**GREN Minutes, September 25, 2017**

**Christian Science Sunday School, 64 Water St. N., Kitchener**

1. **Biosolids in Waterloo Region -** Kaoru Yajima, senior project engineer, Waterloo Region's water services gave a presentation on the status of biosolids (the sludge remaining after wastewater treatment in the Region’s sewage treatment plants). Waterloo Region is developing a strategy to deal with them. So far the region has developed a short list of alternatives and plans to recommend a preferred alternative to regional council next year. The alternatives still being considered are:

1...Produce fertilizer from biosolids.

2...Produce compost from biosolids.

3...Produce dry fertilizer pellets from biosolids.

4...Thermal reduction of biosolids to ash.

Bob Burtt is the GREN representative on the Region’s biosolids committee. In spring 2018, a choice will be made from the short list, and GREN should be prepared to respond. The presentation slides are on the GREN website at <http://gren.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Biosolids_Strategy_-_GREN_presentation_september_2017.pdf>

Notable biosolid facts:

* Long-term plan is needed because must transport biosolids as soon as they’re created, as there’s no storage for them.
* Currently, 40% of Region’s biosolids go to Sudbury—5 trucks a day—to help reclaim land
* The province’s Nutrient Management Plan allows biosolids to be spread on agricultural land as fertilizer only every 5 years.
* The presenter says there are no heavy metals in the biosolids, since they aren’t allowed to be discharged into sewers.

2. **Textile Recycling** – We decided that GREN should get involved in this issue. The first step is to go to the Region to see what they’re doing or planning to reduce textiles going to the landfill and to alert the Region to our interest.

3. **Hidden Valley** - Deaune reported on movements in the zoning issues in Hidden Valley. She noted seeing a bicycle chop shop on the property (now dismantled by police) as well as more farming into suspected Jefferson salamander habitat. The area is as protected now as much as it can be given the tools currently available. But development pressure is on and we need to be vigilant. The GREN group on Hidden Valley will meet again to decide on a strategy.

4. **The Hidden Valley Art Show** at the Homer Watson Gallery is now on, **closing Oct. 22.** There was a full house at the opening and good media coverage. It’s a wonderful show and includes some of Daphne’s pieces.

5.  **Greening Plan for Elmira** – Susan B. reported that a 20-year greening plan for Elmira has been initiated by TWEEC—the Township of Woolwich Environmental Enhancement Committee. It’s a committee of Township council made up of volunteers. TWEEC received a generous grant from the Region’s Community Environment Fund to hire a consulting firm (Natural Resource Solutions Inc.) to work with the community and Township staff to produce a plan that sets out options and priorities. The idea is to implement it over time as funds become available.

6. **Concerned Citizens of Brant (CCOB)** – John reported that the group lost its case against a gravel pit near Paris that the group argued would pollute ground and surface water. The have appealed directly to the Minister of Environment, their last recourse, and GREN has sent a letter of support. To defray high legal costs, CCOB is planning a fundraising event for November. (The event originally scheduled for October has been postponed.)

7. **Greenbelt** – Kevin T. reported that the Liberals are considering using the greenbelt as a wedge issue in the next election. His concern is that they do it right.

8. **Good Green Death Forum** – Susan K’s forum is 1:00-4:00 on **Saturday, Oct. 28.** For more informationand to register, go to<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/good-green-death-forum-tickets-36208279940>

9. The group declared that GREN is proceeding as it should, and that it’s useful to occasionally have a speaker at GREN meetings.

Note that Norah Chaloner was on the agenda to speak about the **Yorkland Green Hub** in Guelph, but she was unable to attend.