



Together we make a difference

June 17, 2019 – Delegation to Burlington Council regarding adding "Environmental Impact" heading to staff reports ASWELL AS the expansion of the Private Tree By-law pilot project

Good evening Mayor Meed-Ward, Council Members, staff and citizens of Burlington

On behalf of BurlingtonGreen, I would like to follow up our June 10 delegation with some additional input regarding the proposed new reporting framework as well as the proposed city-wide tree bylaw. I did share additional input by email in recent days, but for the benefit of the public and in case you've not had a chance to read it, I thought it would be helpful to share it with you here this evening.

1.Regarding the issue of the proposed new and improved reporting framework for all city prepared reports. After delegating last week, Council discussion included comment on **holding off on inclusion of social implications**. I urge you to reconsider and proceed with adopting **all three** aspects (environmental, social, economic).

Consistent with Mayor Meed-Ward & Councilor Sharman's comments, **all three** aspects are **interrelated**, and none should be excluded, if you are to make decisions reflective of a 'liveable 'complete' city. Get the complete framework what it needs to be from the start, shifting staff (and yourselves) to think holistically, effectively applying balanced research and reporting for ALL of your decision-making.

The urgency of the current environmental crisis actually warrants a framework that recognizes that social and economic activity occurs **within** ecological limits, however moving to a environmental, social and economic framework for now, onboarding a carbon/GHG lens as soon after the climate action plan is presented in December, at least keeps the ball moving forward.

2. Regarding the long-time proposed city-wide private property tree bylaw –it was concerning to hear comments at Committee that the issue of tree protection should be looked at later and /or separate from the climate action plan. There has also been comments from the city that we need to provide the community and developers with time to adjust to what a tree protection bylaw could like look. They will adjust. Many developers in Burlington also do business in neighbouring communities where there are safeguards for green infrastructure in place(tree bylaws) – and they adapt.

Declaring a climate emergency and then **not** acting on a low-hanging fruit opportunity to take action sends mixed signals to the community. Respectful that processes take time and resources - the issue of protecting Burlington's mature tree canopy is far from new. BurlingtonGreen and the community have been advocating for an effective, practical private property tree bylaw for more than a decade.

In addition to planting more trees in Burlington (and fast), we must hold onto as many mature trees as we can. A bylaw is one tool in the box to aid in doing this, and it is an **essential one**. The city has a myriad of other bylaws in place to support the greater good, established without subject to years of debate, slow progress and pilots of "proof" before implementation. Science-based, human and environmental health-related issues such as tree protection must be addressed with greater urgency and decisiveness.

Respectful that you aim to gather data and insights via a two-year test period in the Roseland Community, we would argue - to what end? What will you learn from it that exceeds the implications of leaving mature trees unprotected in other communities..... while the clock is ticking on action on climate? Each of your communities are unique and evidence from the Roseland pilot may in fact not be entirely applicable (or contradictory) to areas you serve anyway. ALL of you have mature trees in the communities you serve, and they are worthy of reasonable protection. BurlingtonGreen asks that you direct staff to report back on a plan of action (using the proposed social,

environmental and economic framework), to proceed with establishing and resourcing a city-wide public property tree bylaw before 2020.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Schnurr". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Amy Schnurr

Executive Director

BurlingtonGreen Environmental Association