



Terms of Reference

Environmental Advisory Committee

MANDATE:

The Environment Advisory Committee provides advice and guidance to Town Council and staff with respect to environmental issues including conservation, green energy solutions, environmental sustainability, and environmental legislation and regulation.

MEMBERSHIP

- Members shall be residents of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake (Town), work in the municipality or have a place of business in the municipality.
- Members should have interest and expertise in environmental matters, e.g. environmental science or related sciences (geography, biology, health sciences), environmental law and policy, conservation, mitigation and remediation of adverse environmental impacts.
- Members must have access to a computer and have an email address to receive meeting invitations and agenda packages with large files.
- A demonstrated commitment to and interest in the Community.

ORGANIZATION

- The Committee is established by The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Council (Council) in accordance with these Terms of Reference. Members are guided by these Terms of Reference.
- Members will be appointed by resolution of Council for the current four (4) year term until their successors are appointed.
- This committee will consist of three (3) members of Council and eight (8) citizen appointments.
- Sub-committee for finite terms may be formed as necessary.

OBJECTIVES

- To advise Town Council and Staff on ways to conserve and protect the natural environment, including improvement and enhancement of existing Town programs, policies and services.
- To solicit input and act as a public forum for issues that affect the environment.
- To form partnerships in the community to educate and to support action to protect and improve the natural environment for the benefit of residents
- To ensure that the community engages in action-oriented strategies that are aligned with the principles of relevant Town and Regional strategies.
- Review “significant” development applications involving a change of use or intensification of use within or adjacent to Natural Heritage features

- Assist the Town in the preparation of a community energy plan, designed to improve energy efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and foster local sustainable energy solutions.
- The committee will work in alignment with other committees of Council
- The Wellness Committee recommendations (attached Appendix 1)) should be considered as part of the objectives.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Chair

- Chair all regular meetings of the committee and exercises authority and performs duties as required.
- Ensure that decorum is maintained at each meeting and that the rules of procedure and conduct are observed in accordance with By-law No. 4675-13 (Procedure by-law for the Town).
- Ensure that all committee members are provided an opportunity to comment.
- If applicable, assure that all applicants are provided an opportunity to present and comment.
- Provides guidance and leadership to the committee in the completion of its mandate.

Vice-Chair

Assume all functions of the Chair in the Chair's absence.

Members

- Attend meeting of the committee (if unable to attend notification should be sent the staff liaison as soon as possible prior to the meeting).
- Review agendas and reports sent prior to the meeting.
- Contribute time, knowledge, skill and expertise to the fulfillment of the committee mandate.
- Are cognizant of any conflict of interest or perceived conflict in terms of issues that may service to benefit them personally.
- Act to protect the privacy of individuals with respect to personal information contained in reports and information circulated to the committee.
- Periodically review the committee Terms of Reference and recommend changes as required.

Quorum

- A majority of the members of any committee of Council shall constitute a quorum.
- If quorum is not attained, no actions or recommendations emanating from a meeting have any force or effect.

Support Staff

This committee shall be assisted by staff of the Corporate Services Department, who will provide expert advice, technical reports, background information and will prepare the recommendations of the committee.

MANAGEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

Meeting Schedule

- This committee shall meet monthly or at the call of the Chair.
- Established meeting dates and times will not be changed unless circumstances warrant special consideration.
- Meetings will be held in public. All notices of meetings will be posted on the Town's web-calendar.

Delegation

- Subject to the section immediately below, delegations will not be permitted.
- The Committee can request to receive a delegation. The request shall be voted and approved by a majority of the members.

Conflict of Interest

- Members shall avoid conflicts of interest. Members shall take proactive steps to mitigate conflicts of interest in order to maintain public confidence in the Town and its elected officials. Members are encouraged to seek guidance from the Integrity Commissioner and/or legal advice when they become aware that they may have a conflict between their responsibilities to the public as a Member and any other interest.
- All members have the duty to advise of any conflict of interest with respect to all matters before the committee. Members should decline to participate in the disposal of a matter where a real or apparent conflict is present.
- If a member has any conflict of interest on any matter and is present at a meeting at which the matter is the subject of consideration, the member:
 - Should, prior to any consideration of the matter at the meeting, disclose the interest and the general nature thereof;
 - Should not take part in the discussion of any question in respect of the matter; and
 - Should not attempt in any way whether before, during or after the meeting to influence the discussion of the application.

Reporting

- Minutes of this committee will be forwarded directly into the information package unless there are action items, then minutes will be forwarded directly to Council.

Remuneration

- Not applicable

Enabling Legislation

By-law No. 4675-13 (Procedure by-law for the Town)

APPENDIX I

The Community Wellness Committee recommends:

1. Town Council create an Environment Advisory Committee to advise the Town on environmental matters, especially related to reduction of pollution (including water chemical, noise and light pollution) and adoption of “green” initiatives
2. Town Council create a statement establishing “green” and environmental actions and initiatives as a priority for the health of NOTL residents and the future of the community, including the possibility of “green” burial in the Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery
3. Continue to work with farm operators, wineries and orchards to increase awareness by residents about the use of agricultural chemicals, reporting spraying times and chemicals used, and taking other steps to minimize possible health impacts on residents
4. Monitor Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and bring forward information to Agricultural Committee to identify and support alternatives to bird-scaring noise makers (propane fired cannons)
5. Review zoning policies and practices and zone the development of new residential building with a view to minimizing conflict between residential areas and farming areas, particularly (but not limited to) conflicts over chemical, noise and light pollution, noxious or unpleasant smells (e.g. cannabis) and water use and treatment (in consultation with the Niagara Region and Niagara Escarpment Commission)
6. Work with the Niagara Region and Niagara Escarpment Commission, as appropriate, to ensure by-laws intended to protect the environment (i.e. control of chemical, water, noise and light pollution and water use and drainage) are in place and are applicable and enforceable in all areas of the Town (e.g. also in areas under NEC development control)
7. Consider additional steps to protect the environment, such as reduction or control of use of single-use plastics, chemicals, gas-powered machinery, etc., and investigate how to increase access to water fountains, bottle filling stations, and similar facilities across the Town to reduce use of single-use plastic bottles, and
8. Plan for mitigation of the potential impacts of climate change, particularly events related to extreme weather, flooding, and temperature variability