



## **Agenda**

### **Green Committee**

September 18, 2019

5:30 pm

Municipal Operations Centre

408 James Street South, St. Marys

Pages

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**
3. **AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** September 18, 2019 regular Green Committee agenda be accepted as presented.

#### **4. DELEGATIONS**

##### **4.1 Upper Thames River Conservation Authority re: Invasive Species in Sparling Bush**

3

Vanni Azzano, Community Education Supervisor and Jay Ebel, Forestry and Habitat Restoration Technician from the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority will be attending the meeting to discuss their recommendations for Sparling Bush.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority invasive species Sparling Bush letter be received.

#### **5. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

5

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** the June 19, 2019 regular Green Committee minutes be approved and signed by the Chair and Committee Secretary

## **6. REPORTS**

### **6.1 PW 58-2019 Review & Endorsement of DRAFT Sparling Bush Plan 2020-2022**

10

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** PW 58-2019 Review & Endorsement of DRAFT Sparling Bush Plan 2020-2022 be received;

**THAT** the Committee endorse the DRAFT Sparling Bush Plan 2020-2022; and

**THAT** the Committee recommend Council allocate funds in the 2020 Capital Budget to implement Plan's objectives for 2020.

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

## **8. UPCOMING MEETINGS**

October 16, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. - Solid Waste Management By-law

November 20, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** this meeting of the Green Committee adjourn at

August 13, 2019

St. Marys Green Committee,

**Re: Invasive Species in Sparling Bush**

Public works staff and staff from the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) met at Sparling Bush on June 26, 2019 to review the current status of invasive plant species and offer recommendations on actions to mitigate the spread of these species.

**Observations:**

The property boundary markers seem to be preventing encroachment into the Bush. Neighbouring properties are no longer cutting into the bush and there appears to be a definite perimeter established. This ultimately controls the amount of invasive plants establishing in the bush through encroachment from adjacent property owners. There is significantly less garlic mustard present at the cemetery entrance where a concerted effort has been made to consistently pull the plants before they go to seed. Invasive species observed include garlic mustard, periwinkle, buckthorn and dog strangling vine.

**Recommendations:**

**Garlic Mustard**

- Occurs throughout the bush. Continue manually pulling plants before they seed. Ron Aitken has been instrumental in organizing classes from Little Falls and other volunteers to assist and it is making a difference.

**Periwinkle**

- Mainly in the northeast corner of the bush. This can be controlled by using filter cloth with mulch on top.

**Buckthorn**

- Not enough to chemically treat as it will likely come back. Continue to monitor.

**Dog Strangling Vine**

- Mainly near the perimeter. There are concerns from landowners about the vine spreading onto their properties therefore the perimeter needs to be protected so the plant does not spread. Chemical treatment is not the best option when considering neighbouring properties.
- Use mulch to create a clear buffer zone between private and public property on the edge of the bush. It is recommended that the large areas of the vine be cut, covered with a black tarp and mulch placed on top. Installation of the tarp needs to be done before the plant seeds and would stay down for the entire season. Requires weekly observation.
- This method does not allow for natural regeneration but is an effective option.

**Other:**

Northwest Corner of the Bush

- There is intense encroachment from the neighbouring property resulting in removal of species and yard waste storage. To reduce the re-establishment of invasive plants, it is recommended that the corner be tarped and mulched.
- There is also some natural regeneration of sugar maple, trilliums and flowering dogwood occurring. To enhance the area and grow the canopy, native species such as basswood, sugar maple and black cherry can be planted. This area can accommodate approximately 25-30 trees.

Please let us know if you have any questions regarding the above recommendations.

Sincerely,

UPPER THAMES RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Jay Ebel  
Forestry and Habitat Restoration Technician  
ebelj@thamesriver.on.ca

Vanni Azzano  
Community Education Supervisor  
azzanov@thamesriver.on.ca



## **Minutes**

### **Green Committee**

June 19, 2019

5:30 pm

Municipal Operations Centre  
408 James Street South, St. Marys

#### **Members Present**

Lynette Geddes, Chair  
Katherine Moffat, Vice-Chair  
Councillor Craigmile  
Fred Stam  
John Stevens  
David Vermeire

#### **Staff Present**

Jed Kelly, Director of Public Works  
Dave Blake, Environmental Services Supervisor  
Morgan Dykstra, Committee Secretary

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Geddes called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM

#### **2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

None declared.

#### **3. AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Resolution: GC-2019-06-01**

**Moved By** Katherine Moffat

**Seconded By** John Stevens

**THAT** the June 19, 2019 regular Green Committee agenda be accepted as presented.

**Carried**

#### **4. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

4.1 Green Committee Minutes - May 22, 2019

**Resolution: GC-2019-06-02**

**Moved By** Fred Stam

**Seconded By** Katherine Moffat

**THAT** the May 22, 2019 regular Green Committee minutes be approved and signed by the Chair and Committee Secretary.

**Carried**

#### **5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

F. Stam investigated the possibility of banning plastic bags, three municipalities in Canada legislated against the use of plastic bags. Each municipality has experienced legal ramifications from the banning. Could be a moot point after the Federal Government's announcement about single-use plastics.

#### **6. REPORTS**

6.1 PW 36-2019 TEXTILE RECYCLING

D. Blake spoke to PW-36 2019 Textile Recycling and responded to questions from the Committee.

D. Blake clarified that the Request for Proposal will be general with some conditions. A Request for Proposal will ensure many groups are allowed to provide a textile recycling program submission for the landfill site and possibly a downtown location.

**Resolution: GC-2019-06-03**

**Moved By** John Stevens

**Seconded By** Katherine Moffat

**THAT** Report PW 36-2019, Textile Recycling be received; and

**THAT** the Green Committee recommend to Council that a textile recycling program at the St. Marys Landfill Site be adopted; and,

**THAT** the Green Committee recommend to Council to direct staff to complete a Request for Proposal for textile recycling at the St. Marys Landfill Site in accordance with Municipal By-Law 36-2012.

**Carried**

## 6.2 PW 37-2019 MATTRESS AND BOX SPRING RECYCLING

D.Blake spoke to PW 37-2019 Mattress and Box Spring Recycling and responded to questions from the Committee.

If the Committee, in principle, agrees that the Town needs a mattress and box spring diversion program, then staff will seek Council approval. If Council is also in agreement, staff will develop a framework for the program that considers how the mattresses and box springs will be processed at the Town of St. Marys Landfill Site, possible rate structures and communication to the public.

The Committee discussed possible methods to fund a mattress and box spring diversion program. While developing a framework staff will provide several options for funding, such options may include:

1. Individual charge per mattress and box spring brought to the landfill site (user fee system);
2. Incorporate diversion program costs into the solid waste charge on each tax bill;
3. Fund the program through the landfill, and increase tipping fees to offset program costs (self-funded cost center); and
4. Fund through the general tax rate.

It is the Committee's opinion that incorporating the cost of the diversion program into the solid waste charge may mitigate illegal dumping of mattresses and box springs on public and private property. The goal of the program should be to encourage waste diversion activities and make them accessible to the general public to ensure a successful impact.

Councillor Craigmile arrived at 6:36 PM.

**Resolution: GC-2019-06-04**

**Moved By** Fred Stam

**Seconded By** John Stevens

**THAT** Report PW 37-2019 Mattress and Box Spring Recycling be received; and

**THAT** the Green Committee recommend to Council that a mattress and box spring diversion program be adopted at the St. Marys Landfill Site.

**Carried**

### 6.3 PW 38-2019 WASTE MANAGEMENT BY-LAW UPDATE

D. Blake spoke to PW 38-2019 Waste Management By-law Update and responded to questions from the Committee.

The Committee discussed the items listed in the report, and support transitioning the Landfill Site into a cashless facility and re-configuring Saturday operations to support reduced hours and have two employees on site.

The Committee is to provide any other comments regarding the items outlined in the Report and By-law 71 of 2012 to M. Dykstra by July 12, 2019. Staff would appreciate any type of feedback, technical or from the user/resident perspective to help inform the by-law writing process.

## 7. OTHER BUSINESS

### 7.1 SINGLE USE PLASTICS

The Federal government recently announced its intent to ban single-use plastics by 2021.

In the meantime, the Committee could passively reduce single-use plastics using acknowledgement incentives that encourage the use of alternative products other than plastic. There are various models in the area that the program could emulate. There are businesses in Town who already attempt to mitigate their plastic usage.

**Resolution: GC-2019-06-05**

**Moved By** Fred Stam

**Seconded By** David Vermeire



**THAT** the Green Committee request that staff investigate the feasibility of adopting an organizations recognition program for organizations who exhibit environmental stewardship excellence.

**Carried**

**8. UPCOMING MEETINGS**

September 18, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. - Solid Waste Management By-law

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

**Resolution: GC-2019-06-06**

**Moved By** John Stevens

**Seconded By** Fred Stam

**THAT** this meeting of the Green Committee adjourn at 7:18 PM

**Carried**

---

Lynette Geddes, Chair

---

Morgan Dykstra, Committee Secretary

# FORMAL REPORT

<b>To:</b>	Chair and Members of the Advisory Committee
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Morgan Dykstra, Public Works Coordinator
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	18 September 2019
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>PW 58-2019 Review &amp; Endorsement of DRAFT Sparling Bush Plan 2020-2022</b>

## PURPOSE

The Public Works Department is actively working to preserve, maintain, and enhance Sparling Bush. Throughout 2019, the Department and Green Committee have reviewed the challenges that negatively affect Sparling Bush and current practices.

The Department has created a DRAFT Sparling Bush Plan for 2020 thru 2022. The activities in the plan were determined based on discussions with the Green Committee and recommendations from the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA). Staff are requesting the Committee review the plan, make changes as needed, and ultimately endorse the proposed plan.

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT** PW 58-2019 Review & Endorsement of DRAFT Sparling Bush Plan 2020-2022 be received;

**THAT** the Committee endorse the DRAFT Sparling Bush Plan 2020-2022; and

**THAT** the Committee recommend Council allocate funds in the 2020 Capital Budget to implement Plan's objectives for 2020.

## BACKGROUND

For additional background regarding the health of Sparling Bush and past initiatives, please refer to the following documents:

*Sparling Woodlot Assessment, 2001*

*Sparling Bush: Management Recommendations for the Town of St. Marys, July 2015*

*PW 34-2017 Sparling Bush Management and Information*

*PW 14-2018 Sparling Bush Management Update*

*PW 20-2019 Sparling Bush Action Items*

The Town of St. Marys Council in conjunction with the Upper Thames Conservation Authority have determined for key concerns, below each concern, practices undertaken have been noted:

1. Encroachment: properties are encroaching on the woodlot;
  - a. Boundary markers were installed along the perimeter of the Bush, and information was sent to neighboring properties (the markers appear to be mitigating encroachment).

2. Non-native Invasive Species: significant growth of invasive species along the bush border (harming natural regeneration of the Bush);
  - a. Annual hand removal of invasive species with Rotary Club and local school groups
  - b. Mulch on the trails has appeared to prevent the spread of invasive species.
3. Trail and Tree Management:
  - a. In 2017, 2018, and 2019 the Town and its partners, UTRCA and the Rotary Club have been augmenting the East and South sides of the Bush to ease pressures from development.
  - b. Annual inspection of trees adjacent to trails and perimeter properties.
  - c. Apply wood chip material to trail paths while also blocking and discouraging new path creation.
4. Signage: lack of clear direction within the Bush.
  - a. Rotary Club installed a sign at the Waterloo Street entrance

Furthermore, in September of 2017, the Town held an Open House at the Municipal Operations Centre for neighbours discuss the health of the Bush with Town staff and UTRCA staff.

Also, in the summer of 2019, Public Works Operators installed a seating area – “outdoor classroom” in the North East corner for local school groups. The seating area is visible from the Waterloo Street entrance; the visibility will hopefully deter poor behaviour.

Staff have completed the bulk of the activities in the 2017 task list; therefore, the adoption of a new three-year plan is necessary.

## **REPORT**

The Public Works Department would like to adopt a formal plan to address critical concerns regarding Sparling Bush. The Proposed DRAFT Sparling Bush 2020-2022 Plan is organized into four categories: encroachment, non-native invasive species, trail and tree management, and signage. The focal point of the plan is encroachment and non-native species. The objectives of the plan are more aggressive. The current practices cannot adequately address the pervasive impact of encroachment and non-native species.

For instance, the annual pulling of strangling dog-vine does not deter the regeneration of invasive species. UTRCA recommends the installation of a black tarp and mulch before the invasive seeds, and plant species through the cloth. Furthermore, periwinkle is spreading in the northwest corner; installing filter cloth can eradicate its growth. Without drastic measures that have capital costs, it is likely the non-native species will continue to be pervasive, and affect the overall health of the Bush. Staff have attempted to implement less costly options; however, their results are minimal. In previous conversations, Staff and the Green Committee are uncomfortable implementing any chemical treatment to reduce the invasive species.

Upon eliminating the majority of invasive species, natural regeneration can be encouraged along with augmentation. For example, the Department intends to plant more native species in the northeast corner where natural regeneration is already occurring; such species may include, basswood, sugar maple, and cherry trees (all are on the Tree Species List).

The encroachment of non-native invasive species onto private property has prompted neighbours to encroach along the Bush in attempts to prevent further encroachment. In areas where residents have “cut” into the bush and created a grass area, the invasion of the invasive species has been minimal. Therefore, staff proposes establishing a buffer zone along the perimeter of the Bush to prevent the

spread of dog-strangling vine. Mulch should act as a sufficient buffer. As noted above, adding mulch to the trails has mitigated the dog-strangling vine in other areas of the Bush.

In 2021, Staff propose contacting those with tangible encroachments in the northwest and southeast sections of the Bush, requesting the residents remove those encroachments. If the residents do not comply, staff will physically remove those encroachments. Some of the encroachments include yard waste containers, and garden beds that encourage permeation of invasive species.

Furthermore, to enhance the use of the natural area, Staff propose installing a formal entrance and signage at Sparling Crescent. In the past the residents and visitors have been unaware of the access between two houses on Sparling Crescent. The neighbouring properties are amenable to the formalization. Formalizing this section of the trail will help improve the Town's current Active Transportation Network.

A draft plan has been proposed for Sparling Bush, staff request that the Committee review and discuss the Draft and make recommendations (if necessary). If the Committee endorses the plan, the plan will be presented to Council for their approval.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

To date, staff have used funds from the Operating Budget to complete its objectives. However, the costs of pursuing a more aggressive and active approach exceeds the scope of current operating funds. Therefore, staff are proposing that the costs be incorporated into the Capital Budget. In 2018, the Sparling Bush Boundary Markers were included in the Capital Budget. The capital project would include the costs to install the cloths (contracted services), installation of new trails (materials and supplies, procurement of signage, and native species to encourage regeneration and canopy growth. Staff have allocated monies in the draft 2020 Public Works Capital Plan. Staff request that the Committee recommend Council allocate capital funds in 2020 to fulfill the objectives outlined in the proposed plan.

## **SUMMARY**

The Public Works Department is actively working to preserve, maintain and enhance Sparling Bush. Throughout 2019, the Department and Green Committee have reviewed the challenges that negatively affect Sparling Bush, and current practices.

The Department has created a DRAFT three-year plan to address current issues in the Bush, using previous discussions with UTRCA, the Green Committee and Department's observations. Staff are requesting that the Green Committee review the proposed plan, and provide comment. Staff are seeking Committee endorsement of the Plan, and a recommendation that Council allocate funds in the 2020 Capital Budget to complete the 2020 objectives.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

- ☐ Not applicable to this report.
- ☒ This initiative is supported by the following priorities, outcomes, and tactics in the Plan.
  - Pillar #4 Culture and Recreation: Strategic Priority for a "Focused Parks Strategy"
    - Outcome: St. Marys' parks are not only a prized asset, they are also a natural gathering place that can be optimized and incorporated into enhancing the cultural profile of St. Marys.
    - Tactic(s): Investigate implementing a Forestry and Tree Management policy for the Town.

## **OTHERS CONSULTED**

Vanni Azzano, Community Education Supervisor – Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Jay Ebel, Forestry and Habitat Restoration Technician – Upper Thames River Conservation Authority  
John Hahn, Parks Operator

## **ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment A: Sparling Bush Plan 2020-2022**

## **REVIEWED BY**

**Recommended by the Department**



---

Morgan Dykstra  
Public Works Coordinator



---

Jed Kelly  
Director of Public Works



# SPARLING BUSH PLAN

April 2019



# Sparling Bush Plan (2020 - 2022)

Sparling Bush provides residents and visitors access to a variety of plant and animal life, and recreational trails. The continued preservation of Sparling Bush is crucial as it provides immense ecological and recreational value, and is, therefore, an integral Town asset.

Strategic Priorities	2020	2021	2022	
Encroachment	<p>Establish a buffer zone along the perimeter of the bush to prevent the spread of dog-strangling vine</p> <p>Placement of mulch in the buffer zone</p>	<p>Removal of encroachments in the northwest corner (yard waste, and other materials)</p> <p>Removal of encroachments in the southeast corner</p>		
Non-Native Invasive Species	<p>Garlic Mustard: manually pull plants before they go to seed</p> <p>Installation of filter cloth, with mulch in the northeast corner to deter periwinkle spread</p> <p>Cut a large section of dog strangling vine and install a black tarp and mulch before seeding, and plant native species through cloth</p> <p>Continue to monitor Buckthorn</p>	<p>Garlic Mustard: manually pull plants before they go to seed</p> <p>Tarping of northwest corner to remove invasive species</p>	<p>Garlic Mustard: manually pull plants before they go to seed</p>	
Trail & Tree Management	<p>Installation of Sparling Crescent Trail access</p> <p>Annual placement of mulch on trails</p> <p>Inspection of trees adjacent to trails and perimeter properties</p>	<p>Installation of stone dust trail connection to cemetery Loop Trail</p> <p>Planting of native species in the northeast corner to enhance the area and growth the canopy</p> <p>Annual placement of mulch on trails</p> <p>Inspection of trees adjacent to trails and perimeter properties</p>	<p>Planting of native species in northwest corner to enhance the area and grow the canopy (basswood, sugar maple, and black cherry)</p> <p>Annual placement of mulch on trails</p> <p>Inspection of trees adjacent to trails and perimeter properties</p>	
Signage	<p>Installation signage at Sparling Crescent trail access</p>			