



## MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING December 6, 2024 from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm (Teams Meeting)

**Present:** Justin Liou, Sustainability Commissioner, Victoria College  
Anandita Vishnoi, Sustainability Co-Chair, Victoria College  
Meadow MacDonald, Building President, Victoria College  
Vikas Mehta, Interim COO, Sustainability Committee Chair  
Scott Johnston, Associate Dean, Office of the Dean of Students

**Absent:** Faith McDonald, Student Representative, Victoria College  
Kate Haliash, Student Representative, Victoria College  
Carly Jazbec, Sustainability Chair, Emmanuel College

**Guest:** Amulya Vasanth, Executive Assistant to the Interim COO and Interim Bursar

**Recording Secretary:** Ivy Hussain, Administrative Manager, Infrastructure and Sustainability

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**Attendance:** Vikas Mehta welcomed everyone.

### **Review and approval of previous minutes:**

Motion to approve the minutes held on March 23, 2023, by Vikas Mehta and seconded by Justin Liou. Carried.

### **Business arising from previous meeting:**

The Director of Ancillary Services was included in the previous terms of reference, this position was removed and Vikas Mehta proposed the motion to add the Associate Director, Hospitality Services, Ajay Sharma to the Sustainability Committee.

Motion to remove Director of Ancillary Services and add Associate Director, Hospitality Services in the Terms of Reference by Vikas Mehta and seconded by Meadow MacDonald. Carried.

Sustainability student committee members in 2023 requested baseline utilities used for 2023. The Infrastructure and Sustainability Office would provide steam and water readings from September 2023 – September 2024 (total numbers for each residence). This data would be sent to Committee members to discuss more thoroughly at the next Committee meeting. Students could utilize this data to encourage reducing consumption.

Scott Johnston inquired regarding Vic U's strategy to reduce waste management on campus, and the carbon footprint of upcoming campus construction projects.



Vikas Mehta noted that Vic U aimed to reduce waste generated at campus to landfills and allocate organic and recycling waste properly. Food Services food waste was collected in green bins as organic waste. The Committee discussed restoring the pilot project at the student residences for food waste (campus food waste to go to Burwash dining hall). Waste audit was a legal requirement by Ministry of Environment performed annually providing percentage of landfill, recycling, and organic sites from our campus. Vic U required a minimum 60% waste diversion (waste diverted from landfill) for compliance (Vic U is at approximately 63-65%). The 2024-25 Waste audit would begin in two weeks where environmental consultants review bins on campus and would provide a Waste audit report. An education campaign was previously held in residences with stickers to confirm recyclable and not recyclable waste. Town halls can be arranged to discuss waste management on campus. Vic U's goal was to achieve waste diversion in 80-90 % range.

Scott Johnston inquired if the Burwash dining hall was a source for the waste, i.e. take away food and inquired what was predominantly in Vic U's waste. Vikas Mehta responded that when organic waste included inorganic waste, the full bin was considered contaminated and diverted to the landfill. Vikas Mehta emphasized education and signage at all residences. Should residences require more or replacement signs, Ivy Hussain would make arrangements. Meadow MacDonald noted that the Burwash residences recycling bins were not labelled and requested more signs in Burwash residences. Justin Liou noted unclear labeling and signage as recycling bins were in blue or grey bins. Vikas Mehta noted that he would speak to housekeeping team and would print brochures (the blue and grey bins should have symbols for recycling). The Infrastructure and Sustainability Office would print and leave [City of Toronto Waste Sorting Guide/ Put Waste in the Right Place Poster](#) with the Dean's Office and VUSAC office.

### **Project updates:**

2022-23 sustainability initiatives were all completed. 2023-24 initiatives were underway, and the Infrastructure and Sustainability Office would share the Annual 2023-24 Sustainability Report that included projects completed and initiatives. Vic U joined the Blue Community in recognizing water and sanitation as human rights, banning or phasing out the sale of single use bottled water, and promoting publicly financed, owned, and operated water and wastewater services. Vic U installed additional water bottle filling stations on campus. Locations of water filling stations were available on the Sustainability Website.

The Geothermal field feasibility for Margaret Addison Hall field would be released as part of the Campus Master Planning.



Large construction projects such as the Birge-Carnegie Revitalization satisfied Vic U electrical and mechanical design standards for low flow plumbing fixtures, LED lighting, high efficiency motors, refurbished windows etc. Updated LED lighting was installed in Emmanuel College and Victoria College resulting in approximately \$26,000 in savings from energy rebates.

Vic U awarded [Blackstone Energy Services](#) as Vic U's environmental consultant to create Vic U campus 2050 Net Zero planning in line with the University of Toronto's [Climate Positive Campus](#).

The Caven house windows project was completed and there were savings in mechanical heating costs in the building. Energy savings were realized from the E.J. Pratt roof replacement in December 2023. The domestic hot water heater project was completed in the Isabel Bader Theatre. Steam at the University of Toronto was converted to an electric system.

Electrification of grounds equipment from diesel fuel use continues.

The former Chief Librarian, Lisa Sherlock started an initiative to recycle latex gloves which became a permanent fixture at EJ Pratt Library.

There was continuous enhancement of Sustainability web page.

### **New Business:**

The elevators for Victoria College, Isabel Bader Theatre, and Rowell Jackman Hall were under the 2025-2026 deferred maintenance plans to modernize the elevators with AODA compliance. Burwash upper residence washroom renovations would include low flow fixtures similar to the previous residence washroom renovations at Lower Burwash residences.

The North house residence at Upper Burwash flooring project was completed last summer. Vic U was addressing flooring one residence house at Upper Burwash per year with other infrastructure and sustainability upgrades. Middle House at Upper Burwash is scheduled for May 2025 along with washroom renovations.

The Upper Burwash residence domestic hot water system underwent electrification conversion from natural gas.



### **Comments and questions:**

Scott Johnston inquired if heating and cooling was Vic U's biggest carbon loss issue. Vikas Mehta noted that for carbon footprint, Vic U had scope 1-2 emissions. Vic U 2050 Net Zero plan will address Scope 1 and Scope 2.

Vikas Mehta noted that actions helpful to energy savings included closing windows during the holiday closure, however noted that ambient temperature fluctuation issues exist in older buildings.

Vikas Mehta requested suggestions from the Committee regarding website improvements. Anandita Vishnoi inquired if Vic U had a sustainability dashboard. Vikas Mehta noted that there was no sustainability dashboard that provided a live look, however, this initiative was under consideration. The 2050 Net Zero planning may include a sustainability dashboard.

Meadow MacDonald inquired if the utilities and water usage data in buildings was reported per residence building. Meadow MacDonald noted that she would speak to other building presidents and discuss the possibility of a competition between residences for reducing water and energy usage and look at adjusting based on the student population. Scott Johnston would investigate this initiative with students and notify the Infrastructure and Sustainability Office if support is required.

Scott Johnston inquired if the Vic U's existing and new buildings are reducing or improving the campus' carbon footprint. Vikas Mehta noted that the Birge-Carnegie Revitalization included foundation insulation, reinforcing wall insulation, roof heat loss assessment, window refurbishments to improve efficiency. As a sustainability measure to encourage cleaner commute installed electrical vehicle charging stations in the Rowell Jackman garage.

### **Next Meeting:**

To be held prior to reading week on Microsoft Teams. The final meeting of the year would include an in-person meeting attended by Blackstone Energy Services representatives to share Vic U's 2050 Net Zero plan.