

PUBLIC NOTICE

In accordance with the Statutes of the State of Illinois and the Ordinances of the City of Highland Park, the next meeting of the Natural Resources Commission of the City of Highland Park is scheduled to be held at the hour of 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 9, 2015 at the City of Highland Park City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, Illinois, during which it is anticipated there will be a discussion of the following:

CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK  
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2015  
HIGHLAND PARK CITY HALL  
1707 ST. JOHNS AVENUE  
HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS  
6:30 P.M.

**MEETING AGENDA**

**I. Call to Order**

**II. Roll Call**

**III. Approval of Minutes:** November 10, 2015

**IV. Business from the Public**

**V. New Business**

- A. Presentation of Awards for Meritorious Service to the Highland Park Environment to Highland Park Resident Matthew Jennings
- B. Presentation of the 2016 Sustainability Work Plan

**VI. Old Business**

- A. Update on Amendment to Ethics Guidelines
- B. Update on Environmental Movie Series

**VII. Other Business**

- A. Commissioner Comments
- B. Administrative Items
- C. Farewell to Outgoing Commissioners Don Matthews and Steven Rheinstrom

**VIII. Adjournment**

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF HIGHLAND  
PARK, ILLINOIS**

**MEETING DATE:** November 10, 2015

**MEETING LOCATION:** Presession Conference Room, Highland Park City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, Illinois

**CALL TO ORDER**

At 6:32 p.m., Vice Chair Ross called the meeting to order and Karen Brunetti called the roll.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Ross, Pagoria, Hannick, Wagenius, Rheinstrom, Matthews (6:46 p.m.) and Stone

**Members Absent:** Coyle, Theodosakis, Dotson and Stumpf

The Chairwoman declared that there was a quorum of the Commission present.

**Staff Present:** Karen Brunetti

**MINUTES**

**A. Regular Meeting of the Natural Resources Commission—October 14, 2015**

Commissioner Wagenius moved to approve the minutes of a regular meeting held on October 14, 2015. Commissioner Rheinstrom seconded the motion. On a voice vote, Vice Chair Ross declared that the motion passed (5-0).

**BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There was no business from the public.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Consideration of Amendments to the City of Highland Park Ethics Guidelines**

Staff Liaison Brunetti provided an overview of the amendments to the City's Ethics Guidelines. The commission agreed that the guideline amendments are reasonable and no objections were given. The commission inquired whether the Natural Resources Commission is considered a Land Use Commission. Staff Liaison Brunetti will clarify and report back to the commission at the December meeting.

B. Presentation and Discussion on Coal Tar and Other Sealants Polluting Stormwater

Commissioner Wagenius presented an overview of coal tar and other sealants that act as pollutants to the environment. Wagenius explained that coal tar contains polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH), or organic chemicals, that may cause harm to humans, fish and other aquatic life. Wagenius further explained that several municipalities, governmental entities, universities and companies have made a commitment or passed an ordinance banning these types of sealants, including nearby Village of Winnetka. Wagenius suggested that the commission discuss a recommendation to the City Council on an ordinance to ban coal tar and other sealants that act as pollutants to the environment.

Council Liaison Stone suggested that outreach and education would need to be incorporated into any code changes. Stone also noted that the City does not use these type of sealants.

Commissioner Matthews suggested that the ban be structured similar to the phosphorus ban which was then incorporated into the City's landscaping licensing. Commissioner Wagenius noted that the Village of Winnetka opted to license pavement applicators as part of their ban.

Resident Andy Amend, 905 Ridgewood Place, commented that there have been lots of studies and guidelines on this issue. Ms. Aman asked if there is more effect as residents continue to use layers of sealcoat; she also asked if there are communities that have banned asphalt as well.

Commissioner Rheinstrom noted that it would be much more difficult to ban asphalt than coal tar. Commissioner Matthews moved to recommend an ordinance banning coal tar sealants in the City. Commissioners Hannick and Rheinstrom noted that the ban may be difficult to enforce. Matthews suggested that the ban be similar to the phosphorus ban and enforced in the same manner.

Commissioner Matthews restated his motion to recommend that City Council develop an ordinance prohibiting the sale and application of coal tar sealants within the City. Commissioner Rheinstrom seconded. On a voice vote, Vice Chair Ross declared that the motion passed (6-0).

C. Consideration and Approval of the 2016 Award for Meritorious Service to the Highland Park Environment Recipient(s)

The commission discussed the nominations and determined that resident Matt Jennings should be presented with the Award for Meritorious Service to the Highland Park Environment. The commission opted not to award a business this year. Commissioner Rheinstrom moved to direct staff to invite Mr. Jennings to the commission's December meeting and prepare a certificate for recognition at that meeting. Commissioner Matthews seconded the motion. Commissioner Pagoria abstained and disclosed he is also a member of Trout Unlimited, to which Mr. Jennings is a member. On a voice vote, Vice Chair Ross declared that the motion passed (5-0).

**OLD BUSINESS**

A. Discussion on the 2016 Environmental Movie Series

Council Liaison Stone presented the recommended plan for the commission’s environmental movie series including recommended films and shorts as well as available dates at the Highland Park Library.

The commission discussed the recommendations and agreed that the summer months should be avoided. Commissioner Hannick suggested the series run from January through May and start up again in the fall after reevaluating the program. The commission agreed and directed staff to coordinate the film series for the months of January, March, April and May.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

A. Commissioner Comments

Commissioners Pagoria and Wagenius will be meeting with Public Works to further discuss sealcoats. They will report back to the commission at a future meeting.

Council Liaison Stone reported that the Hazel parking lot has been included in the 2016 Capital Improvement Program; the IGIG grant applied for in 2013 has still not been awarded.

B. Administrative Items

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Wagenius motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Pagoria seconded the motion. Vice Chair Ross adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Brunetti, Assistant to the City Manager

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**MINUTES APPROVED BY THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION ON**

- WITH NO CORRECTIONS \_\_\_\_\_
- WITH CORRECTIONS \_\_\_\_\_  
(SEE MINUTES OF [ \_\_\_\_\_ ] MEETING FOR CORRECTIONS)



# Memorandum

To: Members of the Natural Resources Commission

From: Karen Brunetti, Assistant to the City Manager

Date: December 7, 2015

Re: Agenda Items for the December 9th Meeting of the Natural Resources Commission

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## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **A. Presentation of Awards for Meritorious Service to the Highland Park Environment to Resident Matthew Jennings**

The Commission will present the Award for Meritorious Service to the Highland Park Environment to resident Matthew Jennings.

### **B. Presentation of the 2016 Sustainability Work Plan**

The City's sustainability consultant, Grace Rink with Quercus Consulting, will be present to outline the 2016 sustainability work plan. The work plan is attached for your review.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### **A. Update on Amendment to the City's Ethics Guidelines**

At its November 10, 2015 regular meeting, the Commission discussed the City's proposed amendments to the Ethics Guidelines. During discussions, the commission inquired whether or not the Natural Resources Commission was considered a land use commission. The City's corporation counsel has confirmed that the NRC is not a land use commission, and therefore, does not need to file the organizational interest disclosure statement. No further action is requested from the commission at this time.

### **B. Update on Environmental Movie Series**

As part of its annual work plan, the commission has agreed to co-host an environmental movie series. The commission discussed this item at its November 10, 2015 regular meeting. The following provides

an update to the commission on date reservations and schedule. No action is required from the commission at this time.

The series is schedule to be shown in the Highland Park Public Library auditorium on the following dates in 2016:

- January 23, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Terra Blight  
[http://store.cinemaguild.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Store\\_Code=nontheatrical&Product\\_Code=2421#Trailer](http://store.cinemaguild.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Store_Code=nontheatrical&Product_Code=2421#Trailer)
- March 13, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Project Ice  
<http://projecticemovie.com/>
- April 18, 7:00-8:30 p.m. Project Wild Things  
<http://www.thewildnetwork.com/film>
- May 15, 2:00-4:00 p.m. Comes With Baggage  
<http://www.comewithbaggage.com>

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Draft 2016 Sustainability Work Plan

## SCOPE OF WORK – 2016

The 2016 work plan continues the activities that were ongoing as of the end of 2015, introduces new activities per the City's request, and allows space for unforeseen priorities and opportunities that will arise throughout the year. This scope is based on our recent conversations and feedback from City staff and project stakeholders.

### Task 1: Codes and Policies

In 2014 we began a review of City codes to determine whether or not they enable dark skies and bird safe design. This process continued throughout 2015 and we anticipate completion in early 2016. In 2015 we also reviewed codes for policies that would enable or prohibit green infrastructure and alternative power, and although we found no barriers, we did find a difference in understanding between residents and code review staff as to what is and is not allowed by the Code.

In 2016 we suggest our work on Codes and Policies will consist of the following: (1) revising code language, (2) providing support for City staff in interpreting code requirements related to sustainability, and (3) developing new policies.

#### 1a. Code Revision

In this task we will complete the project begun in 2014, specifically revisions to Chapters 93, 150, and 170 that reduce light pollution and promote bird-safe design. As of the end of 2015, it appears that the suggested revisions will be ready for Council review/approval in January or February.

#### 1b. Code Support

In 2016, Quercus will provide guidance to City staff responsible for permit reviews on how to interpret codes related to light pollution and bird safe design (once approved), and green infrastructure and alternative energy. These supports will include written documents, such as 'ideal' submittals and document checklists against which to compare actual project submittals, and in-person workshops to discuss the code sections and staff experiences with actual projects.

#### 1c. New Policies

Some sustainability objectives do not need to be included in City codes, and instead be implemented through new policies and/or procedures. In 2016 Quercus will develop at least one new policy, Sustainable Events, and others may arise during the year.

### Task 2: Communication Initiative

The City has new and existing policies and priorities in place and needs to communicate them effectively to residents. The following subjects will be addressed in the Communication Plan:

- Waste Management – Recycling and Food Scrap Composting
  - Objective: Maintain strong residential recycling rates, increase awareness of and participation in food scrap composting option, increase recycling rate among business community.
- Light Pollution and Bird Safe Design
  - Objective: Raise awareness of light pollution and lack of bird safe design effects, causes, and solutions. Increase willingness of residents to assist in efforts to reduce light pollution and reduce bird/building strikes.
- Green Infrastructure
  - Objective: Raise awareness of green infrastructure options for residential properties; increase willingness of residents to implement green infrastructure treatments on their properties.

#### 2a. Finalize Communication Plan

If the baseline work planned for the end of 2015 proceeds as planned (i.e., resident survey and draft communication plan completed by the end of 2015), then we should have the communication strategy finalized by the end of February.

#### 2b. Develop Campaign Materials

It is likely that the communication plan will suggest developing materials such as posters or flyers, writing newsletter articles, press releases, and website updates, and planning and hosting events such as workshops, fairs, and award programs. In some cases our team will be able to develop these materials for the City's review. In other cases our team will provide guidance to other stakeholders as they develop these materials. Our 2016 plan allows for the Quercus team to develop at least six original documents and we will provide detailed implementation plans and guidelines for each project suggested in the communication plan. Specific to graphic design (i.e., posters), we have found that in-house Communications/PR teams tend to prefer incorporating our text and guidance into their own designs, rather than our team developing designs for their review. Depending on the approval of the Communication Plan, we would expect the campaign materials to be complete by the end of April.

#### 2c. Implement Communication Plan

In the earlier tasks we will have worked with City staff to determine the most effective communication channels for reaching the intended audience. In this task, Quercus will assist City staff and other identified 'messengers' with implementing the campaign. The onus of the implementation activities is on the City and stakeholders, i.e., planning and hosting events, issuing communication (distributing posters, publishing newsletter articles, website updates, and press releases), but our team will be available throughout the campaign for guidance on timing and reviewing documents. The City should anticipate implementing the campaign from May through November.

#### 2d. Analyze Results

The activity will conclude with a post-campaign survey to gauge effectiveness of the messages and materials. This task will result in a clear measurement of awareness and behavior change attributable to the campaign, and recommendations for continuing the effort. We suggest conducting a survey in late November/early December similar to the survey conducted at the end of 2015. The results will indicate the effectiveness of the campaign and provide guidance for future activities.

### **Task 3: Natural Areas Initiatives**

As of this draft there is only one proposed project related to natural areas stewardship:

#### 3a. Licensed Contractor Requirements

In 2014 we drafted a survey to accompany the City's existing Landscape Contractor Certification application to document the sustainable services available from these companies, and in 2015 we assisted City staff with review of these submittals. In 2016 we will again assist with new document reviews as needed, and will explore similar policies for other contracted activities such as mosquito abatement and application of coal tar products.

#### **Task 4: Sustainability Program Management**

There are a number of fundamental activities that ebb and flow throughout the year. These are combined into this task.

##### 4a. Baseline Metrics

Highland Park does not yet have a baseline measurement of the activities which generate greenhouse gas emissions: energy consumption, solid waste, and water consumption. These metrics were required for at least one award application in 2015, but they are also useful for demonstrating the impact of the City's sustainability program year over year. In 2016 we will work with City staff to generate this baseline.

##### 4b. Sustainability Project Reviews

In both 2014 and 2015 there were occasional needs for our team to review or comment on City projects that intersect with sustainability, such as the Streetscape Plan, ComEd streetlight agreement, Municipal Aggregation, and new HVAC systems. In 2016 this task will remain available on an as-needed basis.

##### 4c. Community Collaboration

Quercus will continue to participate in the Green Alliance collaboration and, through the Communication Plan, activities for this group might increase. In 2015, other examples of Community Collaboration activities included exploring the Divvy program (also might continue in 2016), and the We Love Cities campaign hosted by the World Wildlife Federation.

##### 4d. Grant/Award Writing

Throughout the year there are often opportunities to apply for grants that support new and existing projects, and awards to recognize City accomplishments. In 2016 this will again be an ongoing task as opportunities arise.

##### 4e. New Tasks

This activity remains undefined, by design. In 2014 we researched subjects such as the pros and cons of activated walk signals, a portable water station for events, examining the details of Chicago's residential solar program, and exploring the benefits of ICLEI membership. In 2015 we explored the possibility of direct sales of rain barrels and regional initiatives of the Chicago Community Trust. We suggest continuing this task in 2016 to address 'hot topics' as they arise.

#### **Task 5: Coordination**

The level and frequency of communication amongst our team continues to be very effective. The City has been responsive to requests for information and document reviews, and the staff and stakeholders have been proactive about engaging us in their deliberations. We anticipate this will continue in 2016. Quercus and its sub-contractors will continue to engage in dialogue with the City and stakeholders through in-person meetings, community presentations, and communication by phone and e-mail.