

Environment Committee

Minutes of the Meeting on
July 7, 2020

**Village of Homer Glen
14240 W 151st Street, Homer Glen, IL 60491
Community Room**

1. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Co-Chair Sharon Sweas

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.**3. Roll Call.**

Members present were Co-Chair Trustee Sharon Sweas, Cynthia Rataj, Joe Turrise, Bob Moses, Andy Panelli, Nancy Carlson and Staff Member Melissa King. Member Sabo arrived at 6:40pm.

John Lobick - Advisor was also in attendance

Absent: Co-Chair Ruben Pazmino, Gary White

4. Approval of Amendments to the Agenda.

There were no amendments to the Agenda.

5. Minutes.

a) June 2, 2020

Member Turrise made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 2, 2020 meeting; Member Panelli seconded the motion. Member Panelli mentioned he had sent staff some comments on the Plastics Article. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting minutes were approved.

6. Public Comment.

No public comments were made

7. Old Business.a) Dark Sky Commercial Lighting Postcard

Staff indicated that the postcard was sent to the printer. Staff explained they were working with the graphics company on payment in order to have the postcard mailed out. All brick and mortar businesses and property owners of record for commercial and industrial zoned properties were sent the postcard. The postcard is expected to be sent out within the week. The total number of postcards mailed was 559.

b) 151st and Bell Native Garden

Staff indicated that removing the sign would need a Board approval and that we would need an EC recommendation to be sent to the Board. Member Sabo recommended leaving the sign in the same location and re face the sign in some way. She added it would be nice to add a phrase like "Welcome to Homer Glen". Member Turrise agreed that a reuse of the sign would be nice. All members were in agreement. Member Rataj recommended to delay a motion and gather ideas.

Member Turrise recommended that someone develop a place to locate the tree planting so that everything looks nice. Co-Chair Sweas recommended we ask Roger Ross for a recommendation on where to plant a tree on this corner. Co-Chair Sweas asked staff to keep the item on the agenda and for members to come up with some sayings for the sign to be discussed at the August meeting. Member Panelli recommended utilizing the saying “Community and Nature in Harmony”.

c) Plastic Free Month – July

Co-Chair Sweas indicated that Staff Member Sue Steilen had been pulling out portions from the article to push weekly on the Village Website and on Facebook. On July 1, 2020 Staff Member Steilen pushed out a paragraph and a quick explanation of the contest on the Village Website and on Facebook. Member Panelli was in agreement that utilizing portions from the article would be fine, but to make sure that the most important information is pulled out. Co-Chair Sweas mentioned the importance that the links we put up on the website are from credible sources; Member Panelli indicated that the links he provided were credible. Member Panelli asked where the article would be posted. Co-Chair Sweas explained that portions of the article would be pushed out on the Village Website and on Facebook. Staff indicated that Staff Member Steilen had recommended posting the combined plastic article on the Patch and that Staff Member Steilen also felt like the article still needed to be reduced in length. Members agreed that it would be helpful to have quick questions, or statistics or statements pushed out on the website/facebook. Co-Chair Sweas shared that staff was working on putting together a basket of recycled products and/or plastic free for the contest winner. Member Panelli recommended posting a follow-up article on the contest winner. Member Turrise recommended having the Mayor give the award at a Board meeting. Member Panelli indicated that he would contact Staff Member Steilen to coordinate the article content.

d) Community and Nature in Harmony Awards

Co-Chair Sweas indicated that there are about seven (7) nominees. Staff indicated that there are two (2) additional nominees that have been added in the last few days. Co-Chair Sweas, Member Turrise, Staff Member King and Steilen have volunteered to go on site visits of the garden on August 15, 2020 at 4:30pm.

8. New Business.

a) Electric Vehicles (EV) Charging Stations

Staff Member King indicated that this grant had been brought up in a previous meeting early in the spring but members were not interested in pursuing at the time. Will County Green continues to push out the grant and staff wanted to circle back to check with the Committee on interest. Co-Chair Sweas indicated applications for this grant cycle have to be in by end of August. Members agreed that there is interest, but there are a lot of questions about the details. Staff and Members agreed to wait and see if the grant is funded next year. Questions from the Members included: Is it free access? Who pays for it? How do customers pay? Do we want to install a dual or single station? Who is providing the electrical service after it is installed? Which type of charger is this, is it a quick charge?

Member Panelli mentioned that parking spots need to be designated and the charging stations should be located where someone can park and then go shopping or go to the library to do research or near a park, because it takes some time to charge a vehicle (up to 2 hours). Member Turrise mentioned this would be great for businesses, i.e. in the Jewel parking lot. Member Sabo asked about the two (2) hour charging station and wondered about quick charging stations. Members talked about the inefficiencies of the charging stations during winter. Member Carlson read one of the requirements that the charging station that is funded has to be on the property that is owned by the applicant.

b) Tote Bags for Chalk-it Up

Member Sweas explained that this would be a replacement for the totes the Committee was going to use for the Earth Day event (that has been canceled). Staff Member King explained that Staff Member Steilen had asked if the Committee would be interested in funding or splitting the cost of totes to be utilized at the Chalk-it Up event. Staff Member King showed different versions of totes and pricing on those totes and explained that the recommendation would be to keep it simple and just use the seal on the front of the bag. The idea is to include some handouts on Plastic Free July in the totes.

Member Sabo voiced concerns for this Committee funding a tote without an environmental message on the outside of the tote. Member Panelli agreed that Member Sabo made a good point and recommended utilizing “Community and Nature in Harmony” or promoting the “Environment Committee”.

Member Panelli indicated that the bag selected should be useful so that it doesn't get tossed. Co-Chair Sweas thought that the draw string bag would be a good selection. Member Turrise also supported the draw string bag as an option

Co-Chair Sweas was in support of splitting the cost of a generic tote or funding the entire purchase of an environmentally focused tote.

Staff Member King indicated that the intent of Staff Member Steilen's idea was just to give the Environment Committee an opportunity to use the bag as a vehicle to disseminate environmental information. Member Panelli agreed that this is a good opportunity to get out the plastic free message.

Members discussed options for what goes on the front of the tote. Options included the following:

- The Seal
- The Seal with “Environment Committee” underneath
- The Garbage Can with Plastic Information (Member Panelli mentioned it might be a better option to put the Garbage Can inside the tote)
- The Seal with “Plastic Free July” (Plastic Free Month or Plastic Free July could be dated relatively fast)
- The Seal with “Plastic Free Village or Plastic Free Homer Glen”
- A reflector or reflective
- The Seal with “Plastic Free Environment”

The consensus of the members was to have the draw string backpack printed with the Seal and the saying “Plastic Free Environment”.

Co-Chair Sweas asked for a motion to approve a maximum of \$500 with a 50/50 split of cost. Member Turrise made a motion and Member Panelli seconded the motion. No Discussion. The motion passed unanimously. The expenditure was approved.

c) Open Space Acquisition Plan

Staff presented the idea of completing an open space acquisition plan for Homer Glen. The Village Manager Karie Friling has reached out to the previous Mayor in Orland Park, Dan McLaughlin to come to an Environment Committee meeting to present the why and how of the establishment of the program in Orland. Staff generally explained the history of the Open Lands Program in Orland Park.

The hope would be, with help from Staff, for the Committee to analyze the Village and study the most environmentally sensitive properties in the Village and identify that most priorities pieces of land. The Committee would recommend to the Village Board the 5-10 priority properties in the Village for conservation acquisition. The intent of this effort is to be more proactive than reactive about conserving the land that is most environmentally sensitive.

Staff explained that there are many funding options for conservation/open space acquisition, such as grants, bonds, cash donations, land donations, transfer of development rights, outright purchase, etc.

Member Sabo expressed support of this idea and does have concerns about the environmentally sensitive properties that could be lost without this effort.

Member Turrise would like to recommend that we preserve more “wooded” properties vs. prairie.

Members discussed the 40-acre piece of property up near the northeast Village boundary. Advisor Lobick discussed that this property also has natural wetlands and is loaded with dragonflies and could be home of the Emerald Hines Dragonfly. Member Sabo discussed an article that was published years ago regarding the Village’s interest in this piece of property. Member Panelli agreed that this is a good idea, especially with our current social constraints from COVID, to support the acquisition of lands where our residents can enjoy being outside in the natural environment.

d) Long Run Creek

Advisor Lobick gave a brief overview of the history of flooding along Long Run Creek. He explained that one of the unique conditions along the creek is that the private property lines run all the way to the middle of the creek with no easements, limited Village access to the creek. The Village has not ever had any ability to physically go onto these properties to assess the condition of the Creek. Recently Advisor Lobick met with Director of Development Services Mike Salamowicz where Salamowicz presented a letter drafted by the Village to be sent to residents that own property on Long Run Creek to ask for permission for the Village to come

onto their property to assess the condition of the creek. Member Sabo asked if Marsha DeVivo had been contacted about the work that had been completed in the past regarding flooding on Long Run Creek. Advisor Lobick indicated they had found a lot of old documents that they will likely use for marketing and will be posted on the website. The Village will not be able to do the actual work of removing any blockages (this would still be the responsibility of the homeowner); but the Village and Township are willing to pick up large amounts of garbage and haul away. The effort really is dependent on how much interest there is from the homeowners.

9. Announcements/Committee Member Communication

Right of Ways as Habitat! -_Co-Chair Sweas gave an overview on an article that was pushed out regarding the planting of milkweed and/or other plants that attract Monarch butterflies along roadways.

Member Panelli discussed that he was invited to write an Op Ed titled The Conservative Case for Climate Action. Member Rataj and Co-Chair Sweas discussed the Branding Survey. Member Sabo described her at home composting project.

10. Adjournment.

Motion to adjourn made by Member Turrise; seconded by Member Moses. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Melissa W. King
Senior Planner/Project Manager