

**Glen Ellyn Park District  
Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting  
July 20, 2017**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 PM

**Roll Call**

Members present were Co-Chairman Cornell and Co-Chairman Ward; Dawn Pearce-Bley, Gail Bode, Adam Kreuzer, Janet Kuefler, and Diane Padilla

Members not in attendance were John Bower and Carrie O'Halloran (both excused)

Staff present was Naturalist Frigo, Superintendent Hopkins and Director Harris

**Motion**

Member Kuefler moved to put aside formal protocol under Roberts Rules of Order, seconded by Member Bley and unanimously approved through a voice vote.

**Introduction of new members**

Co-commissioner Michael Ward will replace former committee commissioner Julia Nephew. John Bower will be replacing Kayla Wheeler as a representative of School District 41. Adam Kreuzer will replace Andrew Van Gorp as a representative from the Village's Environmental Commission.

A student member has yet to be found. Suggestions included recruitment from Glenbard West and South high schools, and possibly from College of DuPage.

**Review of Committee Goal**

To bring individuals together to provide advisory and constructive input and recommendations related to the District's Environmental policy, a working document that outlines the development and implementation of sound environmental policies, practices and procedures associated with the planning and management of the District's properties, facilities, and programs.

**Approval of January 19, 2017 meeting minutes**

Approved, with corrected name spelling of Gail Bode

**Update of previous action items**

1. Encourage use of reusable water bottles: flyers were posted near athletic facilities and emails were sent to park district coaches encouraging use of reusable bottles by teams. A discussion continued as to an alternative to the plastic water bottles distributed after the Freedom Four race. Offering a place for race participants to store their own bottles is not practical due to

space limitations. Handing out filled, reusable plastic bottles wasn't seen as a viable option since many households already have plenty of bottles that often get discarded. The best option was offering participants water in paper cups, similar to what is offered along the race course.

2. Volunteer recruitment for monthly ecological restoration work days: Volunteer numbers increased when committee members reached out to a local church and teachers seeking volunteers. The February 2017 volunteer day had 18 participants, much higher than the typical 3-5 volunteers. St. Petronille church staff is now aware of opportunities for confirmation candidates to put in volunteer time helping restoration efforts.
3. Volcano mulching: members learned that the park district has posted, via electronic media, reasons why piling mulch around the base of trees is bad – it also includes a picture showing the proper way to mulch. The Village of Glen Ellyn has also posted proper mulching techniques within their electronic newsletters and will be inserting a flyer within water bills for residents in the upcoming months. Many trees in our community, especially parkway trees, have been mulched improperly, with mulch piled high along the trunk and at an overly thick depth. It is believed that contractors continue to mulch this way and it has become an acceptable practice. In reality, mulch around the base of a tree can cause the bark to rot and roots to grow above the surface of the ground, both potentially shortening the life of the tree.
4. Labeling recycling cans: several cans at Spring Avenue and Main Street are labeled, with a pictures of items that can be recycled (paper, plastic, metal, glass). The majority of recycling containers in the parks features the recycling symbol and is paired with a trash can. The Village's waste hauler will be putting stickers, listing all recyclable items, on residential recycling totes in the hopes that people will better understand items that can get recycled. Perhaps if there are extra labels, some can be used by Park District to label the totes/cans in parks.

#### **Update of environmental happenings in 2017**

1. Monarch resolution: Park District passed a resolution in February, in cooperation with the DuPage Monarch Project, to support, educate and increase habitat and native plantings that will support monarch populations.
2. The Village, The Conservation Foundation & Park District partnership: These three entities are working together to offer conservation-based outreach for the community. On March 15<sup>th</sup>, Conservation at Home workshop was offered free to residents at the Civic Center. On June 24, a sustainable garden walk was offered as a presentation then participants were given maps and addresses of six residences to visit. Over 70 registered for the garden walks and over 40 for the workshop. The yard tours most likely will continue next year, featuring new yards. To market it, suggestions included using photos from this year's walk, discuss with the Junior Woman's League why they discontinued their walk. A "lunch & learn" program was also suggested that perhaps could dovetail into a similar effort – hands on, real examples that can be applicable on sustainable issues.
3. Earth Day 2017: This year's effort included partnership with the Village, Environmental Commission, Chamber of Commerce and Library and held in conjunction with the Recycling Extravaganza. WDCB provided public promotions and helped support acoustic musicians during the event. A few food vendors participated and, environmental groups. There was a native plant

sale and a mural was created as part of the upcoming Market Francis event. While the event was attended as well as in other years, it was still far below expectations due to multiple events taking place that day. Most likely, we will form a sub-committee to work with the Village's Environmental Commission to determine if another Earth Day or similar event should take place next year and what changes can be made to attract new and a larger crowd. A few ideas that emerged was hosting something in warmer weather (June) and coordinating it with another event such as a fish release, farmer's market, or similar venue.

4. Environmental Programs and Camps: Attendance has been strong for most offerings. 12 or the 15 summer camps offered ran and many free guided walks were offered and attended spring and summer.
5. School District 41 Problem Based Learning: park district staff worked with PBL coaches to support topics such as native plants, pollinators, habitats, and the Gardens for Giving garden plot project at Village Green Park.
6. Ecological Restoration: Staff is busy on invasive weed control in seven natural areas. Over 3000 native woodland plant plugs were added to the woodland at Lake Ellyn Park this May. A rare plant was found at Lake Ellyn this spring and a subsequent article was written (staff will share the article with the committee) on the importance of remnant oak ecosystems.
7. Prairie Path Park upgrades: the park received upgrades in the form of chess tables, a ping pong table, story boards, and enhanced landscaping. The Village's Environmental Commission donated \$500 towards sustainable landscaping that included plants along the Prairie Path and the newly created rain garden in the SE corner of the park.

#### **Other business/new items**

1. Member Bley suggested that the Park District increase its efforts to make more people aware of all these initiatives, beyond social media. The group discussed ideas such as asking the Village to include efforts within their annual spring newsletter, weekly e-blasts, and postings on the electronic message board. Another suggestion was posting events and happenings at the train station. A sandwich-board could be used or if the station gets a facelift in the near future, an electronic message board on community happenings would be a great addition.
2. Seek funding from the Friends of the Parks 501c3 foundation: a few ideas were discussed where funding could help with environmental efforts, such as utilizing and installing more native plantings within the neighborhood parks. Other ideas included possible trail improvements near Lake Ellyn. It was noted that adding in a more permanent sidewalk on the south and east shores may happen with cooperation from the village in the near future. Possible plantings/rain gardens between the sidewalks and street and/or lake along the eastern shore. A subcommittee may be formed to determine feasible projects that the foundation could highlight for funding opportunities. Co-commissioner Cornell may continue conversation with Environmental Commission chairman Kreuzer on the Village's new Glen Ellyn Fund and how that may overlap with the Friends of the Parks.
3. Use of garden plots by World Relief or other organizations was discussed. Several community non-profit groups work with refugee families and those living in temporary housing – access to garden space could be very beneficial for these individuals. The garden plots at Village Green

Park usually all get rented, thus perhaps there is a need for additional plots elsewhere. The Park District has looked into creating gardens at other locations. Expenses, water access and locations are all obstacles. Gardens at Surry Park could be explored as well.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM. Member Bley left at 7:20 pm. Several members stayed after adjourning to join staff on a guided walk of Maryknoll Park to see the natural areas and plantings featured. The oak savanna, a butterfly garden, the turf conversion project and the pond naturalization were toured.