

**THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE TOPSOIL COMMITTEE
OF THE CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY**

C-12
Tom Davies Square

Tuesday, July 25, 2006
Commencement: 7:00 p.m.

Chair

COUNCILLOR RON BRADLEY, IN THE CHAIR

Councillors

Councillor Thomspen

Staff

R. Norton, Drainage Engineer; T.C. Wu, Senior Planner; G. Mazza, Director of Building Services/Chief Building Official; E. Labelle, Clerk Designate; CJ Caporale, Council Secretary

Others

Dr. G. Spiers, Chair in Environmental Monitoring Earth Sciences/Chemistry & Biochemistry/MIRARCO

Declarations of
Pecuniary Interest

None declared.

Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed those present and introduced the Committee members. He advised that this meeting was being held in order to receive input from the agricultural community on the proposed regulation of topsoil practices, which would be presented to Council for final approval.

Mr. Mazza explained that topsoil stripping would not be prohibited, but that the concerns of local residents regarding dust control, drainage, and rehabilitation would have to be addressed. He indicated that the Committee recognizes issues that the agricultural community face and would like to hear possible solutions. Mr. Mazza advised those present that the Committee met with Topsoil producers and briefly outlined what their concerns were.

The Chair asked if there was any person present who wished to address the Committee on this matter.

PUBLIC INPUT

Mr. James Found

Mr. Found asked what would be included in the draft by-law? He indicated that dust control was the initial complaint. Mr. Found asked about past draft by-laws on this issue.

Mr. Labelle indicated that the next step would be to determine what conditions the agricultural community views as important. He stated that considerable effort would be required to prepare a by-law that is balanced and protects agricultural lands and is not too prohibitive for topsoil producers.

Draft By-Law

Mr. Mazza stated that because there are existing permits that were issued by the former City of Valley East, producers will have to supply documentation, indicating what the permit was for. Will these properties be grandfathered? Were there restrictions set out by Valley East? Were only certain parcels allowed to be stripped? The producers will have to supply this information. Mr. Mazza indicated that the Committee would have to strike a balance for everyone involved.

He indicated that he was waiting to receive input from other municipalities such as Ottawa, on how they are dealing with this issue. Various aspects would have to be addressed such as grandfathering, remediation, buffering, drainage, etc.

Mr. Labelle advised that from a legal point of view there were many aspects to address, would topsoil removal be restricted to one area of the city? How many reports would be required or how would the deposit be calculated?

Mr. Jean-Guy Bonin

Mr. Bonin questioned if the producers asked where they could remove topsoil?

Councillor Bradley stated that the producers indicated they would like to remove topsoil anywhere within the City of Greater Sudbury.

Mr. Don Blais

Mr. Blais commented that the agricultural community in Northern Ontario was small, and if farmers were not “kept alive, people could say good-bye to topsoil”.

Mr. Norton stated that Topsoil Removal permits are currently being issued under the former City of Valley East by-law. He also stated that it has been difficult to find a by-law in Ontario that regulates topsoil removal. He indicated that the producers are in agreement with implementing a by-law that is fair.

Draft By-Law
(continued)

Mr. Found indicated that land could be rehabilitated in approximately three years and stated that fall rye, which grows fast, controls dust.

Mr. Norton stated that if a deposit was required from the producers, results would occur.

Mr. Mazza indicated that the draft by-law could set out a condition which would involve buffering between the property being stripped and the Agricultural Reserve (AR).

Mr. Blais suggested that if people were given an incentive such as a tax break for farmers or tax increase for producers, things may be different in the City.

Mr. Norton indicated that the City of Ottawa was assisting urbanites by providing water for their gardens.

<u>Direction</u>	The Committee directed staff to begin work on the draft by-law for Topsoil removal.
<u>Closing Remarks</u>	<p>The Chair advised those present that once the draft by-law has been written, further input will be required in order to make any necessary changes.</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone present for attending the meeting and providing their input.</p>
<u>Next Meeting</u>	The next meeting will be at the call of the Chair.
<u>Adjournment</u>	<p>2006-6 Thompson-Bradley: That this meeting does now adjourn. Time: 8:30 p.m.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p>

Councillor Ron Bradley, Chair

Eric Labelle, Clerk Designate