (www.ebr.gov.on.ca)

Ontario Invasive Species Strategic Plan

The Ontario Invasive Species Strategic Plan aims to improve programs designed to combat invasive species in Ontario. In the past, there has been little inter-ministerial program coordination. Recognizing there was a need for coordinated action, MNR (lead), MOE, MTO and OMAFRA developed this Ontario Invasive Species Strategic Plan. The plan highlights work that has been undertaken by these ministries, identifies gaps in current programs and policies and outlines future actions necessary to address priority areas consistent with the goals of the Invasive Alien Species Strategy for Canada (EC, 2004).

A copy of the Draft Ontario Invasive Species Strategic Plan is available on the EBR website.

This document is available for public comment until June 20th. To view the policy proposal, visit www.ebr.gov.on.ca. The EBR # is 011-2884.

2. Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Notices

Sumpter Energy Associates Permit to Install

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is holding a public comment period from May 26, 2011, until June 27, 2011, and a public hearing, if requested, on June 29, 2011, on Sumpter Energy Associates proposed installation and operation of two new landfill gas fired internal combustion engines and generator sets. The facility is located at 28800 Clark Road, New Boston, Michigan. The public comment period and hearing, if requested, are to allow all interested parties the opportunity to comment on the Department's proposed conditional approval of a Permit to Install (PTI). It has been preliminarily determined that the installation of the two engines and generator sets will not violate any of the Department's rules nor the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

If you would like more information, please email me at aparent@city.windsor.on.ca.

3. Newspaper articles

a. Windsor Star April 25th – *Bullet Trains: Time to Enter the 21st Century*

As an economic generator along the Windsor-Quebec City corridor, high-speed rail has the potential to create a mobile workforce as cities and jobs essentially become closer to each other.

The corridor is the most densely populated and heavily industrialized region of Canada with more than 18 million people. It contains half of Canada's population, and three of the four largest metropolitan areas in Canada -Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa-Gatineau. In fact, the corridor's population density is comparable to the Rhone River valley where the French TGV train successfully operates at speeds of up to 200 mph.

High-speed rail would position Ontario and Quebec for future growth and economic development. It would spur tourism. As well, high-speed rail would eventually help air quality as a competitively priced service makes train travel more attractive.

However, the trouble in Canada, when it comes to highspeed rail, hasn't been technology but a lack of political will. Over the past 38 years, there have been 16 studies or attempts to study a Windsor-Quebec City rail link, and nothing has moved the process along.

It was 125 years ago that the famous Last Spike was driven into the CPR rail line to link the Pacific Coast to Central Canada. What we need today is the same kind of vision and determination that joined Canada by rail in the 19th century. It's time to bring train travel into the 21st century.

b. Windsor Star May 5th – *City Council Takes Aim at Zalev's: Expropriation an option for scrap yard*

City council will soon consider expropriating the Zalev Brothers scrapyards, a decades-old industrial eyesore in the middle of Windsor. Lawyers and city staff are completing a report that includes, as one option, a takeover of the 50-acre site north of E.C. Row Expressway between Howard and Dougall avenues.

One of Ontario's top expropriation lawyers was hired more than a year ago to investigate what could be done and his conclusions form part of the report being prepared for council's attention in June.

Ideally, the city would like to negotiate an outright sale or exchange of properties with the owner, but Wilkki and Mayor Eddie Francis said attempts to sit down with the company have been rebuffed.

Francis said the concerns and history of complaints regarding the property's impact on area quality of life - everything from dust, noise and odours to pollution exceeding air quality standards - are "well-known and well-documented." Council included a line item of about \$85,000 in the 2011 capital budget approved in April to further pursue the Zalev file.

Under the Expropriations Act, a municipality must be able to make the case that a forceable takeover is being executed for a specific purpose and that it's fair, sound and "reasonably necessary."

A spokesman for Ontario's Environment Ministry said Wednesday there was "nothing outstanding" regarding the property and that there had not been "any recent complaints against the company, and we've not had reason to issue any new orders or take any compliance action."

TASKS FOR NEXT MONTH

1. Black Oak video

I will continue to work with Axxess Design to produce an educational video regarding the improper use of Black Oak Park. I will work with Axxess Design to produce a video script that WECEC approves of.

2. Improve relationships with Essex County

Meetings have been set up with several County municipal planners to remind them of WECEC and all we have to offer. They will be encouraged to bring forward issues that are relevant to the committee. Now that new members have been for the Committee, I will send around an information sheet about WECEC to show County municipalities who we are and what we do.

3. Regional Growth Strategy

I will continue to await further direction from the Committee as to how to proceed with this initiative. This will likely include collaborating with City and County planners to ensure they are aware of the steps WECEC will be taking, as well as possibly securing funding for an outside consultant.

4. Community Fund

Pending approval from the Committee at the June WECEC meeting, I will continue to move forward with this program. A media event and promotion campaign will need to be developed and deadlines set for applications.

5. Renewable Energy Strategy

I will continue to work with Sergio Grando (Manager Real Property Asset Planning for the City of Windsor) to try and develop a renewable energy strategy for the City of Windsor. I will inform WECEC as to how they can help this initiative move forward.