

Environment Committee

Minutes of the Meeting on
May 2, 2022

**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 6:02 pm by Co-Chair Pazmino.

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

Members present were Co-Chair Jennifer Consolino, Co-Chair Ruben Pazmino, Chris Chiapetta, Joe Turrise, John Walters, Andy Panelli, Nancy Carlson, Staff Member Melissa King, and Staff Member Taylor Udarbe.

Also, in Attendance was Fran of the Homer Glen Junior Women's Club and MaryAnn from the Amberfield Subdivision.

Absent: Member Carina Cirillo, Member Bob Moses, and Member Gary White.

4. Approval of Amendments to the Agenda.

There were no amendments to the agenda.

5. Minutes.

a) April 4, 2022

Co-Chair Pazmino asked the committee if there was a motion to approve the minutes from the April 4, 2022 meeting. The motion was made by Co-Chair Consolino and was seconded by Member Turrise. The motion passed.

6. Public Comment.

Maryann, a resident from the Amberfield Subdivision, came to discuss issues with Homer Glen's Dark Sky requirements like keeping light levels low in order to see stars. She said that burning is an issue and then explained to the committee that her neighbor has been burning an excessive amount of leaves and garden waste. She also added that she understands that burning may be necessary on a large property, but on small lots in a typical subdivision, it is too close to neighbors. Maryann explained that her neighbor does not have a firepit and that they usually do it on the weekend when Village code enforcement is unavailable. She asked the committee their thoughts on burning the environment.

Co-Chair Pazmino and Co-Chair Consolino explained that the Village does have an ordinance for burning. Staff King explained that burning in a firepit does not require a permit, but open burning does require a permit from the Village. Maryann added that she believes allowing burning is contradictory to the Dark Sky community.

Member Turrise added that he lives on a large property and that once New Way stops picking up the compost bins in December, that he still has a lot of leaves and yard waste left due to climate change. He added that the pick up should be extended 2 weeks and should also start earlier in March instead of April. Maryann said she agreed, though her problem is that her neighbor has a smaller lot and does not have as much waste as a 2-acre property should. Member Turrise explained that they wouldn't have to burn as much if the bin pickup is available longer.

Co-Chair Consolino asked Maryann for her contact information and told her that staff would look into it. Maryann thanked the committee for listening.

Member Walters added that it is also important to be a good neighbor and said that if the wind is blowing then people should not be burning.

Member Panelli explained that there are 40 million Americans with lung disease and that it should be common courtesy to warn and notice neighbors so those with health issues can plan accordingly. Member Turrise said this is a common issue with mosquito spraying, too.

Member Turrise asked if extending waste bin pickup is possible. Co-Chairs Pazmino and Consolino said they can look into it.

7. Old Business.

a) 2022 Environment Committee Event/Activity Dates

1. Youth Program/Garden Planting Day

Staff King explained that everything for this event is going very well, and they have 23 kids signed up already. Co-Chair Consolino told the committee that her kids are also signed up. Staff King added that they are going to keep this open as events sometimes have a lot of no-shows, plus they have enough volunteers and supplies for kids. They will let people know they are on a waitlist but if it is only a few more they will just let them come. Food and refreshments are still being organized and they have spoken to John Robinson about tables and water. Staff King said the Women's club had the growing medium and the pots and that they have all other necessary supplies.

Staff King showed the committee the colorful, metal shovels the committee purchased for the event and Co-Chair Consolino asked if the committee wanted to hold onto the shovels for future use. Co-Chair Pazmino said they should let the kids keep them. The committee discussed decorations for the shovel and they decided on providing earthy sticker that the kids can pick out.

Co-Chair Pazmino asked what they were planting and the committee explained they will be planting herbs in the planter and the kids will take home easy growing vegetables, like chives or beans. Co-Chair Consolino said that Rose knows what she wants to plant in the gardens and they will make sure there is enough for the kids to plant.

Staff King asked that committee members reach out if they have forgotten anything.

2. Arbor Day Proclamation

Staff King told the committee that the tree planting had a great turnout and Co-Chair Consolino added that the trees were placed in a good area, as there were not many trees before. The committee also discussed past plantings, like the Arron Hills memorial tree.

3. Stargazing

Staff King explained that everything is ready for this event, but it is looking like it will rain on the Friday of the event and also that Saturday. They will let the committee know, but it will not work if it rains.

The committee discussed the times they will show up to volunteer for the event if it is not cancelled. They also discussed which animals the Big run Wolf Ranch will bring and spoke about the sanctuary's events and how they are run by donations.

4. Big Tree Contest

Staff King said that they need nominations for the Big Tree Awards and added that any tree in Homer Glen will work, even if it isn't the biggest tree you have ever seen because some of the threshold are pretty low.

5. Community and Nature in Harmony Awards

Staff King said this is the same situation as Big Tree Awards and that the nomination form will be online soon. She also explained that these award deadlines can be extended again this year if they do not get enough nominations.

Member Turrise told the committee that nominations can be other projects that beautify the Village and said his neighbor decorates their subdivision entrance sign with seasonal décor.

The committee discussed past nominations and other amazing examples in the Village, like the Byzantine Catholic Church.

6. Plastic Free July

Member Panelli passed out his latest draft for the plastic free July flier that focuses on correct recycling items on one side and on the other, Plastic Free July's message of reducing plastic usage. He added there are a few things the committee can discuss and swap out, but the message generally covers New Way Disposal's recommendations.

Member Panelli told the committee that New Way was interested in buying space for an ad, depending on the message but has not yet committed. He added this is good time to educate on the recycling process, too, so people can avoid recycling items that clog the machines and reduce efficiently. He said the committee can use a half page to tell this story and the other part

can be an article, which would be promoting their business, so he thinks they would be interested.

The committee discussed the new information they learned on the flier, like solo cups, paper plates, or steel should not be recycled.

Staff King stated that she really likes this flier and Co-Chair Consolino said they could maybe send this out in the spring newsletter next year since it goes to every resident anyway. The committee also discussed turning it into a magnet.

Staff Udarbe suggested the links on the flier be QR codes, and Staff King told the committee that it would be really easy to make the QR code.

Member Panelli said that the price for this flier has gone up since last year, from around \$2200 to \$2300 this year. He could not recall how much it would cost to have it shipped and inserted in to the paper, but recalled it was inexpensive.

Member Chiapetta said they could tun it into a sticker and it can go directly on the recycling bin lid. He also asked if New Way would want to pay for it since improper recycling costs them money. Member Panelli said that idea is looking at around \$1 per label and New Way should have done this in the first place. The committee agreed that they could look into it for the future.

Member Chiapetta also said they should get these fliers to schools in the area.

Staff King had concerns about the visibility of the stickers and the committee discussed that the sticker should be made to go on top of the outdoor recycle bin, although it would be more costly to make it weather proof. They could maybe alternate in the future between the fliers and a sticker.

Staff King said that they should discuss the content on this draft so they can get it edited and sent out to the printer this month. She added that she can send out an email with the links and the committee can decide which one or few they want to include on the flier. Staff Udarbe suggest that one QR Code be to the Plastic Free July website and the other should be the New Way Disposal website. Member Panelli suggested they include both the QR code and a link so everyone can access it.

Co-Chair Consolino suggested the side that said “Not Recyclable in your Bin” be changed to “Items that you cannot recycle” to make the message simple and clear. Co-Chair Pazmino said that he thinks “Not Recyclable” is a clear and catchy message and thinks it should stay the same. The committee discussed and came to the consensus that the message should remain “Not Recyclable” with the universal “no” symbol in front of it.

Co-Chair Consolino said they should re-visit the sticker idea in January so they can plan to get it in the Spring newsletter. Staff King added that it is a July program so the May mailing timing may be off, but it would go to every resident if inserted into the Spring mailer.

Member Turrise asked if they could include a hole on the mailer so it could be hung up, but the committee discussed the extra cost associated with the die-cut.

8. New Business.

Member Panelli gave the committee a Community Solar program update and said he had around a 10% response rate from his HOA contacts and added that some may have done the program without responding. He also reached out to Mark Pruitt to see if they could track the number of people who have signed up and had not received a response yet. He asked if they could track hits on the website and Staff King said no, but maybe they can on Facebook. She also told the committee that Amy Blank is leaving the Village and that her role will be picked up by other staff members.

Co-Chair Pazmino told the committee that they can post on the page themselves. Co-Chair Consolino added that she will post on the Watchdog and other group pages, too. Member Panelli asked about the Heritage Business Corridor and Co-Chair Pazmino said he can get him the contact information.

Member Panelli also spoke to the committee about the PGM moratorium on the solar power connections and told the committee he was not sure how this would affect the community solar program.

Member Turrise told the committee that Virginia Bluebells are in bloom and that they can be seen in Heritage Park and Messenger Woods.

9. Announcements/Committee Member Communication

Fran told the committee that the Women's Club members are doing another milkweed seed giveaway.

The committee discussed a large greenhouse plant sale and they talked about the large variety of plants available and how busy it gets.

Staff Udarbe told the committee that she brought in extra tomato and pepper plants for members to bring home.

Co-Chair Consolino added that she hopes to see everyone at the star gazing event and asked if they have a back-up day in case the weather is bad. The committee discussed and they will look into it, but there is not a planned back up day for the events yet.

10. Adjournment/ Committee Members Communication.

Co-Chair Consolino motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 pm and Member Turrise seconded. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted:



Melissa W. King/Taylor Udarbe
Director of Planning and Zoning/Assistant Planner