

MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE OF THE VILLAGE OF METTAWA, ILLINOIS, HELD AT THE HOUR OF 5:30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015, IN THE MAPLE BOARDROOM OF THE HILTON GARDEN INN HOTEL, 26225 N. RIVERWOODS BOULEVARD, METTAWA, ILLINOIS.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Towne called the meeting to order at approximately 5:30 pm.

B. ROLL CALL

Upon a call of the roll, the following persons were:

Present: Chairman Towne, Member Armstrong and Member Sheldon

Absent: None

Also present: April Nielsen from ILM; Rick Phillips, architect; Jan Pink, Trustee; Bob Irvin, Village Administrator; Denis Bohm (Open Lands Ad Hoc Panel); Scott Anderson, Village Engineer; Colleen Liberacki, Deputy Village Clerk.

Chairman Towne declared a quorum present.

C. Approval of minutes from July 08, 2015.

Jan Pink noted that she attended the previous meeting, however, her name was not listed as present. Member Sheldon moved to accept the minutes of July 08, 2015 as presented, with the exception of the aforementioned correction and Member Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

D. PRESENTATION BY APRIL NIELSEN FROM ILM RE: WHIPPOORWILL PARK, BERM AND PRAIRIE MAINTENANCE UPDATE

April Nielsen opened the presentation by stating her goal was to create a diverse species prairie landscape, however, she had three concerns that she wanted to address along with some recommendations.

The first concern was the population of buckthorn along the path on the east side of the trail and adjacent to HOA land. She recommended its removal, as birds feast on the berries, get sick and spread the seed along with their excrement in the general vicinity, creating more buckthorn sprouts. She was also trying to get the homeowners in the immediate vicinity to work with ILM to eradicate buckthorn on their own property. Chairman Towne agreed and encouraged this. She also noted that the teasel was aggressively present as well. Chairman Towne mentioned that they were writing a letter to the HOA about the retention pond and the storm water management analysis plan.

April Nielsen thought that part of the HOA by-laws would promote maintenance of the common property and would encourage cooperation. Scott Anderson noted that what drains into the pond ends over at Deerpath, and the SWM has delegated to the village the specific task of maintaining the quality of the pond. Member Armstrong felt that they should address what tasks took priority first and Bob Irvin was cautious about being too aggressive pressing homeowners to remove the buckthorn, since the village has many sites itself where buckthorn

is present. He felt that this could create problems. April Nielsen noted that a beautiful prairie was developing behind what was being screened by this patch of buckthorn. Member Sheldon inquired if the buckthorn was affecting the drainage in that area, to which Chairman Towne replied that the buckthorn was just invasive and it does soak up a lot of the water. He also wanted to make sure that the retention pond was clear of debris. April Nielsen shared that Lake Bluff just passed an ordinance, which empowered the village to remove buckthorn, even on private property. She said her other two concerns were the spread of teasel and red clover. She noted that the berm was mowed which prevents the red clover from seeding and crowding out the natives, as well as shading them with their growth. She further suggested a 3 – 5 year stewardship program for the Whippoorwill Park, berm and prairie to secure the progress made thus far.

Member Sheldon suggested a 70%/30% native plants and brush strokes/swatches of certain plants. April Nielsen responded to this by suggesting planting/grouping plugs of all one color, but different species with different bloom cycles, so as to assure color all summer as one plant is done blooming and another starts. She also proposed a proscribed burn for the fall or early spring for the prairie area, noting that there was so much good quality of plants, but an equal amount of buckthorn saplings. She felt that this approach would result in less collateral damage than herbiciding and it would also be less time consuming.

Chairman Towne inquired about purple flowers, to which Nielsen pointed out the liatris and asters in the NE corner. He then inquired about the possibility of cardinal flowers, however Nielsen advised that they require too much water and would not last long. Denis Bohm inquired about ironweed, and Nielsen replied that it gets too tall for this area. Member Sheldon inquired about what was considered “native”, to which Nielsen replied that what is considered native to Lake County would be anything in a 100 mile range. It was noted that not enough funds were left for a proscribed burn and springtime would be a good time for herbiciding the berm, targeting the red clover.

Dormant seeding in the winter was also suggested. Chairman Towne asked April Nielsen to have ILM produce a 3 -5 year stewardship proposal, a proscribed burn proposal and an additional quote for additional native plugs. Bob Irvin noted that this should be in line with the WRD plan and if this turns into a larger project, competitive bids from other vendors might be required. Member Sheldon wanted an additional quote for higher grade seeding for best results. April Nielsen cautioned against disturbing the soil, which might produce sprouts from dormant invasive seed. Denis Bohm noted that there needed to be a discussion among the trustees about the definition of native vs. non-native plantings. April Nielsen suggested focusing on the prairie corner to produce a noticeable change and not spread the budget and resources so thin that results would not be noticed.

Bob Irvin noted that there were dead trees and shrubs that should also be removed from this site. Chairman Towne advised that everything discussed thus far fell into the category of maintenance and enhancement, rather than a project and he did not want to abandon this property. Drew Johnson suggested studying the whole site and that it would need an inclusive plan, analyzing the tree quality and planning future phases, to which Denis Bohm agreed. April Nielsen advised that she based her recommendations on the WRD plan and if the budget is tight, to focus on the most visual spots, to which Denis Bohm agreed. Chairman Towne was reluctant to bring in another vendor with their interpretation of the

WRD plan, and ILM has been working on this site for a number of years and is very familiar with the site, to which April Nielsen agreed. She added that ILM is also vested in this property, due to their efforts.

Member Sheldon asked April Nielsen to have ILM produce a 3 -5 year stewardship proposal, a proscribed burn proposal and an additional quote for additional native plugs. Member Armstrong agreed with the proscribed burn, but wanted to know what next steps to take beyond this. April Nielsen was thinking similarly, and advised to keep the project moving westward after year three. Drew Johnson asked if the seed has been chosen for the house site, to which April Nielsen replied no, as there were too many trees there now. Johnson further inquired about the cost for plugs and native seeding for that area, to which Nielsen replied that there were a lot of native options. Chairman Towne felt that Whippoorwill prairie was a prime model example of what was desired in the village. April Nielsen agreed to provide a 3 -5 year stewardship proposal, a proscribed burn proposal and an additional quote for additional native plugs. Chairman Towne committed to presenting this proposal to the Village Board. Drew Johnson asked for an additional proposal for the cost for plugs and native seeding for the home site area, to which Chairman Towne agreed. April Nielsen agreed to present a proposal for both the woodland savannah and the prairie style open land by next month, with a November – December timeframe and a December – February timeframe for buckthorn eradication.

E. DISCUSSION OF OASIS PARK REVISED PLAN AND RESULTING PRIORITY ACTION

Chairman Towne presented the updated topological preliminary plan, showing the berm contours, suggested walking trails and planting locations. He noted that this was according to the WRD recommendations; that it had been mowed one time and the silt fence was removed. He believed that MOLA was planning to remove the teasel. He thought that this plan could be used to put out to bid according to the specs, but it would likely involved different interpretations, due to the variety of vendors. Denis Bohm inquired if the next step was a detailed design with specs for going out to bid, to which Chairman Towne replied that it could be depending on the budget.

Bob Irvin noted that this is similar to the Whippoorwill bid specs which Teska did and it would require more definition of what types of material was used on the trails and pause points, which could involved big expenditures. Chairman Towne noted that the Village Board rejected a bid for \$140K to redo the trails alone, so they would be cautious about this expense. He suggested taking this project in small steps. Member Sheldon estimated a cost of \$60K - \$70K for the detailed plan specs, which would not even include the material. Member Sheldon suggested just accepting/acknowledging the plan and not doing anything further until all parcels are prioritized for attention according to the WRD plan, and all agreed. No further action was taken.

F. DISCUSSION REGARDING NEXT STEPS FOR ZONING PROCESS OF VILLAGE-OWNED OPEN SPACE AND FOREST PRESERVE LAND INSIDE OF VILLAGE

Chairman Towne suggested that all village owned parcels with the exception of the restaurant site, village hall site and all single family lots should move towards being rezoned as open space with the intention of individually being moved into the conservation easements, with

particular attention paid to how each was written. Bob Irvin suggested the right-of-way parcels as well. The sites in addition to the right-of-way parcels were: Oasis Park, Whippoorwill parcels, HOA Hampton Estates, north of Costco, 701 Riverwoods, 5 acre parcel Granger donated and the 10 acre site adjacent to the restaurant site. Member Sheldon agreed and the next step being each parcel be put into a conservation easement, with its use limited. Scott Anderson noted that to change the zoning, the map description of each parcel was sufficient, and no legal description was required. Chairman Towne noted that a public hearing would be necessary and Bob Irvin said that this would be referred to the Zoning, Planning & Appeals Commission.

It was moved by Member Sheldon, and seconded by Member Armstrong, to recommend to the Village Board that the village owned properties including the right-of-way parcel, (Oasis Park, Whippoorwill parcels, HOA Hampton Estates, north of Costco, 701 Riverwoods, 5 acre parcel Granger donated and the 10 acre site adjacent to the restaurant site) all be referred to the Zoning, Planning & Appeals Commission for purpose of zoning as an open space district. The motion was carried.

Denis Bohm inquired if a private party could also petition the Zoning Commission for the purpose of turning their land into open space, to which Member Sheldon replied that a minimum of five acres was necessary to make the tax benefit feasible.

G. DISCUSSION OF ROUTE 60 TRAIL EXTENSION

Chairman Towne noted that the median strip west of the toll way was mowed down due to infringement on site distance for traffic. Bob Irvin suggested cobblestone (to tolerate the salt) and sumac as a solution to the grasses and Chairman Towne agreed to pursue that option. Scott Anderson informed the committee that he received a return call from the State of Illinois for the project, however, he was out of the office and his return call has gone unanswered. It was noted that this application for the trail extension was submitted in November/December and has not moved along as expected, as it was stuck in the traffic and hydraulics departments. Chairman Towne was disappointed that nearly a year has lapsed and not much progress made and thought that the state of Illinois should not control what the village is trying to do. He insisted that the work be ready for bid submittal by the next meeting.

It was moved by Chairman Towne, and seconded by Member Armstrong, to recommend to the Village Board that the work for the Route 60 trail extension be put out to bid. The motion was carried.

H. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT MAY APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION TO THE VILLAGE BOARD.

No other items were discussed.

I. ADJOURNMENT

With no further items discussed, it was moved by Member Armstrong to adjourn the meeting at 7:06pm, seconded by Member Sheldon. The motion was carried.

Colleen Liberacki, Deputy Clerk

This document is subject to correction as noted on next meeting's minutes.