

1 APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
2 SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
3 VILLAGE OF NORTHBROOK
4 AUGUST 17, 2023
5

6 Chairman Reynolds called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Village Hall, Terrace
7 Room. Present were Members Bernadette Knight, Aaron Stash, Ethan Stepen, Sandra
8 Weiss, Ying Wang
9

10 **Also Present:** Sustainability Coordinator Liaison Tessa Murray, Director of Planning Services
11 Jonathan Mendel
12

13 **Absent:** Sandra Dold, Becky Lee
14

15 **Guests:** Derrik Chen, Justin McLeod, Terri Rudd, Jim Reinfranck, Theodore Metellus
16

17 **Review and Approval of Minutes**

18 A motion was made by Member Weiss and seconded by Chairman Reynolds to approve the
19 June 15, 2023 Sustainability Commission meeting minutes. The motion passed by voice vote.
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21 Ms. Murray introduced and welcomed Ms. Bernadette Knight as the newest member of the
22 Sustainability Commission. Ms. Knight is a keen gardener and member of the Northbrook
23 Garden Club. She is interested in renewable energy and composting.
24

25 **Hear from the Audience/Public Comments**

26 Ms. Murray has received emailed public comments related to Buckthorn. Mr. McLeod, a
27 Northbrook resident stated that he believes Buckthorn should be designated as an invasive
28 species. It is not native to the U.S. He stated that the plant needs to be eradicated. He would
29 like the public to be educated about its rapid reproduction and quick growth.
30

31 Ms. Rudd stated that she wants Buckthorn listed as an invasive species. The communities of
32 Highland Park, Deerfield and Glencoe all recognize it as an invasive shrub that should be
33 eradicated. She stated that the Village has lots of regulations on grass and fences and should
34 proceed with rules with enforcement for Buckthorn. She shared an issue with a neighboring
35 property, in which Buckthorn is growing along the fence line on her neighbor's side. She
36 thinks they should be required to remove it. Photos were distributed for the Commission's
37 review, and are attached to the meeting minutes.
38

39 **Community Planning Report**

40 Ms. Murray reported the bag tax rollout will be in January 2024.
41 Residents have started to take advantage of the Discount Compost Program.
42

43 **Buckthorn and Northbrook's Invasive Species List**

44 Ms. Murray stated that the list of invasive weeds can be found in the Northbrook Municipal
45 Code. If Buckthorn is listed as an invasive species, it may be appropriate to enforce.
1

1 However, Buckthorn is currently not on the list. She stated that some people believe it is a
2 shrub that provides screening.

3
4 Member Knight agreed with the fact that Buckthorn is an invasive species and asked why it
5 is not on the list. The answer is that it is a matter of enforcement. It is all over the Village.
6 Member Knight supports action. She would like to see all Buckthorn eradicated but
7 especially any that has a trunk that is more than 4" in diameter. She stated the County and
8 Forest Preserves work on eradicating the species and believes that the Village should do its
9 part. She stated that the shrub is toxic to birds and crowds out native plants on forest floors.

10
11 Membership agreed that education is the issue and believes if a letter is sent to all
12 households, residents would do their part. Enforcement comes later. Residents need to
13 know what the shrub looks like, and how to remove and dispose of the shrub.

14
15 Member Weiss wants to know how other towns handle enforcement. Ms. Murray says she
16 will research.

17
18 Member Stepen added that the shrub should at the least be added to the invasive species
19 list.

20
21 Member Stash asked if there were any other species that should be added to the list at this
22 time.

23
24 Member Wang asked if removal is the residents' responsibility. She would like to engage Go
25 Green and the garden groups.

26
27 Chairman Reynolds believes enforcement is only a follow up to a residential complaint.

28
29 Member Weiss would like an incentive added. She suggested a remove and replace program
30 with a 50% off replacement for a Serviceberry or other type of shrub.

31
32 A motion was made by Member Knight and seconded by Member Stash to add a
33 consideration to recommend a municipal code amendment to next month's meeting
34 agenda. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Ms. Murray will reach out to relevant
35 Village staff to further this discussion.

36
37 **Community Moment**

38 The Community Moment schedule is as follows:

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40 August 22 – Member Dold, Topic – Bird Conservation
41 September 26 – Chairman Reynolds, Topic - Community Garden
42 October 23 – Member Stash, Topic – Fall Cleanup and Composting

43
44 **Earth Day Planning**

45 Ms. Murray reviewed pre-pandemic Earth Day Celebrations and the past Earth Day
46 Celebration response from the Village. Membership stated that many residents missed the
47 family component from Earth Day that was always held in the Village Green. Membership

1 made note of how families and friends would assemble in the morning to pick up trash and
2 waste found on the ground throughout the Village.

3
4 Membership asked if Earth Day and the current Recycling Event have to be held on the same
5 day. Membership is in favor of hosting a separate Earth Day Celebration in 2024, towards
6 the end of Earth Month. They believe this is a great community gathering event with a good
7 education component and opportunity not to be missed. Membership is in favor of defining
8 the culture of the event, promoting sustainability and limiting the vendors that participate.
9 Ms. Murray stated that the Commission would have to take ownership of the event.

10
11 Membership would like Ms. Murray to ask the Park District as to whether they would like to
12 participate and to what degree. Possible locations to hold the event are the Village Green or
13 the Village Hall and Library campus. Both have advantages. Hosting the event at Village Hall
14 would showcase the community garden with indoor event programming at the Library.
15 Membership also authorized Ms. Murray to invite the Library and seek out their level of
16 participation.

17
18 Membership inquired about the Sustainability Commission budget. The event costs would
19 have to come out of the current budget. The new budget for fiscal year 2024 begins May 1,
20 2024. Ms. Murray will report back at the next meeting.

21
22 **Updates on Other Items**

23 a) Communication Initiatives & Messaging

24 1) Pollinator Week at Grow Northbrook Garden Educational Workshops, register for this
25 event through the Library; 2) Northbrook Farmers' Market every Wednesday; 3) A post on
26 poor weather quality days; 4) A nature theme category for the Plein Air Photography
27 Festival (pollinators); 5) A composting write-up in the print newsletter; 6) Beating the heat,
28 information on how to stay cool; 7) West Nile Virus Mosquitoes found in Northbrook; 8)
29 Solar Power Hour at the Library – rescheduled to September 11 at 7 p.m.; 9) Facts about
30 paper and plastic bags.

31 b) Solar Permit Data

32 There have been approximately 20 installations for 2023 to date.

33 c) Recycling & Waste Data

34 Landfill tonnage is substantially higher but following the same trends.

35 Members would like to receive more data. Membership stated that there is not much
36 insight gained from the report. They would like to see the prior year numbers. Numbers for
37 recycling can be interpreted many ways. Lower recycling numbers may be attributed to less
38 materials being used, so less recycling may be taking place since the Covid pandemic.

39
40 **Old Business**

41 Director Mendel shared that Ms. Murray will be a panelist at the American Planning
42 Association Illinois Conference (APA-IL) in September at North Central College, Naperville.
43 The subject matter will include different climate action plans in the region.

1 **New Business**

2 Chairman Reynolds inquired about storms and recent flooding and if the Village's new
3 planning measures were helping. Director Mendel stated Chairman Reynolds would have to
4 follow up with Public Works.

5

6 **Remarks for the Good of the Order**

7 Liaison Murray thanked Mr. Chen for his summer work as a Sustainability Intern for the
8 Village.

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10 **Next Scheduled Meeting**

11 The next regular meeting of the Sustainability Commission is scheduled for Thursday,
12 September 21, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

13

14 **Adjourn**

15 A motion was made by Member Stash and seconded by Member Knight at 7:20 p.m. to
16 adjourn the Sustainability Commission August 2023 meeting. The motion passed by voice
17 vote.

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19 Respectfully submitted,
20 /s/ Sue Anetsberger
21 Recorder









