

WINNETKA ENVIRONMENTAL AND FORESTRY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
June 10, 2020

A record of a legally convened meeting of the Environmental and Forestry Commission of the Village of Winnetka, which was held Virtual via WebEx Cisco, Wednesday, June 10, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order:

Chairperson Dowding called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.; Voting Members present: Chairperson Chuck Dowding, Liz Kunkle, Chris Foley, David Varca, Barry Sylvester, Rosann Park-Jones, and Ted Wynnynchenko. Voting Members absent: None. A quorum of presently appointed members was present. Ex-officio Members present: none. Village Council Representative present: Jack Coladarci. Student Representatives present: Marcus Buccellato and Scarlett Harper. Staff Representatives present: Brendon Mendoza, Public Works Analyst, Steve Saunders, Director of Public Works/Village Engineer, Jim Stier, Village Forester, and Andrew Lueck, Assistant Village Forester. Public present: One member of the public was present via the WebEx phone call in option.

1) Introduction & Chair's Remarks:

Chairperson Dowding called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and welcomed all Commission members and the public.

2) Public Comment:

One member of the public was present and asked if they would like to speak via the WebEx phone audio connection, however they did not opt to speak.

3) Review and Approval of Minutes:

a) Approval of the February 12, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes

Chairperson Dowding asked for a motion to approve the February 12, 2020 minutes, which was moved by Commissioner David Varca and seconded by Commissioner Chris Foley.

4) Communications:

a) Approval of June & July Communication Items:

During the Communications Items agenda item, the Commission discussed the Village's gas powered leaf blowers ban from June 1, through October 1 and thoughts on requiring landscaping companies to be licensed by the Village to be revisited in the future.

Chairperson Dowding asked for a motion to approve the June & July Communications Items which was moved by Commissioner Wynnychenko, and seconded by Commissioner Varca.

b) Discussion of August Communications Items:

Staff Representative Mendoza discussed the upcoming August Communications Items.

5) Commission/Staff Reports:

a) EFC Green Award Nomination(s):

Staff Representative Mendoza stated that included in the agenda packet are two (2) nominations received for the Environmental and Forestry Commission (“EFC”) Green Award. The two nominations are for the Village Forester, Jim Stier for his services, and Reprise Coffee for their sustainability initiatives.

Chairperson Dowding asked for a motion to approve the award of the Green Award to the two (2) nominees which was moved by Commissioner Sylvester, and seconded by Commissioner Kunkle.

b) Village Forestry Update and Discussion:

Chairperson Dowding stated that there was a concern with the tree removal count for the Winnetka Downtown Streetscape Plan, and also the potential Park District parking lot plateau improvements at Tower Road Beach regarding if the Village Tree Ordinance would apply to the Park District.

Chairperson Dowding stated that there was a comment that someone made an regarding the number of trees being removed was greater than amount of trees being replaced. Commissioner Kunkle mentioned that there was a resident who made a comment regarding the number of trees removed from the Chestnut-Elm corridor. Commissioner Kunkle stated that it would be helpful to understand the Downtown Streetscape Plan to ensure the Commission is relaying accurate information to the public and the decision making process for tree removals and replacements.

Village Forester Stier stated the Village evaluates the potential trees to be removed, and determines removal based upon the trees’ health, species, and other factors. The Forestry Division stated they reviewed the tree inventory in Phase I and Phase II of the Downtown Streetscape Plan and changes in utilities, including, street lighting, sidewalk changes, street, planters and etc. factored into tree decisions. Village Forester Stier and Assistant Village Forester Lueck discussed the number of trees removed and the reasons for removal.

Chairperson Dowding asked if the Forestry Division is involved in the design phase of the projects. Assistant Forester Lueck stated that the Forestry Division is involved in the development of the plans.

Student Commissioner Harper suggested that if trees are removed in a certain area and cannot be replaced there, that the Village could replant trees in other areas to mitigate a net loss of Village Trees. Village Forester Stier stated the Forestry Division is always looking for areas that could be utilized to plant trees to avoid an overall loss of trees.

Commissioner Kunkle stated she attended a webinar regarding the protection of tree canopies, and mentioned the importance that trees are part of the Village's infrastructure and they need to be recognized as such in all development plans.

Village Forester Stier stated the Forestry Division does work with the Park District for tree removals over eight (8) inches in diameter.

Chairperson Dowding stated if the Park District plans for the expansion of the parking lot at Tower Road were to take place, would the Park District be required to work with the Forestry Division to remove trees in that location. Village Forester Stier stated that trees that require a permit for removal over eight (8) inches and any variance that involve trees, the Forestry Division would be involved.

c) Village's Refuse & Recycling Programs Update:

Staff Representative Mendoza stated that due to the COVID-19 pandemic the implementation of the Village's new curbside refuse program for residential and commercial users has been postponed.

Director of Public Works/Village Engineer Saunders, stated that the transition of the new refuse program is anticipated to take place in 2021 for residential and commercial users.

Director of Public Works/Village Engineer Saunders also mentioned that the Lakeshore Recycling Contract expires in February of 2021 and will be reviewed by staff, including potential additional programs that may be able to be added to the contract, such as curbside composting.

Commissioner Kunkle asked Director of Public Works/Village Engineer Saunders about the commercial hauler licensing in terms of how many would be issued. Director of Public Works/Village Engineer Saunders stated that multiple haulers may be interested, and stated that the more haulers that are interested could lead to competitive pricing and

variety of services offered for commercial users. Director of Public Works/Village Engineer Saunders also mentioned that Village's commercial hauler licensing would be used to ensure the haulers' services and operating standards are acceptable to the Village of Winnetka.

Commissioner Kunkle stated her only concern with multiple commercial haulers is that each hauler has their own recycling standards and the recycling collection for recyclables may not be uniform.

6) New Business, Old Business/Updates:

a) Village of Winnetka Comprehensive Plan Discussion:

Chairperson Dowding displayed the ten (10) benchmarked communities that the Lakota Group is studying. Chairperson Dowding asked each of the Commissioners to review one of the communities' comprehensive plan, specifically each community's sustainability plans and any other important findings. Each Commissioner selected one of the communities listed below.

- Greenwich,CT
- Wellesley,MA
- Scarsdale, NY
- Piedmont,CA
- Cherry Hills Village, CO
- Mission Hills, KS
- Bethesda,MD
- Radnor,PA
- Grosse Point, MI
- Shaker Heights, OH
- Hinsdale, IL

b) Village Recycling Guidelines Communications:

Commissioner Kunkle stated she would like to regularly review the Village's Recycling Guide to ensure the information being provided is accurate as this information changes from time to time.

Commissioner Kunkle mentioned the Village's Recycling Guide includes information regarding traditional recycling, and also other non-traditional items such as styrofoam and electronics and will be updated as needed. Commissioner Kunkle recommended to add a section of "what can I do with my food waste" to be included in the Recycling Guide as it would add to the overall idea of recycling. Commissioner Kunkle mentioned that her goal was to minimize the confusion of recycling.

Commissioners Kunkle and Commissioner Wynnychenko discussed the importance of the education of recycling plastic materials.

c) New Village Website Discussion:

Chairperson Dowding displayed the Village's new website through WebEx and showed the Commission the new EFC page and sustainability page. The group discussed and provided initial feedback.

Chairperson Dowding stated it would be beneficial to for the Commission to go through the website and provide any suggestions at the July EFC Meeting.

7) Open Forum:

Commissioner Kunkle stated she would like to have the Commission informed of upcoming Village Council agenda items that relate to the Commission as in the past it may not have been a communication that was taking place regularly. Staff Representative Mendoza stated he will keep the EFC informed of agenda topics that may be of interest to the EFC in the future. Trustee Coladarci suggested that Village Staff keep the Commission informed of EFC related agenda items in the future to ensure there are communications.

Commissioner Wynnychenko discussed technical errors in the Village Code regarding the EFC's section of the Village Code. Trustee Coladarci suggested sending notes to the Village Attorney and Village Manager to inform them of the errors.

8) Adjournment:

There being no further business, Chairperson Dowding asked for a motion to adjourn which was moved by Commissioner Wynnychenko and seconded by Commissioner Foley. The motion passed, the meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.