**GREN Minutes - Feb. 19, 2014**

**St. John’s Kitchen, Kitchener**

**1. Water Supply Master Plan and Water Efficiency Master Plan updates (Susan B, Susan K and John J)**

The Region’s Water SMP pushes the water pipeline from Lake Erie further into the future, suggesting it may never be built. The Region will instead maintain current supply methods. GREN can take some credit for this outcome. The Region’s Water EMP notes that water demand continues to drop in the Region, currently averaging 202 litres per capita per day in the residential sector. The target is further reduction, to 160 lcd by 2025. Susan K is currently editing GREN’s comments on both Plans, assembled by Susan B and John J. Generally, our comments are very supportive, with suggestions to be more aggressive in setting and reaching targets and in protecting the current local water supply. The comments will be circulated to GREN.

**2. Headwater Hikes in the Greenbelt Proposal (John & Kevin)**

The Ontario Headwaters Institute is applying for a grant “to develop a series of ten hikes, in collaboration with local partners, to increase public understanding of the important role that headwaters perform in the health of the Greenbelt’s biodiversity, downstream watersheds, and socioeconomic fabric. Once the hikes are developed, individuals will be able to experience headwater areas on their own while the local partners will be welcome to use the materials as they see fit, with the exception of for schools. The Hikes will be designed to increase overall appreciation of the Greenbelt, as well as the need to safeguard and strengthen it.”

The Institute is requesting GREN’s support as a partner to help select hike areas in the Region. Once they develop the hike materials, GREN can post and make that information to anyone. We agreed to sign on.

**3. The Green Scene (Susan K)**

Susan is developing a 6-episode TV show on green issues in the Region, to be broadcast on Rogers TV in May. They have begun taping the first episode, and the show will include a tour of REEP House, a tour of the dump as well as the water and wastewater cycle, with John J as a guest. Energy, garbage, water, culture are among the topics. Susan K also noted that Conestoga College is now offering a 1-year Green Management program.

**4.  West Cambridge Development**Lynn Stevens summarized the concerted efforts being made by Sue Stubley and her mother (and Lynn) to save Barrie’s Lake from problems that could arise from development. One concern is the possibility of storm water affecting the Lake from development, and another is a proposal to realign Roseville Rd. to support future development. They stressed that decisions must be made with more transparency and accountability to the public.

Parts of the affected area are ESL, and like all ESLs, the land is privately owned. Jan Liggett and Les Kadar noted that the area was designated for development 20 years ago. The opponents aren’t opposed to development of the area, but want it done properly to protect the lake and ESL. John J noted that if the development is adjacent to ESLs, the matter should be before the Region’s EEAC. He will check that status. City of Cambridge meets on March 3 to make decisions on the overall servicing plan to the area. Any development proposals that come forward must include detailed plans for storm water management. West Cambridge development will be discussed again at our April meeting.

**5. Citizens’ Environmental Monitoring (Tony Maas) – deferred to next meeting**

**6. Light Rail Transit & Waterloo Region Official Plan status updates (Kevin)**

On Tuesday, March 4, 3:00, Council Chambers, the Region’s Planning and Works Committee meets to discuss the staff recommendation of the company chosen for the LRT contract. The Committee’s recommendation then goes to Regional Council. This is an important meeting to attend and make comments. The public will be informed of the staff recommendation at the end of February.

Kevin and Deb also noted the need for pro-LRT letters to the editor and articles to combat the recent anti-LRT campaign. Tritag is developing an infographic to support LRT. Kevin notes that there have been 383 public meetings on the LRT—so the complaint of little consultation not valid. He reiterated Region’s 3 main reasons for LRT: 1) to move people around 2) to foster better growth in the core, preventing sprawl and loss of farmland, and 3) huge greenhouse gas reduction. Cambridge GREN members noted that they support LRT but want the LRT extended to Cambridge.

Kevin noted that the ROP is in legal limbo, with two cases before a backlogged divisional court. The Region is acting as if the new ROP is in force. The developer Activa just lost a case before the OMB in Breslau, in which Activa was trying to shut out other developers.

**7. Municipal elections – Our role? (Kevin, Tony, all)** – deferred to next meeting.

Note that GREN’s Jan Liggett plans to run in the City of Cambridge.

**8. Provincial election? – Our role? (John J)**

John noted that three pieces of environmental legislation are tied up by the Tories. Last week, the Minister of Environment, Jim Bradley, sent a letter to the NDP suggesting the parties work together to get them through—putting the NDP on the spot. They are the Great Lakes Protection Act, the Waste Reduction Act, and the Whistle-blower legislation. The first two have gotten to committee but stymied there. We want them all passed, but they need substantial amendments.

Andrea Horvath is coming to town to speak at Chambers of Commerce meeting on Feb. 28. We need someone to speak with her to support the Minister’s request. It was suggested we ask Catherine Fife, and write up some notes for her.

Re waste, it was noted that the Region does not pick up recycling for industry or construction, resulting in tons going to the landfill, and the new legislation pushes harder for this. Current law requires that municipalities pick up only residential waste. How can we work on the Region to do this? Susan K suggested Sustainable Waterloo has helped companies organize green teams, and they may have some influence.

**9. APT Environment’s 25th Anniversary (Susan B)**

APT, the Elmira citizens’ group that has pushed issues around the contamination by Uniroyal Chemical (now Chemtura), is celebrating 25 years. An event is planned for September 28, 2:00, at St. James Lutheran Church hall, on the main street of Elmira, 60 Arthur St. south. Please mark your calendars to attend and bring friends. We want a crowd. Susan also announced that she is being inducted into the Waterloo Region Hall of Fame for her environmental work.

**10. Other – GREN website**

We discussed options for keeping the GREN website up to date. We need a volunteer administrator. The GREN executive will meet before the April meeting to discuss further and come up with ideas.

**Next meeting: April 10, 2014 – 7:15 – St. John’s Kitchen, Kitchener**

**Guest presenter**- Sue Stubley re Barrie’s Lake & turtles campaigns

**Items deferred from February meeting**: Citizens’ Environmental Monitoring (Tony Maas), Municipal elections – Our role? (Kevin, Tony, all)

**Note that it’s time to pay membership dues** - $20 individual, $10 student, $40 organization

You can mail cheques to Theo Negoita, 619 Forest Hill Drive, Kitchener, ON, N2N 1A1