

AMENDED
MINUTES OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CONTROL COMMISSION
VILLAGE OF NORTHBROOK
February 18, 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 Beefink, Rebecca Lee, Scott Robson, Sandra Weiss, and Chairman Reynolds. A full quorum was met.

Member absent: Brian Bruce

Also Present: Director of Development and Planning Services Michaela Kohlstedt, Winnetka Environmental Forestry Commissioner Ted Wynnychenko and Greenest Region Corps Member Tessa Murray.

Minutes

Chairman Reynolds moved for approval of the January meeting minutes as amended with a second by Member Weiss.

Hear from the Audience

No audience members spoke at this meeting.

Community Planning Report

Director Kohlstedt mentioned that Tom Poupard has officially retired and Chan Yu is transitioning well to his new role as Deputy Director of the Development and Planning Services Department.

Northbrook Climate Action Plan Team Update

Director Kohlstedt summarized the February CAPT meeting, in which team members rated action items and organized in subteams based on different aspects of sustainability. There was a large number of items to sift through, so CAPT members are ranking actions individually as a homework task before the newly added “bonus” meeting occurring on March 1 at 5 p.m. Member Weiss explained that this additional meeting speaks to the enthusiasm of the team, as it was raised by members who agreed that each item should be carefully reviewed by more than one member before being committed to or removed.

Chairman Reynolds reminded Commissioners that two representatives from the EQC should attend every Climate Action Plan Team meeting, and to notify him if there is a conflict so he can attend in their place.

Mayors' Monarch Pledge Action Item Commitments

Tessa Murray explained that Northbrook signed onto the Mayors' Monarch Pledge for 2021 with 5 action items already in place. The Commissioners reviewed options for three new items to potentially add to Northbrook's commitment to achieve “Leadership Circle” status as a National Wildlife Federation Community Habitat for Monarchs.

Member Duda mentioned that an invasive species removal program would be useful to educate residents on what is invasive or non-native and how to eradicate them. Chairman Reynolds and Member Duda offered to help with creating educational content for this program. Member Duda also added that a milkweed plug giveaway event occurred every year at the “Welcome to Northbrook” festivities around the third week in May, and encouraged a socially distanced curbside pickup version of the giveaway for this year. Member Lee offered to help with this. Tessa Murray secured funds for 50 Common Milkweed plugs through the Greenest Region Corps program. If more plugs are bought, Member Duda advocated for a different milkweed species that survive flooded conditions and Member Weiss mentioned that adult Monarchs feed on nectar from plants other than milkweeds.

Chairman Reynolds asked Tessa what she considers easily accomplishable items beyond the giveaway and invasive

removal project to get Northbrook to “Leadership Circle” status. Tessa responded that promoting a citizen science effort could be a successful opportunity. Chairman Reynolds inquired on the status of planting natives in public medians or rights of way, and Director Kohlstedt explained that these are being maintained professionally by native landscapers which may meet the requirements for this Monarch Pledge action item.

Pesticide Discussion with Ted Wynnychenko

Chairman Reynolds prefaced that the Commission has spent time with this topic in the past, which led to the creation of an educational factsheet on pesticides. He added that it is unclear how much community support there is for regulating these chemicals.

Ted Wynnychenko, of Winnetka’s Environmental Forestry Commission, spoke on concerns of pesticides that are released as fog with the ability to drift beyond intended spray areas. He noted that residents of the North Shore are observing less bees in the area each summer and many houses with signs for private mosquito control companies in their yards. He presented information that permethrin, commonly used in mosquito control, drifts for 100 yards and has residual effects on leaves that can kill butterflies and bees by contact even years after the spray event occurred.

Mr. Wynnychenko mentioned that Oak Park and Evanston have passed resolutions that advocate for the repeal of the portion of the Illinois Pesticide Act that preempts home rule communities from regulating pesticide usage, and hopes that more communities follow suit to pressure the state. He posed that requiring those who use private applicator services to give notice to neighbors could be a helpful step in generating consideration and discussion. In reference to the article from the Xerces Society that reported Western Monarch populations are very near extinction, Mr. Wynnychenko explained his concern that his generation’s children and grandchildren may look back on this time and wonder why more was not done to slow extinctions and environmental degradation.

Member Duda added that applying pressure on the state is most effective for this issue, and Mr. Wynnychenko explained that the non-profit Illinois Environmental Council has remained silent on the topic perhaps because downstate communities do not share the same experiences and opinions on pesticides as they are useful to crop production.

Chairman Reynolds reminded Commissioners that a resolution would require backing from the Village Board of Trustees. Mr. Wynnychenko offered to keep the EQC updated on how Winnetka approaches the topic as they discuss further at their next meeting. Director Kohlstedt suggested that Tessa could create educational pieces on promoting alternatives to insecticides, such as Citronella and Lemongrass plants used to deter mosquitos.

Updates on Other Items

Tessa Murray presented on communication initiatives created for February. Director Kohlstedt updated the Commission on Solar Permit Data. Tessa Murray provided updated data for Northbrook’s waste collection in January. Member Lee inquired on the textile collection program, and Member Duda responded that this service is available through Simple Recycling. Residents may request orange bags on the Simple Recycling website that will get collected on usual recycling days. Director Kohlstedt noted that the plastic film collection service is still halted and staff are working to resolve this. The Village is no longer promoting the plastic recycling service, but bins are still available.

Old Business

There was no old business at this meeting.

New Business

Chairman Reynolds mentioned that the Village is seeking input from the public on what kind of traits are desired for the new Village Manager position, with a survey link available on the Village website. Director Kohlstedt added that everyone will receive a flyer in the mail on this as well.

Member Weiss explained that the Climate Action Planning Team is now deciding on action items and what Village partners should be brought in to help with implementation of each strategy. She asked Commissioners for their opinion on where the EQC should stand as a facilitator of the Climate Action Plan. Member Robson recalled that the

EQC decided communications should be a main focus for the year, so coordinating volunteers or developing educational materials would fit well in this purview. Member Weiss inquired specifically on the EQC's role as an advocate for policy changes like regulations on pesticides and gas-powered leaf blowers. Chairman Reynolds replied that the Commission must remain sensitive to only bringing ideas to the Board when appropriate and when there is perceived support from the community at large.

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the EQC is scheduled for March 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