

Environment Committee

Minutes of the Meeting on
July 11, 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 6:06 pm by Co-Chair Pazmino.

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

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

Also, in Attendance during call to order was Fran of the Homer Glen Junior Women's Club and representatives from C.A.R.E: Citizens Against Ruining the Environment.

The Village's Communication Specialist, Matt Libs, was present later in the meeting.

Absent: Member Carina Cirillo, Member Nancy Carlson and Member Gary White.

4. Approval of Amendments to the Agenda.

There were no amendments to the agenda.

5. Minutes.

a) June 6, 2022

Co-Chair Pazmino made the motion to approve the minutes from the June 6, 2022 Environment Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Co-Chair Consolino. The motion passed with Member Walters abstaining from the vote.

6. Public Comment.**7. Special Presentation by C.A.R.E. – “A Life with Less Plastic”**

C.A.R.E. members explained that they have been meeting in Lockport since 1995 and they have been concerned about the plastic problem for a very long time. They gave the committee a brief history of the worldwide “Life with Less Plastics” and “Plastic Free July” movements and explained that while the idea is to cut down use, there is still a global ecological crisis around plastics. They cited the long lifespan of plastics, microplastics, and the economic toll on having to clean up this waste as the main problems.

They told the committee that the message from this presentation is that people need to recognize that we need less plastic in our lives. This particular presentation would be through an individual responsibility lens to reduce plastic consumption, rather than relying on changes to big business production, sustainable policymaking, and environmental organizations. The group cited that a top-down approach for the plastic problem has not been working and most people do not know how to make it better.

C.A.R.E. provided research findings that measured the average weight of household plastic disposal and a member shared her week-long audit of her own plastic usage. She urged the Environment Committee to consider auditing themselves and to

participate in their blog challenges. They also brought in several examples of products used to replace single-use plastics, like mason jars, bees wrap, and reusable k-cups. They also talked about alternative products that are better for the environment than are commonly used, like a Coraball for microfiber collection, unbleached parchment paper, and organic cotton clothes.

The Environment Committee and the C.A.R.E organization discussed the broad scope of the global plastic problem. They also discussed how this presentation revealed how difficult, time-consuming, and often costly it is to reduce individual plastic waste when we often have little to no choice in how essential products are packaged.

8. Old Business.

a) 2022 Environment Committee Event/Activity Dates

1. Big Tree Contest

Staff King told the committee that she will get the Big Tree List to Member Turisse. She explained that she drove around a few neighborhoods in the Village to find nominations. She said they should go out to visit the Big Tree and Community and Nature in Harmony Award nominations in the 3rd week of July and added that the gardens will look very pretty at that time.

Fran added that they have their garden walk this Saturday and that she gave an address from Allison Lane to Staff Member King to nominate them.

The committee discussed Meeting on Tuesday, July 26th to check out the Big Trees and Community and Nature in Harmony Winners. Staff King told Member Turisse they don't have all the tree details this year, and wanted him to check out the trees to take measurements and determine the species. Member Turisse said they could always save the Big Tree nominations for next year, but Staff King said she would arrange showings so the property owners are aware.

The committee discussed the typical timeline of the awards, which have usually been the last Village Board of Trustees Meeting in August.

2. Community and Nature in Harmony Awards

The committee discussed this item with 1. Big Tree.

3. Plastic Free July and Community Solar

Member Panelli explained that the Environment Committee booth at Homer Fest was manned by himself and Member Chiapetta for 4 hours each of the 4 days. He added that they made around 150 to 175 contacts, although there was very little booth traffic, because he and Member

Chiapetta had to initiate contact with people walking around or coming into the fest.

He explained that the Community Solar flier makes them look like salesmen, though they did find people that were interested in the program after speaking with them.

Member Panelli told the committee that after 5 months of the program, they had around 50 current subscribers and 60 people on the waitlist. But he cautioned that that typically only 25% of those on the waitlist will join. Overall, the best performing cities/villages get a 3% hit rate on their mailing list. The Village of Homer Glen is just under 1%. Overall, we're definitely not the best, but we're also not the worst. We're performing in the 33 percentile range of the Mayors Caucus community solar program participants. He added that they can move closer to the top of the list by having the Environment Committee members sign up and all of the members talking up this great program with friends and family.

9. New Business.

a) Consider a Motion to Recommend Acceptance of the Dedication to the Village of the Villas of Old Oak Planned Development Open Space Outlot "D", as part of the Final Plat Approval.

Member Panelli asked for clarification on the item. Staff King explained that this duplex project, The Villas of Old Oak, had been approved by the Village Board in January of this year. She added that this project did a great job at meeting the intent of the Conservation Subdivision ordinance which also includes that the Village should take the open space property and if it should be called out on the plat for dedication. Staff King clarified that whether the outlot is under the developer's ownership or the Village's, it is not allowed to be developed.

Member Walters made the motion to Recommend Acceptance of the Dedication to the Village of the Villas of Old Oak Planned Development Open Space Outlot "D", as part of the Final Plat Approval. The motion was seconded by Co-Chair Consolino.

Member Moses wanted to clarify that they are looking to preserve the open space and save the trees, and the committee said yes. Member Moses is okay with the motion.

The committee unanimously voted in favor of the motion and the motioned passed.

10. Announcements/Committee Member Communication

Member Turrise told the committee that he read an article in the Tribune about the \$134 Million that have been allocated to Will County and saw that around \$140,000 would go to parks.

Member Panelli asked Member Chiapetta if he has anything to add about Homer Fest. Member Chiapetta reiterated the need for a clearer message for the intent of Community Solar. The Committee discuss ideas with the Village's Communication Specialist, Matt Libs, who was present later in the meeting.

Fran from the Women's Club told the committee that the garden walk is this weekend and that there are past Community and Nature in Harmony Award Winners included.

Member Walters wanted to reiterate that he abstained from the approval of the minutes, as he was not at the last meeting.

Member Moses asked about the Bengston's property for sale behind the Creamery. Co-Chair Consolino clarified that the property was sold to the Village and then they sold it to Bengston's.

11. Adjournment/ Committee Members Communication.

Co-Chair Consolino motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 pm and Member Walters seconded. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted:



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