
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Wednesday, January 19, 2022
11:15 a.m.
Meeting to be held electronically.

Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Adoption of December 1, 2021 Minutes
3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest
4. Reports
 - a. Establishment of Pollinator Gardens at County of Elgin Facilities – Chief Administrative Officer
5. Correspondence – none.
6. Date of Next Meeting
7. Adjournment

Meeting: Environmental Advisory Committee
Date: December 1, 2021
Time: 10:30 a.m.
Location: Webex

Attendees: Grant Jones, Councillor, Chair
Sally Martyn, Councillor
Kim Smale, Community Member, Vice Chair (joined the meeting in progress)
Robert Braam, Community Member
Ray Price, Community Member
Sarah Emons, Community Member (joined the meeting in progress)

Regrets: Tom Marks, Warden
Michaela Lenz, Community Member
Primrose Kisuule, Community Member
Julie Gonyou, Chief Administrative Officer

Staff: Nancy Pasato, Manager of Planning
Katherine Thompson, Manager of Administrative Services

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The Environmental Advisory Committee met this 1st day of December, 2021 with Councillor Jones in the chair. The meeting was called to order at 10:36 a.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

The Chair requested that an addendum be included in the agenda in order to provide the Manager of Planning with feedback regarding the Elgin Natural Heritage Systems Study and the Source Water Protection Plan.

Moved by: Sarah Emons
Seconded by: Ray Price

Resolved that the agenda be approved as amended.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Councillor Martyn	Yes	
Kim Smale	Yes	
Sarah Emons	Yes	
Ray Price	Yes	
Robert Braam	Yes	
Councillor Jones	Yes	
	6	0

- Motion Carried.

3. Adoption of May 26, 2021 Minutes

Moved by: Kim Smale
 Seconded by: Ray Price

Resolved that the minutes of the May 26, 2021 meeting be adopted.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Councillor Martyn	Yes	
Kim Smale	Yes	
Sarah Emons	Yes	
Ray Price	Yes	
Robert Braam	Yes	
Councillor Jones	Yes	
	6	0

- Motion Carried.

4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

5. Elgin Natural Heritage Systems Study – Community Feedback Presentation – Manager of Planning

The Manager of Planning provided the Elgin Natural Heritage Systems Study (ENHSS) Community Feedback Presentation that was presented at public meetings in October and November 2021. The Manager of Planning outlined the background

of the ENHSS, as well as the project overview and goals, key findings and considerations. The Manager of Planning noted that the Committee and the public are welcome to provide feedback on the study through www.engageelgin.ca/officialplanreview .

6. Source Water Protection – Community Feedback Presentation – Manager of Planning

The Manager of Planning presented the Source Water Protection Community Feedback Presentation that was presented at public meetings in October and November 2021. The Manager of Planning invited Committee Members and the public to provide feedback through www.engageelgin.ca/officialplanreview.

Moved by: Sarah Emons
 Seconded by: Ray Price

RESOLVED THAT feedback on the Elgin Natural Heritage Systems Study and the Source Water Protection Plan as received from the Environmental Advisory Committee be included as part of the Official Plan Review Public Consultation Process.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Councillor Martyn	Yes	
Kim Smale	Yes	
Sarah Emons	Yes	
Ray Price	Yes	
Robert Braam	Yes	
Councillor Jones	Yes	
	6	0

- Motion Carried.

7. Pollinator Gardens – Manager of Administrative Services/Deputy Clerk

The Manager of Administrative Services/Deputy Clerk presented the report outlining options and next steps needed in order to proceed with the installation of a pollinator garden at County facilities.

Moved by: Rob Braam
 Seconded by: Kim Smale

RESOLVED THAT more information be provided at the January 12, 2022 meeting regarding the costs, associated maintenance and viability of a stand-alone pollinator garden at the County of Elgin Administration Building and incorporating pollinator plants into existing gardens at County-owned facilities; and

THAT funding partnerships be explored.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Councillor Martyn	Yes	
Kim Smale	Yes	
Sarah Emons	Yes	
Ray Price	Yes	
Robert Braam	Yes	
Councillor Jones	Yes	
	6	0

- Motion Carried.

8. Items of Correspondence

None.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee will meet again on Wednesday, January 12, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

The Committee requested that the Chair send a letter to the Elgin County Budget Committee requesting their consideration for the allocation of \$10,000 for the installation of a pollinator garden and native pollinator plants at County-owned facilities.

10. Adjournment

Moved by: Ray Price
Seconded by: Rob Braam

RESOLVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 11:48 a.m.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Councillor Martyn	Yes	
Kim Smale	Yes	
Sarah Emons	Yes	
Ray Price	Yes	
Robert Braam	Yes	
Councillor Jones	Yes	
	6	0

- Motion Carried.

Julie Gonyou,
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk.

Grant Jones,
Chair.



REPORT TO ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FROM: Julie Gonyou, Chief Administrative Officer
 Brian Lima, General Manager of
 Engineering, Planning & Enterprise (EPE) /
 Deputy CAO
 Carolyn Krahn, Legislative Services
 Coordinator
 Katherine Thompson, Manager of
 Administrative Services

DATE: January 12, 2022

SUBJECT: Establishment of Pollinator Gardens at
 County of Elgin Facilities

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the report titled “Establishment of Pollinator Gardens at County of Elgin Facilities” from the Chief Administrative Officer and General Manager of Engineering, Planning, & Enterprise (EPE) / Deputy CAO, Legislative Services Coordinator and Manager of Administrative Services, dated January 12, 2022 be received and filed by the Committee; and

THAT Committee feedback and direction be summarized in a report from the Committee Chairman to Elgin County Council.

INTRODUCTION:

Correspondence from the Environmental Committee (“Committee”) was included as part of the January 11, 2022 agenda package for County Council’s (“Council”) consideration. The Committee’s correspondence to Council is included with this report as **Appendix A**.

At its meeting on January 11, 2022, Committee Chairman Councillor Grant Jones provided Council with a detailed overview of the Committee’s desire to establish pollinator gardens at County facilities including the Committee’s request that a \$10,000 placeholder be considered as part of Council’s 2022 budget deliberations.

After careful consideration and deliberation, Council directed that correspondence be sent to the Committee relaying Council's request for additional information about pollinator gardens at County facilities. Council's correspondence to the Committee is included as **Appendix B**. Council concluded that additional information was needed before an informed decision could be made about whether to consider this initiative as part of its 2022 budget deliberations.

This report includes the following sections:

- 1.) Chairman Councillor Grant Jones presentation to County Council (January 11, 2022)
- 2.) Council's request for additional information;
- 3.) Additional information requested by the Committee at its last meeting on December 1, 2021, including a sample design and estimated budget amounts for the potential creation of pollinator gardens at County facilities; and
- 4.) Options and alternatives regarding pollinator gardens for the Committee's consideration.

It is anticipated that this report will assist the Committee in making a recommendation to County Council and in its efforts to provide Council with follow-up information, as requested.

SUMMARY – Presentation to County Council on January 11, 2022

The following is a high-level summary of the presentation delivered to Council by Chairman Councillor Grant Jones on January 11, 2022:

- Pollinator gardens are essentially “wildlife gardens”
- These gardens support more than just honey bees and monarchs, this initiative is about supporting 1,600 species of moths, butterflies, etc.
- Pollinators also include: 850 native species of bees, as well as hummingbirds, flies, beetles, moths and birds.
- Wildlife gardens provide habitat for a richer diversity of life than just pollinators – species diversity and enrichment is the true goal.
- Food chain – plants are the first level that helps sustain all life on earth.
- Increase in plant diversity is directly correlated with an increase in diversity of other creatures (including mammals).

- Committee is looking at changing how we look at gardens (regardless of facility). It is not an expensive undertaking when we consider the redevelopment costs of Terrace Lodge Long-Term Care Home, noting the opportunities associated with the interior garden space.
- When we consider other LTC home facilities, a lot of residents spend time enjoying and/or nurturing the gardens.
- Pollinator gardens, after 2-3 years, can be just as beautiful as planted gardens and often require less maintenance.
- Supports this as a great initiative which will shift our thinking about gardens at the County in the future.

Council's Resolution (January 11, 2022):

At its meeting on January 11, 2022, Elgin County Council resolved:

THAT staff be directed to send correspondence to the Environmental Committee suggesting that additional information with respect to the installation of pollinator gardens at County facilities be provided to County Council at a future meeting.

COUNCIL – Comments and Recommendations for Committee Follow-Up

The following provides a high-level **summary of the comments/questions** received from Elgin County Council at its meeting on January 11, 2022:

- 1.) With respect to the grounds to the South of the County Building – are those tall prairie plantings in there?

Staff confirmed that, through consultation with the Conservation Authority, our understanding is that the grounds include tall prairie plantings.
- 2.) A naturalized area / pollinator garden is already established in this area (grounds to the South of the County Building).

Councillor Jones provided an explanation clarifying the difference between a pollinator garden (flowering) and prairie plantings (non-flowering).
- 3.) Historically, farms had fencerows that had milkweed and pollinator-enhancing plants. With fewer smaller farm operations, this has changed and there is a need to look after the pollinators as a result.

- 4.) Value of a pollinator garden is a moot point – it is obvious. Many agencies and community environmental groups are already doing a lot of work across the County to improve this work.
- 5.) The Budget Committee has been “cutting to the bone” in several other areas, and it was suggested that Council focus on “wants versus needs”, noting that this initiative falls within the “wants” category for services/projects.
- 6.) It was recommended that the Committee consult with other agencies, in particular, it was suggested that Elgin County can promote several programs that will help farmers create and be paid for pollinator gardens (i.e. Stewardship Council).
- 7.) Support for the concept was expressed by a few Members, but it was specifically noted by one Member that they would not support providing funding for this initiative.
- 8.) Committee Member Councillor Martyn reinforced the ways she felt this initiative did fall within the mandate of Elgin County.
- 9.) There are programs that exist in the community, that are targeted to farms, not municipal gardens.

The following provides a high-level **summary of the suggestions** that were made by Elgin County Council at its meeting on January 11, 2022:

- a. A recommendation that the Environmental Committee’s proposal include more detail, in particular, as it pertains to additional information to support the Committee’s financial request of \$10,000.

Staff Comments: Available financial information is detailed within this report.

- b. It was suggested that the Environmental Committee consider developing proposals and considering projects and / or initiatives that do not cost money but could save money while improving the impact on the environment (i.e. reviewing mowing, spraying approaches) – additionally, Council asked that the Committee consider other practices/policies that could be reviewed rather than requests that require funding.

Staff Comments: Some suggestions regarding no-cost/low-cost initiatives are included within this report.

- c. It was also suggested that while some existing environmental programs are directed at agricultural lands, other programs may exist for private land owners on non-agricultural lands. Furthermore, it was suggested that there may be funding available to the County. It was recommended that the Committee explore these alternatives for funding.

Staff Comments: Some suggestions regarding existing environmental programs and the County's eligibility to apply for programs/funding are included within this report.

- d. It was noted that the Committee's proposal should answer the following questions:
- i. What needs to be done?
 - ii. Where will it be placed?
 - iii. Who is going to do this?
 - iv. Is this funding to support volunteers who will do the work?
 - v. Or, is this funding to support a firm who will do this for us?

Staff Comments: Financial information is included within this report and it is recommended that these questions are most appropriately answered after the Committee has provided staff with direction.

- e. More information about who funded the naturalized space next to the County Building at 450 Sunset was requested. Specifically, whether some funding was provided by the Conservation Authority.

Staff Comments: Staff follow up is required and more information will be provided once available.

COMMITTEE DIRECTION – December 1, 2021

A pollinator garden is one that attracts bees, butterflies, moths, hummingbirds, or other beneficial creatures that transfer pollen from flower to flower, or in some cases, within flowers. Pollinators need flowers that are rich in nectar and pollen, and that are easily accessible. Native pollinators are the best plant pollinators, as native plants and pollinators have evolved together to adapt to local soil, climate and growing season.

At the December 1st, 2021 Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting, discussions took place regarding the possibility of establishing pollinator gardens at County Facilities. In the Committee presentation, three (3) options were identified and

discussed. At the request of the Committee, Corporate Facilities staff have undertaken a high-level review of the options and have provided a design sample and an estimated construction budget for each option.

1.) Identify a location for a single pollinator garden. Consider size, if it's an entirely new garden, consider maintenance

- The identified site for the location of a single pollinator garden is the Administration Building at 450 Sunset Drive. It is proposed that the garden would be placed in the north lawn between Karen Street and the administration building.
- The proposed size is approximately 600 sq.ft, attached is a sample design, provided by the City of Guelph. The design includes a variety of native plants that will attract pollinators throughout the entire growing season. This design also provides for water features and a bee housing structure. The County would engage local expertise to finalize any design proposals prior to tendering this work if it were to be approved by Council. This design is provided as an example only and is meant for budgeting purposes.
- This would be a new garden and may marginally increase plant bed maintenance costs due to the added work of weeding, edging/trimming, and ensuring the water source is filled.
- This proposal would also include information signage for garden visitors.

2.) Consider whether existing garden locations at County Facilities can be enhanced and whether pollinator patches can be planted. Multiple patches may make it easier for pollinators to forage

- Corporate Facilities Staff has undertaken a review of all existing gardens at all county facilities and identified suitable locations at each facility for a pollinator garden to be established. For the purposes of this report, it's assumed a pre-existing 225 sq.ft. garden would be repurposed into a pollinator garden for budget purposes.
- The design includes a variety of native plants that will attract pollinators throughout the entire growing season. This design also provides for water features and a bee housing structure. The County would engage local expertise to finalize any design proposals prior to tendering this work if it were to be approved by Council.
- This proposal would also include information signage for garden visitors.

- This would not be a new garden and would not increase maintenance costs as weeding and maintenance of gardens forms part of existing service agreements.

3.) Other Options? A combination of Options 1 & 2

- This option would be the most expensive. Committee direction would be required to clarify the number of gardens they would wish to see established.

Staff would recommend that a single project be identified in the first year. If the project achieves the desired results that the Committee and Council are looking for. Additional locations could be established in future years.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There currently is no budget allocated for the establishment of pollinator gardens in the County's 10-year capital budget. This proposal would require the approval of Council and the appropriate funds added to future budgets. Staff have provided a summary of estimated costs for Options 1 and 2, generated in consultation with the County's current grass cutting and landscape maintenance contract service provider.

Option 1 (600 sq.ft. Garden at County Administration Building)

Design	\$500.00
Signage	\$500.00
Construction	\$14,000.00
Total	\$15,000.00

**Note, the contractor estimates an additional \$400/year in maintenance costs for the garden that is not currently included in the County's service maintenance contract.*

Option 2 (225 sq.ft. Repurposing of Existing Facility Garden Beds)

Design	\$200.00
Signage	\$500.00
Construction	\$4,000.00
Total	\$4,700.00/per garden

CONSIDERATION OF NO-COST/LOW-COST INITIATIVES:

Carolyn Krahn (Legislative Services Coordinator) suggests the following:

To encourage the establishment of pollinator gardens at County of Elgin Facilities, another option would be to create a policy requiring that any new landscaping or planned re-planting in existing gardens incorporate native pollinator plants. This approach would use the existing landscaping budget to gradually transform County gardens into gardens that support native pollinator species. Whenever new gardens are created, they would include native pollinator plants; and whenever existing gardens are replanted, they would be replanted to include native pollinator plants.

While this approach may take longer to implement, it would ensure that pollinator gardens are established in a sustainable way and that they will be maintained for years to come.

EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS & ELIGIBILITY:

The Manager of Administrative Services has reached out to various organizations over the past several days to investigate available funding opportunities. Many environmental funds are only open to private land owners and specifically preclude municipalities from applying; however, a few possible options were investigated and are detailed below. This list is not exhaustive.

ALUS

The Alternative Land Use Services, is a community-developed and farmer delivered program that produces, enhances and maintains ecosystems on agricultural land. Although ALUS usually completes projects on agricultural land, preliminary discussions with ALUS representatives indicate a willingness to consider a special project with Elgin County.

Ontario Community Environment Fund

Municipalities are eligible to apply for the Ontario Community Environment Fund and eligible projects include those that increase environmental restoration and remediation activities which repair environmental harm. For example: planting trees, shrubs or plants to help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Proposed projects must be at least \$5,000 to qualify. The proposed activities / project of creating pollinator habitat and/or rain gardens would be eligible. Representatives from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks indicate that it is likely that the in-take period for applications will open in mid-2022 for projects starting in 2023.

TD Friends of the Environment Foundation Grant

The Foundation supports a wide range of environmental initiatives, with a primary focus on environmental education and green space programs. Eligible projects include schoolyard greening, park revitalization, community gardens, park programming and citizen science initiatives. Grants through this foundation are usually between \$2,000 and \$8,000. The winter submission period closed on January 15th but another intake period closes in July. More research is required regarding this grant.

Carolinian Canada

It has been suggested at previous Committee meetings that Carolinian Canada may be interested in partnering with the County to install a pollinator garden at the County of Elgin Administration Building. Staff have reached out to Carolinian Canada but at the time of this report no response had been received.

Landscape Design Program – Fanshawe College

The students in the Landscape Design Program at Fanshawe College participate in Community Outreach projects each semester. Staff have reached out to Fanshawe College and determined that they are already fully subscribed for projects for this semester but there might be a chance to work with the program in the Fall semester. Students would design (with the Committee's input) a pollinator garden at no cost to the County, and are willing to work within a budget set by the Committee. The County would be responsible for the cost of materials and installation of the garden; however, there may be an opportunity to reach out to the Horticulture students at Fanshawe regarding installation(staff have not contacted this department at this time). This approach would provide opportunities to involve youth/young professionals in the activities of the Environmental Advisory Committee.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Serving Elgin	Growing Elgin	Investing in Elgin
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring alignment of current programs and services with community need.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Exploring different ways of addressing community need.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Engaging with our community and other stakeholders.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Planning for and facilitating commercial, industrial, residential, and agricultural growth.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fostering a healthy environment.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhancing quality of place.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring we have the necessary tools, resources, and infrastructure to deliver programs and services now and in the future.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Delivering mandated programs and services efficiently and effectively.</p>

Additional Comments:

None

LOCAL MUNICIPAL PARTNER IMPACT:

None

COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:

None

CONCLUSION:

This report is intended to assist the Committee in making a recommendation to Council on this initiative.



All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Brian Lima, General Manager of
Engineering, Planning & Enterprise (EPE)
/ Deputy CAO

Julie Gonyou
Chief Administrative Officer

Julie Gonyou
Chief Administrative Officer

Carolyn Krahn
Legislative Services Coordinator

Katherine Thompson
Manager of Administrative Services

Warden Marks and Elgin County Budget Committee
450 Sunset Drive
St. Thomas, ON N5H 1T2

December 1, 2021

Warden Marks and Members of the Budget Committee,

The Environmental Advisory Committee provides input, advice and makes recommendations on environmental matters affecting the County of Elgin. Over the course of 2021, the Committee has been investigating ways in which the County of Elgin can reduce its environmental footprint and improve the natural environment in our area. One of these ways is the possible installation of naturalized areas and pollinator gardens at County-owned facilities. A pollinator garden is one that attracts bees, butterflies, moths, hummingbirds or other beneficial creatures that transfer pollen from flower to flower, or in some cases, within flowers. Pollinators are in decline and pollinator gardens are one way in which much needed pollinator habitats can be created.

The Committee is in the process of gathering feedback from the Kettle Creek Conservation Authority and County Facilities Staff regarding the cost and viability of installing one larger pollinator garden on the north side of the County Administration Building and incorporating native pollinator species into existing gardens at County owned facilities. The Committee expects to receive a report at its meeting scheduled for January 12, 2022 in which anticipated costs will be presented. After consideration by the Committee, a recommendation will be presented to County Council for consideration.

The Environmental Advisory Committee is aware that the 2022 Budget process is currently underway and budgetary recommendations are being reviewed by the Budget Committee. The Environmental Advisory Committee is requesting that the Budget Committee consider allocating \$10,000 for the installation of a pollinator garden and native pollinator plants at County-owned facilities. An updated number based on information gathered over the course of December will be provided to the Committee in January.

Sincerely,



Councillor Grant Jones
Chair, Environmental Advisory Committee

Elgin County Environmental Advisory Committee
C/o Councillor Grant Jones, Chair
Elgin County Environmental Advisory Committee
gjones@elgin.ca

January 11, 2022

Dear Councillor Jones and Environmental Advisory Committee;

In response to the Committee's request for \$10,000 in funding for the installation of a pollinator garden and native pollinator plants at County-owned facilities, Elgin County Council passed the following resolution:

"Moved By: Councillor Purcell
Seconded By: Councillor McPhail

"That staff be directed to send correspondence to the Environmental Committee suggesting that additional information with respect to the installation of a pollinator garden and native pollinator plants at County owned facilities be provided to County Council at a future meeting.

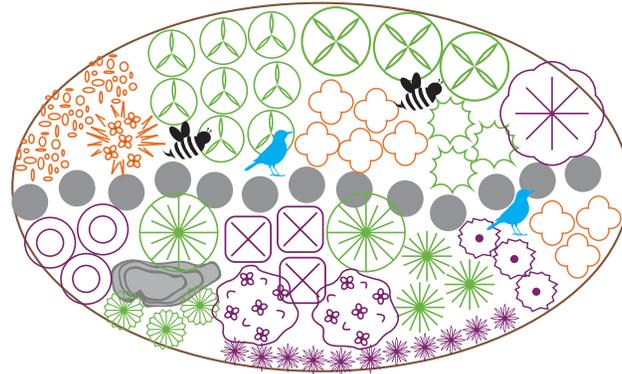
-Carried."

Sincerely,



Mary French
Elgin County Warden

Sun – pollinator garden



SUN
At least six hours of direct sunlight.

SOIL
To help your soil hold moisture and decrease watering needs, add 5 cm (2 in) of organic material (e.g. compost, manure, leaf mold) every couple of years. This will also provide a constant supply of nutrients, eliminating the need to fertilize, and will help quicken plant growth.

WATER
New plants may need extra watering until roots are well established (one to two seasons). Mulch will help increase moisture retention for long periods of time. Add 5-10 cm (2-4 in) of mulch every two to four years to help reduce watering needs throughout the summer.

GENERAL
A pollinator garden is a safe resting spot for insects and birds and provides them with shelter, food and water. Having a variety of flower shapes will encourage many different types of pollinators to visit your garden. Select plants which flower at different times of the year to ensure you have blooms for yourself and for pollinators all summer long. Leave flower heads and stalks standing in the winter as many insects will overwinter there, and birds may feed on them. The addition of bird baths and bee houses will keep insects and birds returning to your garden each year.

- Spring interest
- Summer interest
- Fall interest
- Stepping stones
- Ornamental rock
- Birdbath
- Bee house