

Introduction for Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Protection and Enhancement Policy Nov. 25, 2019 by Susan Towndrow

Good evening Madam Mayor and members of Council. My name is Susan Towndrow and I am representing the greening advocacy group, Tree Action Arbre, which is a working group of Transition Cornwall+.

It is my privilege to be part of the conversation on the updated Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation policy that is on your agenda this evening. It is the result of a successful, collaborative process between our group and several city departments, through the skilled coordination of Jamie Fawthrop, Division Manager of Parks and Recreation.

Now, there are times in the life of a community when crucial decisions need to be made that will profoundly affect its future and I believe this is one of them. Recent declarations by both the World Health Organization as well as the United Nations, make it clear that climate change is a threat to human health and the ecosystems on which we depend. Although we are a small community we need to be part of the solutions in whatever way we can. Increasing and protecting the tree canopy and natural vegetation in Cornwall is one of the cheapest and most effective ways of addressing climate change. It is one way in which we can act right here right now.

This year, you are to be commended for showing real leadership when you identified Environmental Sustainability as one of the five key priorities for the City and then further, by supporting this with the creation of a new Committee of Council, the Environment and Climate Change Committee.

Cornwall, like all other communities across Ontario, is preparing a policy required by the province under Bill 68 and we can be proud of the fact that this document will certainly be shared with other communities who are doing this and who will look to us as leaders in this endeavour.

Now, while Council and staff can provide leadership, they can't do this alone. The policy before you contains a strong public advocacy component. Community engagement will be crucial in building public understanding and support. It will encourage actions by all the various partners, community groups and individual citizens in helping to achieve the goals set out.

This policy will form an important part of the City's Environmental Sustainability priority. A well-designed and generous green infrastructure, has been shown to advance the economic, the health and the environmental well-being of the community as you will see outlined in the brief before you.

Something to note is that a number of City policies and actions are already in place in different city departments to protect and enhance the tree canopy and natural vegetation. This new updated proposal brings many of these together in one document that can be used by all the various city departments while adding some important targets to strive for.

This evening, it is my pleasure to welcome Mr. Michael Rosen, the President of Tree Canada, who is generously contributing his time and has come from Ottawa to share his knowledge and to talk about the value of trees and wildlife in our community. With over 30 years of experience, Michael leads Tree Canada in stakeholder relations, building partnerships, governance and program management.

We are also fortunate to have Danielle St-Aubin here this evening, she is the new CEO of Tree Canada.

I would like to welcome to you both.

Thank you again and we will be pleased to answer your questions following Michael's presentation.

BIOS

Michael is President of Tree Canada leading its transition to private sector support in 2007 and successfully advocating for a *National Tree Day* for Canada in 2011. With over 30 years of experience, Michael leads Tree Canada in stakeholder relations, securing partnerships, governance and program management. Previously, he was a Stewardship Coordinator and Forester with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources where he assisted landowners, managed the York Regional and Simcoe County Forests and helped revise provincial tree legislation. He serves on the Boards of a number of organizations and presents and writes on urban forests, carbon and trees, and forest history. A Registered Professional Forester (R.P.F.) in Ontario he has a B.A. in History from Trent University, a B.Sc.F. from the University of Toronto, a Diploma from the Ontario Advanced Forestry Program from U of T and Lakehead University and has participated in training programs with the Institute of Corporate Directors and the Canadian Society of Association Executives.

Danielle St-Aubin

Ms. St-Aubin has worked in the not-for-profit sector for more than 15 years and has acquired a deep knowledge of the development and implementation of a broad range of strategies including communications and marketing, fundraising, sponsorship, and events. In her most recent role as Vice-President of Communications and Marketing at Trans Canada Trail, she was responsible for raising the profile and increasing the reach of the organization. Before that, she served as Vice-President, Donor Relations at The Ottawa Hospital Foundation. She began her career as Publicist at United Way Ottawa before moving on to the Canadian Wildlife Federation, where she managed the rebrand and re-launch of the iconic Hinterland Who's Who (HWW) program. She has an MBA from the Telfer School of Business.