

APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CONTROL COMMISSION
VILLAGE OF NORTHBROOK
January 21, 2021

Chairman Reynolds called the EQC meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. in a remote meeting through WebEx virtual meeting platform.

The following Members were in attendance: Dale Duda, Michael Beeftink, Rebecca Lee, Scott Robson, Sandra Weiss, Brian Bruce, and Chairman Reynolds. A full quorum was met.

Also Present: Deputy Director of Development and Planning Services Michaela Kohlstedt, Deputy Director of Development and Planning Services Chan Yu, and Greenest Region Corps Member Tessa Murray.

Minutes

Member Beeftink moved for approval of the minutes of the November meeting with a second by Member Robson.

Hear from the Audience

No audience members were present at this meeting.

Community Planning Report

Director Kohlstedt introduced Deputy Director Chan Yu, who will oversee zoning and economic development in the Department of Development and Planning Services and work on the Climate Action Planning Team. He will also serve as staff liaison for the Industrial and Commercial Development Commission and Economic Development Commission.

Northbrook Climate Action Plan Team Update

Member Weiss summarized the most recent meeting of the CAPT, in which subteams met to detail possible action items for adoption. Deputy Director Kohlstedt added that Village staff coordinators for other commissions regularly provide updates on CAPT meetings to welcome feedback and ideas from a larger representation of Northbrook's community. Member Duda inquired if the gas-powered leafblower issue falls under any subteam category, to which Member Weiss responded that the topic is addressed in the Climate Health and Greenspace subcommittees. Member Duda reported she is in the process of developing educational materials for this issue and requested help from Tessa for outreach with this project.

Earth and Arbor Day Update

Director Kohlstedt reported that due to the pandemic, Earth and Arbor Day events will not occur as its usual celebration but instead the Village will promote celebrating Earth Day at home in the next print newsletter and on social media platforms. Member Weiss suggested including information on where to purchase native plants and which are best for certain pollinators. Member Duda offered Lake Barrington's Citizens for Conservation as an example of a socially distanced plant sale, in which residents order ahead and arrange a time to receive their purchases on a designated pickup day. She also mentioned it would be useful to include information on how tall the plants will get and when they will bloom. Member Weiss added that a post about celebrating Earth Day could encourage Northbrook residents to go for a nature walk at Somme Woods and provide information on where parking and walking trails are at the preserve.

Green Business and Green Resident Award Update

Tessa Murray provided an overview of the current drafts of the green award applications, and asked if the commissioners had ideas on this year's focus area for the Green Resident Award. Member Duda suggested waste reduction, to which Member Lee, Member Weiss, and Chairman Reynolds agreed. Chairman Reynolds clarified that

the goal is to welcome any submittals in any category, and looking more favorably on waste reduction actions should not preclude residents from submitting applications for achievements related to any other facet of sustainability. Deputy Director Kohlstedt inquired on a target date to present awards around late summer, to which commissioners agreed.

Deputy Director Yu asked commissioners if they would consider creating a new award that allows recognition for green educators or students who take part in sustainability projects in Northbrook. Chairman Reynolds and Member Weiss supported the idea, and Member Beefink added it could be called the "Green Steward Award".

E-Newsletter and Newsletter Sustainable/Green Topics Discussion

Tessa Murray explained the document listing each mention of any aspect of sustainability in all print and e-newsletters since March 2020 for the commissioners' review. Member Duda asked for the appearance of green topics to be consistent in one section of the newsletters. Deputy Director Kohlstedt mentioned the Village's communications specialist Kylie Cerk recommendation that doing so may cause readers to skip over the section completely and limit the amount of sustainability content that can be posted. Chairman Reynolds agreed to follow the specialist's advice and encourage residents to see green content as ubiquitous in Village happenings. Member Weiss added that the goal of these postings should be to persuade readers into thinking about their ecological footprint as they make decisions in their normal daily life, to the point where recycling is as straightforward and obvious as wearing a seatbelt.

Updates on Other Items

Tessa Murray updated the Commission on all communication initiatives created since December. Member Lee suggested residents may benefit from learning how products are recycled through these Village programs, such as holiday lights and battery recycling.

Deputy Director Kohlstedt updated the Commission on Solar Permit Data. Tessa Murray provided updated data for Northbrook's waste collection tonnage and diversion rate in 2020. Deputy Director Kohlstedt added that due to the success of the plastic film recycling program through Village Hall, the current collection haulers can no longer support this capacity. Member Lee encouraged Tessa to shift messaging to prioritize refusing plastic items over recycling them. Chairman Reynolds mentioned that the increase in plastic may relate to the packaging associated with online deliveries due to the pandemic.

Old Business

There was no old business at this meeting.

New Business

Chairman Reynolds explained that Winnetka's Environmental and Forestry Commission would like to speak with the Commission on collaborating to seek change in the Illinois Pesticide Act that preempts local governments from enacting regulations on pesticide usage. Tessa Murray added that the director of the North Shore Mosquito Abatement District would like to share information on the subject to the EQC as well. The commissioners agreed to invite both presenters and add the item to future agendas for discussion. Member Weiss requested that they provide materials for review ahead of time so commissioners may prepare questions.

Good of the Order

Member Duda updated the Commission that planning for the 2021 season of Northbrook's Farmers' Market has begun.

Member Bruce stated that the community garden signup for summer 2021 is available, and gardeners have until February 28th to guarantee their same plots as last year. He reported that there are 63 plots total, excluding those for the food pantry and enabling garden. Northbrook residents new to the community gardens may email brainbrucesr@sbcglobal.net to receive a plot at the Temple Beth-el location.

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the EQC is scheduled for February 18th, 2021.

Adjourn

Chairman Reynolds made a motion to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Member Robson. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Tessa Murray
Recorder