

**WINNETKA ENVIRONMENTAL AND FORESTRY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
July 8, 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, July 8, 2020, 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, Liz Kunkle, Chris Foley, Rosann Park-Jones, and Ted Wynnychenko. Voting Members absent: David Varca and Barry Sylvester. 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 Representative present: Brendon Mendoza, Public Works Analyst. Public present: None.

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.

2) Public Comment:

There was no public comment. Public comment was requested after agenda item 7. Open Forum.

3) Review and Approval of Minutes:

a) Approval of the June 10, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the June 10, 2020 minutes. Staff Representative Mendoza requested to table the approval of the minutes to the August EFC meeting for the Commission's approval to include edits from other commissioners that had not yet been incorporated.

4) Commission/Staff Reports:

a) Composting Vendors in Winnetka Area Update

Staff Representative Mendoza provided background regarding how the Village developed a Village-wide composting program, allowing for optional composting vendors that residents may contact directly to participate in residential or commercial composting.

Staff Representative Mendoza reported that he reached out to the three (3) optional composting vendors vetted by Village staff in the fall of 2019, that are listed on the

Village's website. Staff Representative Mendoza stated that Urban Canopy no longer services the Winnetka area at the time that they were contacted. There are two (2) vendors still listed on the Village's website that serve the Winnetka area; WasteNot and Collective Resource Compost. Staff Representative Mendoza also stated residents who want to utilize composting services are free to select any vendor that services the Winnetka area, but these are just two (2) that have been vetted by Village staff.

Commissioner Kunkle asked if the Village is aware of how many customers each of the two(2) vendors service and the number of residential. Staff Representative Mendoza stated he will follow-up and reach out to the composting vendors for the information requested.

Commissioner Kunkle stated she requested this staff update, as this information would be helpful to incorporate this as part of the Village's refuse, recycling, and food waste collections and educational opportunities.

Student Representative Harper, stated when she was researching the Village of Hinsdale in connection with obtaining information relevant to the Comprehensive Plan process, that she found composting information and it was easy to find on their website, and but stated it is difficult to find such information on the Village of Winnetka website.. Commissioner Kunkle stated that reworking the website would be helpful and making it easier for residents to find the composting page and recycling information.

Commissioner Kunkle also stated that the State of Vermont has banned the disposal of food waste in landfills as of July 1, 2020.

Commissioner Wynnychenko reiterated that it would be useful to find out the number of Winnetka residents who use composting services offered by the two (2) optional vendors, as well as why Urban Canopy no longer services the Winnetka area. Staff Representative Mendoza stated he did not receive information regarding why Urban Canopy no longer services the Winnetka area when he contacted them.

5) New Business, Old Business/Updates:

a) Village of Winnetka Comprehensive Plan Discussion:

Chairperson Dowding shared a summary of each commissioner's findings regarding any comprehensive, strategic, and/or suitability/climate action plans for the benchmark communities listed below (see attached document).

- Greenwich,CT
- Wellesley,MA

- Scarsdale, NY
- Piedmont, CA
- Cherry Hills Village, CO
- Mission Hills, KS
- Bethesda, MD
- Radnor, PA
- Grosse Pointe, MI
- Shaker Heights, OH
- Hinsdale, IL

Chairperson Dowding mentioned it would be helpful for each Commissioner to discuss three (3) initiatives from each comprehensive plan for the next EFC Meeting. Chairperson Dowding stated the Commissions should continue to make recommendations to the Lakota Group regarding including sustainability within the new Winnetka Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Wynnychenko stated Grosse Pointe had a master plan in 2012, but had minimal language for sustainability objectives. Commissioner Wynnychenko stated it is interesting that a lot of the benchmark communities, such as Grosse Pointe, which only recently created a urban forestry commission in 2017 when they hired a forester, appeared to briefly make a statement about sustainability or environmental initiatives, but have done little to advance those initiatives.

Commissioner Kunkle stated Wellesley, MA and Piedmont, CA have a good structure and are ahead of the curve in terms of sustainability. Commissioner Kunkle stated she researched Shaker Heights, and mentioned that sustainability is a priority for that community, but there is no sustainability plan per se.

Student Representative Harper mentioned she did not find a comprehensive plan for Hinsdale, IL, but was able to locate a master infrastructure plan. She also stated the website includes some information regarding sustainability and programs residents could participate in, but does not give a status of current sustainability efforts.

Trustee Representative Coladarci stated that in the past, the Village Council removed liaisons from the different boards. Trustee Coladarci stated that liaisons from different boards provides insight, experience, and inter communications and thought the EFC Commission should consider requesting to have liaisons from other boards to coordinate addressing issues that other boards are working on. Chairperson Dowding stated that would be very helpful and that is an issue the Commission has been working on for some time.

Commissioner Wynnychenko stated that something that should be addressed at some point is to incorporate sustainability as a specific goal in Village policies going forward.

Commissioner Kunkle stated she is part a Winnetka Public School District Level Green Team, which started in 2015 and includes administration, faculty, staff, parents, and students. Commissioner Kunkle also stated that she went to each taxing body in the Village (Council, School, Park, and Library) asking about interest in a sustainability coordinator. Instead of each taxing body having its own suitability coordinator, which could be redundant and inefficient, another idea would be for the Village to have a sustainability coordinator that works with all of the taxing bodies. Trustee Coladarci asked if the school groups would be interested in becoming a liaison. Commissioner Kunkle stated she thinks there could be interest.

Chairperson Dowding stated that there are three (3) key points to take away from this discussion; 1) the issue of adding at least a Park District liaison within the WEFC to other taxing bodies 2) the form of sustainability within the comprehensive plan (chapter or spread throughout the comprehensive plan); and 3) the concept of a sustainability coordinator for the four (4) or five (5) taxing bodies in the Village.

Commissioner Wynnychenko stated that the Village of Oak Park has an intergovernmental assembly consisting of two (2) members from the elementary school, high school, township, park district, library and village, which is similar to having liaison from all taxing bodies in Winnetka in the Commission.

b) Village Recycling Guidelines Communications:

Commissioner Kunkle provided an update on the changes to the Village's Recycling Guide. Commissioner Kunkle stated she saw an opportunity to add food scrap collection to the Recycling Guide along with the other non-traditional recycling programs. Commissioner Kunkle asked for the Commission's input regarding any edits or changes to the recycling guide so that they can be incorporated into the next version of the Village's Recycling Guide. Commissioner Foley stated he would like an opportunity to review and provide feedback. The group agreed to table this item to the August EFC meeting to allow the group to review.

Student Representative Harper, stated that the Village's Recycling Guide is hard to find on the Village's website, and it should be located in a very accessible location. Staff Representative Mendoza stated he will work on updating the Village's website to so that the Recycling Guide is easier to locate.

c) New Village Website Discussion:

Chairperson Dowding mentioned that there are two (2) entry points to get to sustainability pages on the Village website (the Commission page and also the new Sustainability page). Chairperson Dowding asked Staff Representative Mendoza to

follow-up to discover if the Greenest Region Compact page name can be changed to Sustainability Plan. Chairperson Dowding asked Staff Representative Mendoza to find out if he can add documents to the sustainability page.

Chairperson Dowding went through recommended changes and asked the Commission if he has permission to move forward with discussing changes to the Village website with Village staff. The Commission granted Chairperson Dowding such permission.

d) Further Discussion of Trees in Downtown Streetscape Planning Process:

Chairperson Dowding asked Staff Representative Mendoza to provide his findings after following-up for this item at the previous June EFC meeting. Staff Representative Mendoza stated he received an update (attached) from the Village Foresters and mentioned the following from the report;

Chestnut Street from Spruce to Elm (Including corners)

2 trees transplanted to other locations in Village

30 trees removed

21 trees replanted

Elm Street from Green Bay to 845 Elm

19 trees along Elm Street within streetscape construction zone

13 removed, 6 protected during construction

Removal breakdown:

a. 7 ash trees in poor condition

b. 6 honey locust

i. 3 in poor condition/have overgrown their space in terms of rooting and building clearance.

ii. 3 in good condition are very unlikely to survive construction due to root impacts (cutting/compaction). These could become unstable if left in place.

Chairperson Dowding asked Trustee Coladarci if the Village Council considered the change in amount of trees for the Streetscape Plan. Trustee Coladarci mentioned some of the discussion took place prior to his time on Council, however, typically the Council reviews the plans with a high level overview, with Village staff and Village Foresters providing input for the tree changes (removal, replanting, species, etc.). Trustee Coladarci stated there was no public concern during the planning phase of the Streetscape Project when the plans were provided to the public, but complaints were received during the work phase.

Chairperson Dowding asked if there was consideration regarding the overall look of the Village's tree canopy (such as the size of trees or aesthetics). Trustee Coladarci stated that the assumption was the Village would end up with beautiful trees and aesthetics based upon the consultants experience for trees, which would be coordinated between Village staff and the consultant.

Chairperson Dowding stated that moving forward, the EFC should have some form of interaction concerning tree and tree canopy during the design phase in the next phase of the Village's Streetscape Plan. Commissioner Kunkle stated that the EFC was tasked with ensuring that accurate information was being conveyed regarding the tree changes in the Streetscape Plan. Commissioner Kunkle stated she attempted to attend the task force meetings for the Streetscape Plan, but was unable to attend many of them. Commissioner Kunkle stated she thinks the Downtown Master Plan was put together without the consideration of the tree canopy.

Commissioner Kunkle stated she attended a recent webinar regarding tree canopies and how to protect them by ordinance and policy. She also stated the biggest take away from the webinar was that the trees are a fundamental part of the Village's infrastructure, and need to be considered as such. She also mentioned that the webinar focused on protecting trees, not through ordinances and policies that directly affected trees, but by ensuring ordinance and policies in other departments or commissions (such as Zoning, Design Review Board, etc.) recognize trees as a fundamental part of the Village's infrastructure.

Commissioner Kunkle requested officially that the Commission be informed of EFC relevant agenda items on the Village Council Agenda when they take place. Staff Representative Mendoza stated he will review upcoming Village Council agendas and keep the Commission informed of relevant agenda items as he is aware.

e) Winnetka Solar Community Program:

Commissioner Kunkle provided an update on options for residents and commercial entities to participate in solar energy. Commissioner Kunkle stated she attended a Go Green Illinois meeting in January regarding solar energy where Jon Carson, of Trajectory Energy Partners presented. Commissioner Kunkle stated she spoke with John Carson after the meeting to discuss solar options for the Village of Winnetka, which led to an in person meeting with Jon Carson, Commissioner Wynnchenko, Go Green Vice President, Jessica Bollhoefer, and Village of Winnetka Director of Water & Electric, Brian Keys. Commissioner Kunkle stated there are different options 1. onsite solar 2. off site community solar 3. partner with other IMEA communities for a community solar program and 4. Solarized Chicago (residents placing solar on homes).

Commissioner Kunkle stated Jon Carson is working on a community solar program for Winnetka.

6) Communications:

a) Approval of August Communication Items:

Commissioner Kunkle that paper goods can not be recycled even if they are not contaminated with food waste so it would be helpful to clarify that. Commissioner Kunkle stated she would assist with modifying the article. The Commission asked to push the pumpkin collection article to the October communications items. Commissioner Kunkle suggested using previously-approved recycling tips that had not yet appeared in the Village's weekly e-newsletter or hard copy mailings. Commissioner Kunkle asked for the Commission's permission to move forward with revising the articles and working with Staff Representative Mendoza for content for August and September. The Commission granted this permission.

b) Discussion of September Communications Items:

The September communication items were discussed as part of the August Communications items discussion.

7) Open Forum:

Landscaping Licensing Discussion (discussed during August Communications)

Commissioner Kunkle recommended to use the gas powered leaf blower article again for August communications. The Commission discussed the enforcement of Village's gas powered leaf blower ban. Trustee Coladarci asked the Commission how to address the electric vs gas powered landscaping leaf blowers as it is not only the leaf blowers, but the other gas powered equipment that is used as well. Chairperson Dowding mentioned that in the past the possibility of registering all landscaping companies within Winnetka was discussed. Chairperson Dowding stated this would also address pesticides use and other related landscaping issues, similar to the Village's Pavement Sealant License. Chairperson Dowding asked if it would be a good idea to research this topic and provide information to the Village Council. Trustee Coladarci stated he cannot assign assignments to the EFC, but thought it may be a good idea.

Student Representative Harper stated that she has observed the variety of bees around the Village, and noticed a significant amount of dead bees. Student Representative Harper asked if there has been a change in the pesticides used and also if there is a pesticide ban on pesticides that are harmful to insects like bees. Chairperson Dowding stated that it could be due to the various mosquito spraying taking place throughout the Village. Commissioner

Wynnychenko stated a possibility would be to license the pesticides users, and use more environmental friendly pesticides.

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 Kunkle. The motion passed, the meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

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