



AGM 2021

Environment Committee Report

There is general agreement that the Glasgow COP26 climate conference is not going to bring about the fundamental change we had hoped for. It will be up to us locally, as a community to push for change. During the pandemic there have been some gains in a few areas like less use of fossil fuels and at the same time massive consumption, waste and ongoing abuse of the earth that sustains us. Witness as a single example, the pollution created by increased home deliveries and with it the use of plastic packaging.

The environment committee is left with the same feelings of despair that likely many of you feel about the world we are leaving to our children and grandchildren. As a committee we decided to work on a stronger action oriented approach this year. We need to stay strong in the face of overwhelming greed and damage still dominant and running rampant in our culture. The need for radical change is as urgent as ever. Part of the change is to find other ways to encourage each other with practical measures to lower our carbon budget/footprint individually and communally. We need less growth in consuming the world's limited resources.

Our presentations between 2013 and 2019 were well received and had a significant impact. We covered many relevant topics from the health of bees, sustainable agriculture, Lyme disease, GMO's, extreme weather, soils, water, finding connection, plastic pollution and sustainable energy practices. These were grounded in understanding the broader systems in which these issues are embedded and looking at alternatives for us locally.

Instead of having larger presentations on a topic the committee is now focusing on meeting with smaller groups including individual MC² members and their neighbours to discuss environmental concerns to find out what we are doing and can do more effectively individually and collectively. We want to share this information focused on different topics through special bulletins and the website with our membership and with leaders in our community urging each other to take meaningful action.

An example of a strategy to empower ourselves to make the biggest possible difference locally is to look at planning and land use. Municipally how can we revise our building codes to make them more climate friendly? Can we allow more natural growth of local plants in our boulevards and lawns to increase biodiversity and reduce our carbon footprint? How can we become more self sufficient in producing our own food? We need to look at waste, first of all reducing it and secondly finding better ways to reuse and recycle it. Whether this is the food we find molding in our fridges or the ongoing construction of highways and use of aggregate products. In our county there is a recent proposal for a new quarry. Is that material just going to be used to cover more of the little remaining farmland in southern Ontario? There is much to be done. Please join us on the committee or at your kitchen table to share our communal resources. It is critical that we act now together.