

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, February 9, 2011 at 1707 St. John's 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, FEBRUARY 9, 2011
1707 ST. JOHN'S AVENUE
HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS
6:30 P.M.

MEETING AGENDA

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Approval of Minutes: January 12, 2011

IV. Business from the Public

V. New Business

- A. Overview of City of Highland Park Steep Slope Regulations, Ravine-Bluff Maintenance Guidelines and Variation Application Evaluations

VI. Old Business

- A. Green Team Status Report

VII. Other Business

- A. Commissioner Comments
- B. Administrative Items

VIII. Adjournment

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

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, January 12, 2011

MEETING LOCATION: Pre-Session Room, City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, IL

CALL TO ORDER

At 6:30 p.m., Chairman Bogot called the meeting to order and the Staff Liaison called the roll.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Bogot, Compher, Dennison, Friedman, Hill, Himmelfarb, Matthews, Naftzger, Sultan, Mandel and Meyer

Members Absent: None

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

Staff Present: Staff Liaison Barbara Cates and Technical Advisor Michael Bernardi

Also Present: None

MINUTES

A. Joint Meeting of the Environmental Commission and Lakefront Commission—December 8, 2010

Commissioner Naftzger moved approval of the minutes of the joint meeting of the Environmental Commission and the Lakefront Commission held on Wednesday, December 8, 2010. Commissioner Hill seconded the motion.

On a voice vote, Chairman Bogot declared that the motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 384 Prospect Avenue—Consideration of Staff-Drafted Findings of Fact Recommending Zoning Board of Appeals Approval of a Request for a Steep Slope Variation to Construct an Addition to an Existing Single-Family Residence

Commissioner Sultan moved to approve and forward to the Zoning Board of Appeals the staff-drafted Findings of Fact recommending approval of a request for a Steep Slope variation at 384 Prospect Avenue. Commissioner Hill seconded the motion.

On a voice vote, Chairman Bogot declared that the motion passed unanimously.

Staff Liaison Cates noted that the approved Findings would be forwarded to the Zoning Board of Appeals on January 20, 2011 for final determination.

B. Polystyrene Food Ware Recommendation Status Report

Chairman Bogot made a detailed presentation on the background of this Item, noting that Dart Container Company was evaluating possible means of providing polystyrene recycling in Highland Park. Bogot suggested that the Commission delay its recommendation to ban polystyrene until all possibilities for a pilot program were evaluated.

Councilman Mandel noted that he had recently met with the Executive Director of SWALCO and a Dart Container Company representative to discuss ways to facilitate polystyrene recycling in Highland Park. Mandel noted that Dart has expressed interest in establishing a stakeholders group to get other large manufacturers involved so that the initiative can gain traction.

The Commission discussed the success of the recent Recycling Extravaganza event organized by the City, Dart Container and SWALCO.

At 6:45 p.m., Commissioner Matthews entered the meeting room and joined the Natural Resources Commission meeting in progress.

Commissioner Himmelfarb volunteered to investigate opportunities for polystyrene recycling at Highland Park schools.

Chairman Bogot directed staff to develop a poster featuring polystyrene recycling information for display at the Rosewood and Millard Park kiosks and in the train stations.

C. Green Team Overview and Status Report

Commissioner Himmelfarb gave an overview on the background of this Item, explaining that the Green Team was established to work collaboratively with various local school green groups. Himmelfarb reported that two high school green groups are being combined due to overlap, an environmental education program that has been running for 3 years has been cancelled and the schools are showing a renewed effort to reduce energy use in the classroom.

D. Discussion of Potential Movie Titles for the 2011 Movie Series

Commissioner Dennison reported that the film *Tapped* is being screened at the Highland Park Library on February 13th at 2:00 p.m. and the event is being co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters.

Dennison noted that the next movie series screening is expected to be *Carbonnation*, and Dennison is again pursuing co-sponsorship from the League of Women Voters.

Commissioner Himmelfarb suggested screening the film *Lunch Line* in the future. Commissioners Hill and Naftzger volunteered to investigate other titles that may be available through the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. Commissioner Matthews

suggested collaborating with the Park District for a future screening, and Park District Representative Meyer noted that the Park District may be able to provide a venue for the screening. Mandel recommended pursuit of commercial sponsorship.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Potential Article Topics for the *Highlander*

Commissioners discussed potential article topics for future editions of the *Highlander* including those to: promote recycling and river cleanup events, encourage the use of tap water, advertise the success of the milk carton recycling program and publicize ravine restoration projects. Commissioner Matthews volunteered to write articles on tap water use and the river cleanup event scheduled in May. Chairman Bogot volunteered to write an article on phosphorus and lawn fertilizers.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioners Friedman and Dennison discussed reusable bag refund initiatives at Highland Park grocery stores.

At 7:35 p.m., Commissioner Dennison left the meeting in progress.

Commissioner Hill suggested inviting a speaker from Eco Promotional Products to the February meeting for an informational presentation.

Commissioner Sultan volunteered to educate the Commission on the City's ravine and beach regulations at the February meeting.

Chairman Bogot reported that he is working with teacher Howard Hill to find a new student representative.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Bogot adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara E. Cates, Secretary

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: Barbara E. Cates, Planner
Michael Bernardi, Assistant Civil Engineer

Date: February 2, 2011

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

NEW BUSINESS

A. Overview of City of Highland Park Steep Slope Regulations, Ravine-Bluff Maintenance Guidelines and Variation Application Evaluations

Commissioner Sultan will present information on this agenda item. Informational handouts related to the topics to be covered are attached for Commissioners' information.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Green Team Status Report

Commissioner Himmelfarb will present information on this agenda item.

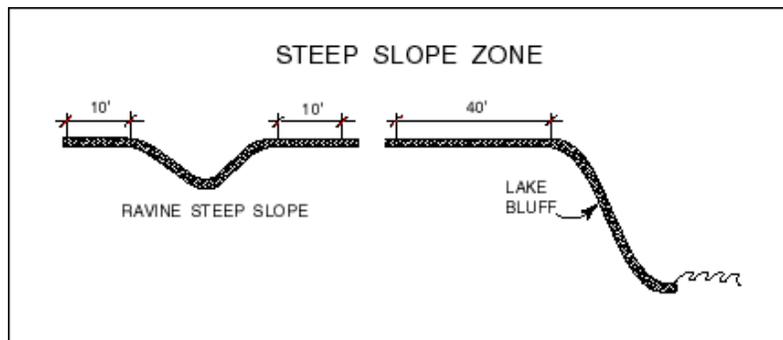
ATTACHMENTS

- Steep Slope Regulations and Maintenance Informational Handouts

City of Highland Park Beach, Ravine & Bluff Regulations

Section 150.703.1 of Article VII outlines protection regulations and standards pertaining to the construction of beach structures and other activities on lakefront properties within the “Lake Michigan Protection Zone.” The Lake Michigan Protection Zone consists of all land within Lake Michigan, and the private and other property located between Lake Michigan and the termination, on the Lake Michigan side, of the Steep Slope Zone. *Prior to the granting of a permit, all proposed beach structures and activities must be considered by the **Natural Resources Commission** and approved by the **City Council**.*

Article XIX of the Zoning Code restricts all building, demolition and tree removal activities within the “Steep Slope Zone” in order to protect the character of the City’s ravine-bluff ecosystem. The Steep Slope Zone is defined as all land which lies between the bottom of a ravine steep slope and a line being farthest from the bottom of a ravine steep slope and ten (10) feet from the top edge of a ravine steep slope; and all land which lies between the bottom of a bluff steep slope and a line being farthest from the bottom of a bluff steep slope and forty (40) feet from the top edge of a bluff steep slope.



The maintenance restrictions for the Steep Slope Zone are as follows:

- Except as set forth in Article XIX, no structures shall be constructed and no earth moving shall occur within the Steep Slope Zone
- Trees, tree stumps and invasive species shall not be removed from the Steep Slope Zone without necessary permits
- In-ground swimming pools must be setback an additional ten feet from the top of the Steep Slope Zone and discharge must be directed to the sanitary sewer
- Surface stormwater runoff must be conveyed to public storm sewers or to the ravine channel
- Debris jams (including those caused by decaying plant matter) that can harm natural vegetation or impede free flow of water must be continually removed
- Damage to steep slopes must be repaired immediately

The following structures and activities are allowed in the Steep Slope Zone, *provided all necessary permits have been obtained. Activities and structures other than those listed require a variation and must be reviewed by the **Natural Resources Commission** and approved by the **Zoning Board of Appeals**.*

- Retaining walls and other structures which are determined necessary for slope stabilization and meet the standards listed in Article XIX;
- Rebuilt and remodeled legal non-conforming structures, provided they do not extend beyond the previous footprint within the Steep Slope Zone, the applicant can provide proof of the location of the previous location of the structure, the applicant has been issued a building permit within one year after the date on which the structure was damaged or demolished and they meet the standards listed in Article XIX;
- Mechanical or electrical lifts, bridges, walkways, steps, landings, fences and/or utility service lines, provided they do not obstruct the flow of light and water, conform to the standards of Article XIX and have been approved by the Director;
- Immediate action may be taken to remediate an unstable or insecure slope which poses an imminent menace to an authorized structure or to the health, safety, or welfare of the public or nearby property, provided the Director has determined that an emergency situation exists and has issued a permit;
- Normal landscape maintenance or routine arboreal activities are permitted, provided such activities conform to the standards of vegetation or revegetation contained in Article XIX and all necessary permits have been issued;
- Decks and patios not exceeding 150 sq. ft. or a combined total of 300 sq. ft. may be installed between the top edge of ravine and the Steep Slope Zone setback, provided the necessary permits have been obtained.

This summary of regulations does not supersede the complete regulations listed in Articles VII or XIX. For a full explanation of the most recently updated standards and procedures pertaining to ravine and bluff development, please visit the following websites:

Article VII: <http://www.cityhpil.com/pdf/ordinances/article07.pdf>

Article XIX: <http://www.cityhpil.com/pdf/ordinances/article19.pdf>

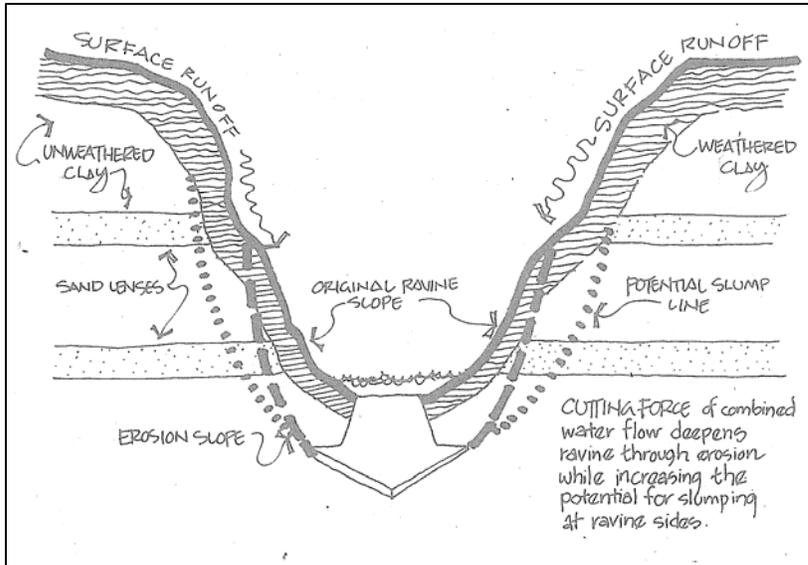
Zoning Board of Appeals Application: http://www.cityhpil.com/pdf/APPLICATION_000.pdf

Please contact the Department of Community Development at 847-432-0867 to discuss how these regulations pertain to proposed projects.

City of Highland Park Select Recommendations for Protecting Your Ravine-Bluff Property

Many of Highland Park's homes are situated on properties featuring ravine or bluff slopes. The ravine-bluff ecosystem is unique and picturesque, but it is also fragile and requires routine maintenance to ensure its longevity. Steep slopes are susceptible to erosion and slippage, particularly in periods of above-average rainfall.

What Causes Slope Disturbance?



During major storm events, an increased volume of water directly and indirectly travels over slopes at a high velocity. The higher rate of flow can accelerate slope erosion and over-saturate the soil which results in slumping—the sliding of soil and surface material which exposes unvegetated ground that is vulnerable to further erosion.

The easiest way to prevent the cycle of erosion is to routinely check drainage to ensure that it is properly functioning and adequate. Over-saturation of the soil is the single biggest catalyst of slope disturbance. Controlled burns and fluctuations in the water table **do not** cause slope failure.

What Can I Do to Protect My Property?

Because slopes are inherently unstable and erosive in a natural state, it is imperative that precautions are taken to eliminate factors which aggravate instability or exacerbate erosion. The tips in this handout are provided to help you protect your ravine-bluff property.

Before pursuing any of these recommendations, please consult the Department of Public Works at 847-432-0807 or the Department of Community Development at 847-432-0867 to discuss how these actions might apply to your individual property. **It is important to note that all land use and development on and around ravine and bluff slopes is regulated by Article XIX of the Zoning Code, available online at: <http://www.cityhpil.com/pdf/ordinances/article19.pdf>**

DO:

- ✓ Regularly inspect and maintain existing drainage
- ✓ Regularly inspect slopes and remove debris jams that may be blocking the ravine channel
- ✓ Regularly inspect swimming pools for possible leaks
- ✓ Identify, protect and reintroduce existing native species of trees, shrubs, grasses and flowering plants and remove non-native species
- ✓ Cover exposed soil on or near slopes with erosion control fabric and replant with native species as soon as possible
- ✓ Plant a vegetative buffer of native grasses along the top edge of slopes in place of turf grass

DO NOT:

- ✗ Locate lawn sprinklers next to slopes, use them when the ground is saturated or leave them on for long periods of time
- ✗ Deposit yard waste, landscape clippings or leaves on slopes or in storm sewers
- ✗ Drain pools near slopes or directly into ravines or bluffs
- ✗ Direct stormwater runoff to the top of slopes
- ✗ Locate impervious surfaces next to slopes
- ✗ Use heavy machinery near slopes
- ✗ Begin any project without first consulting the City and obtaining required permits

If I Observe Slope Disturbance on My Property, What Should I Do?

- ✓ Consult a trained professional and consider having soil borings done on your property to assess existing soil conditions and determine the potential for future slope movement
- ✓ Advise adjacent property owners to inspect their own slopes for disturbance
- ✓ Contact the Department of Public Works at 847-432-0807 to report abnormal channel erosion or slope conditions