

**WINNETKA ENVIRONMENTAL AND FORESTRY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
May 12, 2021**

A record of a legally convened meeting of the Environmental and Forestry Commission of the Village of Winnetka, which was held virtually via Zoom, Wednesday, May 12, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order:

Chairperson Dowding called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.; Voting Members present: Chairperson Chuck Dowding, Commissioners Barry Foley, David Varca, Ted Wynnynchenko, Liz Kunkle, and Barry Sylvester. Voting Members absent: Commissioners Rosann Park-Jones. A quorum of presently appointed members was present. Village Council Representative absent: Jack Coladarci. Student Representatives: Scarlett Harper. Student Representatives absent: Marcus Buccellato. Staff Representatives present: Andrew Lueck, Village Forester and Diana Puga, Public Works Analyst. Public present: Two members of the public were present.

1) Introduction & Chair's Remarks:

Chairperson Dowding called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and welcomed all Commission members and the public. Staff Representative Lueck took roll call for attendance.

Oral Declaration Regarding In-Person Meetings

Chairman Dowding stated pursuant to recently adopted amendments to the Illinois Open Meetings Act included in Public Act 101-0640, public bodies may, in certain circumstances, hold entirely virtual public meetings without a quorum physically present in any one location. On March 17, 2020, President Rintz issued a Declaration of Emergency pursuant to the authority granted by the Village Code, the Illinois Municipal Code, and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act to address the health threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. On May 29, 2020, Governor Pritzker issued a Disaster Proclamation that declared in-person attendance at public meetings of more than ten people at the regular public meeting location to be infeasible, in accordance the Open Meetings Act, as amended by Public Act. 101-0640. On June 16, 2020, Village President Rintz executed a written determination that given the on-going emergency associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person meetings of the Village's Village Council are not practical or prudent at this time and until further notice. In accordance with the Governor's Disaster Proclamation and the Village President's Declaration of Emergency and Determination regarding meetings of the Village Council, I, as Chair of the Environmental & Forestry Commission hereby determine that in-person meetings of the Environmental & Forestry Commission are not practical or prudent at this time and until further notice.

2) Public Comment:

Two members of the public were present. Neither member of the public provided commentary.

Staff Representative Lueck read a written comment from the public regarding 13 trees that were removed at Nielsen Tennis Center. Staff Representative Lueck explained various trees were in poor condition while some were diseased. All trees removed fell within the criteria for removal, the contracted landscaper will be required to replant several trees (with a total diameter equivalent to those lost according to code).

3) Review and Approval of Minutes:

a) Approval of the April 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes

Chairperson Dowding asked for a motion to approve the April 14, 2021 minutes. The motion was moved by Commissioner Foley and seconded by Commissioner Sylvester.

AYES: FOLEY, VARCA, WYNNYCHENKO, KUNKLE, SYLVESTER

ABSENT: PARK-JONES

NAYS: NONE

4) New Business, Old Business/Updates:

a) Parkway Usage: Village Council Study Session Wrap-Up

Commissioner Dowding provided an overview of the Village Council Study Session. The EFC had a joint study session with the Village Council where the EFC provided their findings on parkway usage. The overview included feedback on implementing additional principles, such as consistency of parkway aesthetics to the local area, commitment from the applicant to maintain the parkway gardens, definition of a parkway, difficulty for residents to determine the right of way on their property, and a permit process.

Commissioner Wynnychenko believes the parkway usage should be defined better and to provide residents the opportunity to create parkway gardens.

Commissioner Kunkle agreed and shared the commendations provided by Village President Rintz.

b) Mayor's Monarch Pledge

Commissioner Kunkle presented the action items the Village has decided to undertake under the Mayor's Monarch Pledge:

1. Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat
2. Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location

3. Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan, or other city plans

The first action item was completed during a Village Council meeting held during Earth Week. The third action item is currently a work in progress.

The second action item is more significant, she yielded to Commissioner Dowding to share his thoughts and ideas for this action item. An idea they had for the location of the monarch butterfly garden is on the Eastern side of the tracks, west of Green Bay Trail between Elm and Oak Street, continuous of the trail. She also shared that Go Green Winnetka is happy to be a community partner.

Commissioner Dowding shared that they recruited Eagle Scout Troop 18 candidate, Michael Essig, to take on this project. He had a meeting with the Eagle coordinator and Friends of the Green Bay Trail in which they discussed the responsibility and maintenance of the garden, identified additional organizations that could contribute to the community-based effort, identified, and discussed potential locations to establish the garden, and discussed the Village commitments including granting a parkway permit, providing water if there are no other available or viable solutions, and to provide advice.

Commissioner Wynnychenko shared his experience with the permit application for his own residence. The permit for plantings in the parkway referenced the 1973 Winnetka Beautification Project.

The commissioners had a discussion regarding potential available or viable solutions to watering the garden. The discussion included potentially using a plastic barrel, the Forestry Intern using the Forestry truck, potentially pumping water out of drains, repurposing the garbage bins that residents will be disposing of as we transition our refuse services to the curb.

Eagle Scout candidate Michael Essig joined the EFC call and shared that his troop made the decision to take on the continuing maintenance of this garden as a service project as part of community-based project. Michael decided to plant the garden because he can give back to the Village and enjoys working outdoors. He also shared it was sufficient for Commissioner Dowding to sign as beneficiary for the project.

Commissioner Kunkle shared the Friends of the Green Bay Trail would be interested in this project in the long term, not short-term as they are currently working to develop their strategic plan, their efforts support primarily Glencoe but are in conversations about extending their efforts to Winnetka.

The commission discussed points of contacts at local schools and potential partnership opportunities, particularly to involve students.

c) Pyrethoid Pesticide Legislation Discussion

The commission discussed the two drafted resolutions, one that would ask the state to consider giving home rule communities more control over insecticides within their jurisdictions and the second that addresses the house resolution Student Representative Harper has been working on and would require Village support.

Student Representative Harper shared that a few communities have similar resolutions to resolution one. She is unsure of the likelihood of the Village Council adopting the second resolution but is willing to try to lobby for adoption.

Student Representative Harper discussed the status and timing of HB3118. She informed the EFC that the bill was stalled at the Energy and Environmental Committee after amendments due to significant opposition from various lawn and insecticide groups. The bill missed the main legislative session. There is a possibility it could go to the House of Representatives during the Veto session. Otherwise, it could reach the main legislative session the following year. The bill would not have to be reintroduced. She also shared that there is a lack of information on the effect on humans and is looking to work with scientists in research to study the effects to help support the bill. She asked if the Commissioners have any connections at Northwestern University to share them with her.

Commissioner Dowding asked if there was a motion to consider sending the resolutions to the Village Council for consideration. Commissioner Wynnychenko moved the motion, Commissioner Kunkle seconded the motion. The motion opened for discussion.

The commission discussed whether the resolutions should be sent as they are written, or if the EFC would complete a full analysis for recommendation. Resolution one is straight forward, though outside the purview of the EFC, and would require some information on whether the Village would take on more responsibility in asking the State to allow home rule communities more control over insecticides within their jurisdiction. The second resolution may require more context and analysis. The discussion included whether the Resolution two would be controversial and would need to address why the Council should pass it, supply more context on the potential consequences, and identify ramifications of adopting the resolution.

Commissioner Wynnychenko offered to draft a letter, similar to the Monarch Pledge letter, to review at a future meeting. Commission members suggested a memo or executive

summary for review. Commissioner Wynnchenko withdrew the motion. He and Student Representative Harper will draft a letter or memo for resolutions one and two, respectively.

d) Sustainability Chapter for 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Morgan Gass is a college work study student with an Environmental Science major, who assisted Commissioner Dowding and Kunkle in producing a sustainability plan. She reviewed with the EFC a draft Sustainability Chapter for 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The draft is based entirely on previous EFC documents: GRC2 Introductory paragraphs, EFC analysis of previous Village achievements within the GRC2 framework, EFC identification of possible near-term GRC2 goals for Winnetka, and the 2040 Proposed Village Goals prepared for the introductory 2040 Comprehensive Plan meeting with Lakota in February 2020.

Commissioner Dowding proposed that the EFC study the plan over the next month for discussion. The EFC would rewrite the introduction and the portions of the document as a tool for Lakota to use during its 2040 study sessions and to provide the Village Council some guidance on possible goals.

e) Sustainable Materials Management

Commissioner Kunkle discussed expanding the collection hard to recycle or non-traditional recyclable items at the Public Works Facility. There is currently a larger effort created by Governor Pritzker, Materials Management Advisory Committee (MMAC), to understand the different aspects of waste management. Recommendations from the MMAC will be provided to the public in the summer and Commissioner Kunkle would like to keep the agenda item as a placeholder for future discussions.

5) Communications:

a) Approval of June Communication Items

The Commission reviewed the June Communication Items which included coal tar sealant reminder, gas-powered leaf blowers ban, removal of buckthorn and other invasive species, and recycling tips for liquid and food residue, as well as plastic bags and film. Commissioner Kunkle shared that a local resident and a Wilmette resident hosted a summit on the leaf blower ban. Winnetka Police Chief Hornstein suggested a creating a pledge asking landscapers to commit to not using leaf blowers and currently has 70 companies on board. Commissioner Kunkle also suggested to table the recycling tip for liquid and food residue discussion. Student Representative Harper shared a communication paragraph regarding alternatives to the use of pyrethoid pesticides. Chairperson Dowding asked for

a motion to approve the June Communications Items which was moved by Commissioner Kunkle and seconded by Chairperson Foley.

AYES: FOLEY, VARCA, WYNNYCHENKO, KUNKLE, SYLVESTER

ABSENT: PARK-JONES

NAYS: NONE

b) Discussion of July Communications Items

The Commission reviewed the upcoming July Communication items including the Paper Shredding Event, a Zero-Waste Event, Recycling Tips for Silverware and Styrofoam, and Stormwater-friendly landscaping. Commissioner Kunkle suggested that communications item Zero-Waste Event should replace the word caterer with vendor. Commissioner Kunkle also requested a change in the Styrofoam recycling program due to the changes in its collection.

6) Commission/Staff Reports: None.

7) Open Forum: None.

8) Adjournment:

There being no further business, Chairperson Dowding asked for a motion to adjourn which was moved by Commissioner Kunkle and seconded by Commissioner Varca. The motion passed; the meeting adjourned at 9:17pm.

AYES: FOLEY, VARCA, WYNNYCHENKO, KUNKLE, SYLVESTER

ABSENT: PARK-JONES

NAYS: NONE