



– SEPTEMBER, 2010 –

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSW) Tour

Thank you to everyone who participated and helped out with the tour. It was a success! The tour occurred on Friday, September 17th and included:

- The Airport Woodlots

The first part of the tour was given by Phil Roberts. We learned about the new taxi way recently built by the airport, looked for snakes, and checked out some fish before making our way to the woodlots.

We discussed the PSW boundary and looked at an aerial map of the area. In order to fully maximize the ecological potential of the land, the group discussed connecting the three woodlots by planting trees and ensuring hydraulic connectivity among them.

- Ojibway Shores

Port Authority Harbourmaster Peter Berry showed the group around the last natural shoreline property in Windsor, Ojibway Shores. Some of us, myself included, were shocked to see the amount of damage done to the area by ATV's and general garbage dumping.

We discussed ways to increase by-law enforcement in the area, including a strong educational campaign in the spring and the addition of no parking signs along Broadway Blvd. This way, by-law officers would be able to ticket vehicles without having to go into Ojibway Shores on foot. A meeting will be set up shortly with City employees, the DRCC, and the Port Authority on how to proceed.

- The Ojibway Nature Center

To conclude our tour, we spoke with Paul Pratt at the Nature Center. We laid out a large aerial map of the PSW's in Windsor and the County and discussed possible future measures we should take to ensure these areas are protected and enhanced. This may include lobbying the federal and provincial governments to purchase top priority ecologically significant areas for compensation as a result of the Detroit River International Crossing Project.

IMPORTANT UPDATES AND INFORMATION

1. PSW Report

On Monday, September 24th, City Council deferred the document entitled Official Plan Amendment – Provincially Significant Wetlands for six months.

This gives WECEC the opportunity to prepare a presentation detailing our position on the issue. This can be presented to City Council when the report is brought forward six months from now.

2. Newspaper articles

a. Chicago Tribune (September 14th): *It's getting hot up here - As climate change come to Chicago, conservation groups anticipate future changes in local ecosystems.*

Scientists warn that earlier spring blooms, higher corn stalks and much less ice cover on the Chicago River are telltale signs that climate change is already here.

The article explains rising CO₂ emissions and the resulting climate changes occurring in the area. They argue for more education regarding the importance of land set aside to sequester carbon such as woodlands and prairies.

An example of ecological change as a result of climate change is given through discussion of warbler songbirds. As warmer temperatures trigger the birds to head north and breed earlier, their arrival no longer coincides with the days in which insects are vulnerable. This means that the warbler no longer has a food source to refuel on.

Many examples of invasive species prospering from climate change are given, including kudzu, the dreaded, fast-spreading Japanese vine that has choked out native plants in the southeastern U.S.

In order to preserve native species that would suffer in a warmer climate, planners will develop contingencies to move threatened plant and animal species from deteriorating native habitats to ones they can survive in. They will also accommodate or eliminate encroaching species, depending on if they are compatible with or harmful to local ecosystems.

b. Windsor Star (September 14th): *Windsor and Canada on track for warmest year on record.*

The first eight months of this year set a record for the warmest average temperature in Canada and the fall forecast calls for above average temperatures from Manitoba to the east coast.

This article details average temperatures of Canada and Windsor and compares them to previous years. Windsor had the second warmest June, July and August season on record.

The Environment Canada forecast for September, October and November calls for above average temperatures and precipitation for much of Canada, including Windsor.

c. Windsor Star (September 28th): Controversial Nuclear Shipping Talks Hit Ottawa.

There will be two day long public meetings starting today in Ottawa where close to 80 groups from across Canada, the United States and Sweden will give testimony on a controversial plan by Bruce Power to haul 16 decommissioned radioactive steam generators across the Great Lakes.

If the licence is approved by the CNSC, it would be the first time a shipment of this size has travelled on the Great Lakes. Citizens are concerned about more shipments being approved if this one goes through.

Bruce Power argues the proposed plan is safe, because the generators contain on “low-level radiation”. If the containers are shipped to Sweden, 90% of the metals can be safely broken down.

d. Windsor Star (September 29th): Windsor Area Solar Plant Moving Forward

Negotiations with the Windsor International Airport operator are nearly complete for Solar Source Corporation to begin construction on a new solar panel manufacturing plant located on airport lands.

On Tuesday, Solar Source announced a partnership with a company that will help its clients set up solar power generating projects. ESEI Solar will help solar panel buyers with engineering, procurement of other parts and construction of rooftop and ground installations.

As of January 2011, all solar panels that are going to be installed on rooftops and on the ground must be made in Ontario. So the faster we can make solar panels in Ontario the better we’re going to be able to take advantage of the market opportunities.

3. SWO Air Quality webinar

On October 13th from 10:00am until 12:00pm, the SWO Clean Air Council is hosting a webinar entitled: *Indoor and Outdoor Fireplaces including Open Air Burning, By-laws, Codes, Programs.*

Meeting Description:

Gabriella Kalapos, Clean Air Partnership: Environmental, Health and Greenhouse Gas Impacts of Fireplaces and Open Burning.

Victor Li, Environment Canada: Open Air Burning: Health & Environmental Impacts, Programs and Actions.

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John Newdick, Ministry of the Environment: Provincial Actions and Fireplaces and Open Burning Municipal Code of Practice for Indoor and Outdoor Fireplaces including Open Air Burning in Ontario.

Following these presentations there will be a discussion regarding existing and/or needed federal, provincial and municipal regulations, by-laws, actions and next steps related to these topics.

****Please let me know if you are interested in attending and I can set up a room to view the webinar****

ONGOING INITIATIVES

1. One Change Fuel Efficiency Campaign

I have distributed the One Change advertisement to all members of WECEC to assist them in recruiting volunteers.

The City of Windsor will continue to speak with One Change about incorporating efficient driving maintenance and practices into City Fleet training programs.

2. Bicycle Friendly Communities Application

The Share the Road Cycling Coalition (SRCC), an Ontario-based non-profit organization which promotes bicycling as a mode of transportation, announced on August 18th that the Bicycle Friendly Communities (BFC) Program is coming to Ontario.

The BFC Program provides incentives, hands-on assistance, and award recognition for communities that actively support bicycling.

To determine if Windsor should apply, I have looked at the “quick scorecard” available on the *Share the Road* website. Windsor has completed enough requirements on the scorecard to merit an application to the BFC Program.

On September 27th City Council voted unanimously to pursue Windsor’s designation as Canada’s first “Bicycle Friendly Community”. WECEC may be able to contribute to Windsor’s application. The complete application however, will be submitted by the City of Windsor.

3. Climate Change Workshop

The transportation sub-committee has recommended that WECEC recognize 10/10/10 as a “Global Work Party”, an initiative started by the group *350.org*. This is an international campaign building a movement to unite the world around solutions to the climate crisis. WECEC recognizes that there is not enough time to proceed with any initiative.

I have met with Frank Butler to talk about hosting a Climate Change Workshop. The workshop would focus on what can be done at the individual level to combat climate change.

This would likely be a half-day workshop including:

- A short introductory presentation regarding climate change issues and information
- Information relating climate change directly to human health
- Speakers
- Discussion groups focusing on specific topics

On the 4th of December, the Global Climate Campaign is promoting a Global Day of Action. This will involve international demonstrations on climate change. We may want our Climate Change Workshop to coincide with December 4th.

4. Screening of the documentary “Tapped”

Members from WECEC have agreed to view the documentary before the free public showing. The date and time of the screening has yet to be determined by Detroit River Canadian Cleanup.

The DRCC has request that the \$500 dollars WECEC has decided to contribute will be put towards advertising.

5. DRCC Video Contest

WECEC will support the video contest by possibly donating prizes for participants. The idea of water bottles was presented by Dean Clevett.

The DRCC has many water bottles which they are planning on giving out to contestants. WECEC will have to think of another way to contribute to the video contest.

NEW TASKS

1. PSW Report

Develop a presentation and delegate a speaker to address City Council the next time the report is brought up.

2. DRIC Compensation Land

Work with the DRCC and ERCA to prioritize parcels of land we would like to see acquired as part of the compensation for the DRIC project.

3. County Representative

Designate a resource person from the County to inform WECEC of environmental issues being raised in the County.

4. Prioritize Strategic Plan Goals

Currently, goals in the Strategic Plan do not have general time frames for when they are to be completed. I would like to have a discussion during the October 7th WECEC meeting to prioritize these goals and set time lines for their completion.

5. Prioritize Environmental Master Plan Goals

WECEC has been designated as having a support role for six Environmental Master Plan Implementation Objectives. During a WECEC meeting I would like to discuss which goals we should focus on and the appropriate steps we should be taking moving forward.