

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
CONSERVANCY COMMISSION
THURSDAY, January 25, 2018
7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER by Chairman Bodkin at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

- Commissioners present:
Diane Bodkin, Nancy Munao, Corinne Chrystall, Deb Bachmeier, Aga Razvi
Ecologist: Dustin Wire
Guests: Alec Jacobs and mother Connie Jacobs

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 2017 MINUTES: Motion by Commissioner Munao, seconded by Commissioner Razvi, passed unanimously without corrections.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Chairman Bodkin invited Eagle Scout candidate Alec Jacobs to describe the history of his ramp project. He stated he began his project July 18, 2017, and completed it October 19, 2017. He raised \$1463 in total funds with help from local businesses for supplies and equipment. He and helpers totaled 228 man hours. Commissioners commended Jacobs on the quality, durability, and beauty of his work. Bodkin signed off on his project and stated she would send the commission's approval to the Board of Trustees. She asked Scout Jacobs to add some more gravel at the base of the ramp to ensure the safety of users till the path is attached.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Bodkin announced the donation of \$250 from the village attorney firm, Storino, Ramello and Durkin. She also announced she has requested a donation of \$1000 from the South Barrington Garden Club for plants and shrubs along the new proposed handicap path.

Commissioner Munao announced that she still has the certificate for one of the girl scout volunteers who helped with the sedge planting in the summer. She will mail the certificate to the scout.

Bodkin announced she has requested the need for a used lawnmower for the Conservancy to be placed in the Village "Weekly Update" and possibly other residents' newsletters.

AGENDA :

I. MAINTENANCE:

A. MOWING:

Bodkin reviewed the newest draft of the 2017-2018 Budget with the Commissioners. She stated she and Village Treasurer Bodie reviewed the past year's budget and created a new draft with new expenses.

Commissioners asked about the extent of Ron DiMonte's responsibilities in the median and along the frontage edge of Bridges Drive and along the path to the Arboretum.

Bodkin replied she understood that even if it were Village property, this mowing and care would come under the Conservancy budget.

Bodkin added that she had asked for the scarecrow trail maintenance to be placed in DiMonte's responsibilities, as she could no longer physically do the work. She and her husband would still be responsible for mowing the specific exhibit sites, but DiMonte would be responsible for spraying the sites prior to the event. Bodkin also requested that DiMonte continue spraying the east side of the mound, as the weeds are too vigorous for volunteers to maintain. Commissioners and Wire agreed to the \$725 for Wire's spraying of invasive species throughout the year.

B. BURN:

Dustin Wire reported that he is in communication with Chuck Campbell, Project Manager at Applied Ecological Services, regarding plans for the controlled burn. They have agreed it to be more expedient and less expensive to do the whole burn in the same day, using north, south, and west winds. The burn will probably take place in mid March. Wire stated the cattails along Bartlett could be tamped down to minimize the height of smoke along the road. Wire asked Bodkin to check with the Park District for times of sports in the afternoon, so as to minimize the effect of the smoke on the athletes.

C. SEDGE MEADOW:

Bodkin reported that she and Village Engineer Karney would send the final report to close out the 2017 grant from ComEd /Openlands. They will use photos of volunteers and planting areas and invoices for the plants. Bodkin asked the Commissioners if they would be in favor of continuing the plantings in the remaining areas of the sedge meadow. All commissioners expressed agreement in continuing and completing the whole sedge meadow and applying for the grant again. Wire agreed that two more plantings would complete the project.

Commissioners agreed the most difficult part of the project is clearing out the weeds in the new area in preparation for new plants. The Village's responsibility for a possible matching grant will be placed in the budget for 2018. It was agreed to increase the budget amount to cover the added expense of Wire's work obtaining and transporting plants, and sharing expertise to lead the project. Commissioners will contact scout troops and garden clubs for volunteer planters.

II. CAPITAL PROJECTS

A. ENTRANCE MOUND:

Commissioner Chrystall reported having difficulty getting the asters to grow on the mound last season. Bodkin authorized her to find her own nursery for the asters and to add some penstemons to the mix. She will repot and nurture new plants for a few months before planting on the mound. Commissioner Razvi reported he had ordered six pounds of wild lupine seeds that would cover 3000 square feet. He would like to spread them directly on the ground in the front area of the mound and other areas of impact and high visibility and discovery. Razvi added that the plants would not flower the first year.

B. STONE STREAM FOR EROSION CONTROL:

Commissioner Chrystall reported her landscaper would like to create the Rock River/ Stone Stream on the mound facing Bridges Drive. He would expect to do the work in late March. Razvi offered to survey the area for the water path downhill. He and Chrystall will work out surveying time. Bodkin will place the project on the March agenda for report on progress or completion.

C. HANDICAP PATH TO OBSERVATION DECK:

Bodkin reported that work on the brush area by the path to the ramp is being done. She and her husband and Wire have cleared a fourth of the total area with chain saw and brush whacker, hauling the brush to the cattail area for eventual burn. Chrystall asked if the clearing project could be a good one for her landscapers to do along with some volunteers. Bodkin stated she would like to see the whole tree area cleared to see through to the cattails. Chrystall added she would like to see the trail on the west side of the swale developed and extended to a clearing near the pond, and connected with the proposed asphalt path west of the area. It was agreed to look at the area in question again after the burn when the indicators are clearer.

Bodkin reported that the Mayor would like more information on the need for the asphalt path before approving any funds for the project. Engineer Karney obtained an estimate of about \$33,000 for the actual path and \$4000 for the engineering. Commissioners discussed methods of obtaining information on amount of usage of the Conservancy by the public, and specifically numbers of handicapped persons who

might use the attraction feature. Suggestions included taking individual resident surveys of usage and potential usage, and the possibility of using the Police Dept. cameras for a week to monitor usage.

Commissioner Razvi recommended the project of creating a 5-year plan for the Conservancy, and looking into finding a graduate student to design this plan. Bodkin gave Razvi the copy of the first 3-year plan created in 2013, as a springboard for creating a new one in 2018. Some of the goals have been achieved and some are still possibilities for future attention. Razvi agreed to send out letters to several campuses to invite potential students for possible intern work.

III. PROGRAMS

A. ARBOR DAY REPORT:

Commissioners agreed to celebrate Arbor Day this year on Saturday, April 28, 2018. Bodkin reminded the commission of the requirement of this celebration annually to fulfill one of the requirements for designation of Tree City, USA. It does not have to be a tree planting each year. Bodkin plans to ask a naturalist to guide around the arboretum. Munao will talk with Jeff Andruss about taking on this educational aspect of the celebration. Bodkin added plans to complete the revised "Tree Walk" brochure, stating Village Treasurer Bodie had indicated an interest in working on it with a new computer application. Munao will be prepared to talk with Barrington High Graphics Class if needed. Commissioner Chrystall voiced ideas to include activities for children, since the day was changed to Saturday to include them. A possible suggestion was to plant a shrub on the mound. Other ideas were to publicize the event through South Barrington Life magazine ahead of time (making the deadline date of March 5 for the Article) and the Village "Weekly Update" and a possible banner sign like the one used for the Scarecrow Event.

B. POLICY OF USE:

Commissioner Razvi talked with Village Treasurer Bodie about creating a "Policy of Use" document and both decided not to change anything in the current policy. The terms of use, the deposit, the restrictions, all appear to cover any situation. If large group requests arise, they can be discussed on individual basis. Commissioners agreed with Razvi to keep the Conservancy natural and not add power, toilet facilities, and shelter at this time. Residents come to the Conservancy for the natural setting.

C. SOIL AND WATER MANAGEMENT SUMMER SCHOOL CLASS:

Commissioners Munao and Razvi will work together to create a summer school class in Soil and Water Management for the Countryside 4th Graders in June.

OLD BUSINESS

SCARECROW EVENT:

Commissioners agreed to schedule the annual Scarecrow Event September 22-30, 2018. Bodkin will be available only for the opening weekend. Commissioners Bachmeier and Chrystall will host the second weekend. The theme will be "Children's Books." Chrystall will host the apple pie and bistro scene again. Bodkin hopes to contract Gordy the Bubbler this year for the children's attraction for the opening day.

NEW BUSINESS

DOGS ON CONSERVANCY GROUNDS:

Commissioners discussed the problems of dogs walking in the picnic ground area. It was noted that dogs are not allowed in any of the Park District areas. Commissioners agreed that the Conservancy would see more use if dog owners were allowed to walk on the Conservancy trails with bags for cleanup. It was suggested to have map signs letting owners know trail and path areas only are approved for dog walking in the Conservancy. The Commission will also explore the cost of a bag station with a trash can to be installed in the best location.

REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING DAY

Commissioners voted to continue the Third Thursday evening at 7:00 p.m. for meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Next meeting will be February 15, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Bodkin, Chairperson