

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

Approved with changes 10/17/18

MINUTES

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

September 19, 2018, 7:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Establishment of a Quorum.

Chairman Beebe called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Roll call found Commissioners Dan Beebe, Kris Zimmermann, Bob Blaus and Joe Cavataio present. Commissioner Bethany Brown arrived at 7:05 P.M., Commissioner Symowicz was absent.

Also in attendance was Assistant Director of Public Works, Tim Wilcox, and Andrew Van Gorp, Sustain DuPage Founder & President.

2. Approval of Minutes.

- A. **Environmental Commission Minutes of August 22, 2018. Commissioner Blaus made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Symowicz to approve the meeting minutes of August 22, 2018.**

Voting Yea: Commissioners Beebe, Zimmermann, Blaus, Cavataio, and Brown. Voting Nay: 0.

3. Public Participation/Presentations.

Mr. Van Gorp introduced himself to the Commission members and gave a brief explanation of what Sustain DuPage is all about. He envisions building a culture of sustainability in DuPage County. During his talk he mentioned 5 mission projects: food, ecology, art, education, and policy. He also mentioned reasons for a planned change to the Sustain DuPage Logo. Some people told him they “hate” the logo, which he said was meant to convey fighting for the environment.

Mr. Van Gorp brought a slideshow along with a small projector and shared his slideshow with the group. The slideshow introduced the Environmental Commissions & Committees of DuPage County (EC3) and explained the concept to unite all of the environmental commissions and committee’s from communities throughout DuPage County. Mr. Van Gorp added that DuPage is the first County in the State to form such a coalition.

The slideshow also provided information about the harmful effects of light pollution and EC3’s 2017-2018 policy initiative to address light pollution and starry skies restoration, known as the DuPage Starry Skies initiative. The goal with the DuPage Starry Skies project is to implement a Dark Sky ordinance all across DuPage County and become the first-ever Dark Sky County, certified by the International Dark Sky Association (IDA) with the intention for West Chicago to be the pilot community and to assist West Chicago to become the first to achieve the Dark Sky certification in DuPage County. Mr. Van Gorp said the slideshow was created to present the information to other communities and he’s is always working to improve it.

There was much discussion after viewing the slide show. It was mentioned that one of the biggest challenges is the concept that bright shining lights provide safety from or deter criminal activity at night. Also discussed was gaining public support and the importance to involve Police in the process. Commissioner Zimmermann distributed the draft timeline she created for passing a West Chicago Dark Skies Ordinance; there was some discussion about the timeline and the one Mr. Van Gorp had created.

Mr. Van Gorp said the Sustain DuPage website is currently being revamped so don't look at it yet. ~~He mentioned ways to celebrate.~~ He said Westmont has indicated on their village website green page that the Village of Westmont is a member of Sustain DuPage's EC3, and provided information about the coalition. They included the EC3 logo and a link to the website <http://sustaindupage.com/ec3>. Mr. Van Gorp said the EC3 logo will stay the same and he encouraged West Chicago to add the logo and link to their City Website.

Mr. Van Gorp left the meeting at 7:40 P.M.

4. Items For Consent

None

5. Review and discuss Commission Priority List.

A. Review current priority list

Adopt A Highway

The group was reminded that the next cleanup will be 8:00 A.M., October 13, 2018 meeting at the old Kmart area parking lot.

Lighting Ordinance

The discussion on this topic continued after Mr. Van Gorp departed the meeting. Chairman Beebe thought the point made about including the police was very good and important to get them on board. Also important is to stress that the goal is not to eliminate light at night but to promote and establish smarter lighting.

Commissioners Zimmermann and Brown both agreed that encountering skunks at night while walking in unlighted areas was one of the worst problems they have experienced. Commissioner Cavataio mentioned there is only one street light in his subdivision (Meadowwood). Subdivisions rules require residents to have and maintain yard lights in the front yard of their property.

Commissioner Zimmermann said that Mr. Van Gorp had contacted Drew Carhart about doing his talk about light pollution in West Chicago. Mr. Carhart indicated he would be willing to do it anytime. Commissioner Brown mentioned the possibility of using the cafeteria at Ball Horticultural to host the event. Chairman Beebe asked if it was set up to accommodate such an event. Commissioner Brown indicated that it has been used for meetings in the past but she would need to check with Ball to see if they would allow it to be used. There was more discussion about the timing to hold the event this year, probably not before November but sometime before the holidays, what time and if a weekend day would work. Commissioner Zimmermann said she would contact Mr. Carhart to find out his availability.

Commissioner Brown will check with Ball for permission to use the cafeteria and if weekends would be okay. Commissioner Blaus thought Alderman Ferguson should be contacted to get his opinion as well.

B. Discuss new additions to priority list

None.

6. Other Business

There was some discussion about the McAuley School house on Route 38 in West Chicago and talk of Mrs. Ferguson (Alderman Ferguson's wife) starting a website/gofundme page to save it. The Baker House located on the north side of St. Charles Road in the West Branch Forest Preserve was mentioned as a building that was saved from demolition. The exterior was restored and maintained but the interior is not open to the public.

Commissioner Blaus asked if he should try to reserve the solar house for next year's Blooming Fest event, and also mentioned educating people on ComEd's Smart Grid. The group agreed he should look into reserving the house.

Chairman Beebe said he would like to start discussing suggestions for the next residential waste and recycling contract. The current contract expires December 31, 2019. He would also like a representative from Groot attend a future meeting to discuss and answer questions about current trends in waste and recycling, including food scrap composting, and also Education ideas to help reduce contamination in the recycling effort.

7. Adjournment

At 8:35 P.M. Commissioner Blaus made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Zimmermann seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Wilcox, Assistant Director of Public Works