

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF PORT COQUITLAM

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

A meeting of the Environmental Protection Committee was held in the Board Room, 2580 Shaughnessy Street, Port Coquitlam, on Wednesday, March 15, 1989 at 6:00 p.m.

In attendance were:

Alderman M.C. Farnworth, Chairman  
Alderman M.R. Wright, Co-Chairman  
D.G. Riecken, P. Eng., Deputy City Engineer  
Members of the Public (11)

ITEM I: CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the minutes of the meeting of the Environmental Protection Committee held on Tuesday, February 8, 1989 be taken as read and adopted.

Carried

ITEM II: OUTDOOR BURNING

Ten residents of the agricultural area of the City outlined their concerns relating to the proposed ban on all burning in the City. Blueberry farmers in particular are concerned that it would be impractical to truck away prunings since they would have to be carried off their fields by hand due to the wet field conditions in the spring. As well, when diseases appear in the bushes, diseased branches must be removed at once to prevent the spread of the disease. Since Agriculture Canada will not permit the movement of infested plant material from one area to another, these branches must be burned. It was also noted that burning was the only practical way of controlling the spread of blackberries, to clean brush from drainage ditches, and to get rid of dead grass from the previous year's hay crops.

One resident of the urban area requested that the Committee consider allowing some burning in the urban residential area of the City. He indicated that there are some materials which do not lend themselves to bundling or bagging for setting out with domestic garbage. He noted that in his opinion there is far worse pollution from fireplaces, automobiles and other sources, and that by allowing some burning, which he described as a natural process, the City wouldn't discourage residents from cleaning up their premises. He also felt that if burning were completely banned that many residents would ignore the ban and burn anyway.

The Committee considered the comments made and determined that it would be reasonable to allow burning in the agricultural area for a period of up to six months during the spring and summer months. In order to prevent hauling in of material from other sites for burning it was determined that only agricultural organic materials generated on the property should be allowed to be burned.

MAR 15 1989

It was felt that a permit should be required for this burning to alert the Fire Department as to where and when the burning would be occurring.

The Committee considered the comments made relative to residential backyard burning, and determined that some burning could be allowed provided it was limited to a two weekend period in the spring. The last weekend in March and the first weekend in April were suggested to coincide with the spring burning presently allowed in the District of Coquitlam.


The Committee was not prepared to recommend that burning for land clearing projects be allowed. As long as contractors are made aware of the prohibition of any burning they will be able to adjust their bid prices to allow for alternate methods of disposal. The Committee recognized the problem which exists with burning in the Indian Reserve; however, they were hopeful that a proposal for shredding and composting at the former Coquitlam Landfill Site would proceed and provide a reasonable alternative to burning. The Deputy Engineer noted that it would likely cost the City more to dispose of brush trimmed from parks and within road allowances than it does to burn as is presently being done. The Committee felt that the City should be setting an example, and that by allowing some burning in the Spring, the savings in tipping fees for garden refuse which would be otherwise collected would offset the additional costs. Moreover, the City could burn during the two weekends in the Spring.

The Committee also noted that the current regulations which specify materials which are prohibited from being used in a fire should be retained and that toxic materials be added to the list of prohibited materials. It was also felt that the Fire Department should be able to shut down a fire for environmental as well as safety reasons.

The Committee determined that a report should be presented to Council with the following recommendations:

That Council not proceed with final reading of Bylaw No. 2412 and that the City Clerk be directed to prepare a new Bylaw which incorporates the following recommendations of the Committee:

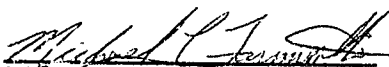
1. That burning be allowed on all properties zoned A-1 under a seasonal permit for a period not exceeding six months. No material other than on-site generated agricultural organic material shall be burned.
2. That burning be permitted on all occupied residential properties without a permit during the last weekend in March and the first weekend in April only. No material other than garden refuse generated on the property shall be burned.
3. That the Fire Department be empowered to require extinguishing of any fires, whether under permit or not, for environmental as well as hazardous conditions.

  
MAR 15 1989

4. That toxic materials be added to the list of materials prohibited from being used on or in any fire.
5. That no land clearing burning be permitted.

The Meeting Adjourned at 8:03 p.m.


  
D.G. Riecken, P. Eng.,  
Deputy City Engineer

  
Alderman M.C. Farnworth,  
Committee Chairman

DGR/jlh

NOTE: Minutes not read and adopted by the Committee until certified correct by the Committee Chairman's signature.

cc Mayor and Aldermen  
City Administrator

  
MAR 15 1989