

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, July 11, 2012 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, JULY 11, 2012
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: June 13, 2012

IV. Business from the Public

V. New Business

- A. 251 Cary Avenue-Consideration and Approval of Staff-Drafted Findings of Fact Recommending Zoning Board of Appeals Approval of a Steep Slope Variation to Maintain an Existing Outdoor Fireplace
- B. Discussion of Commission Participation at the Adopt-A-Beach Event on September 15, 2012

VI. Old Business

- A. Recap of July 4th Event
- B. Recap of June 16th Ravine Cleanup Event
- C. Status Report on the Green Team

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: June 13, 2012

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

CALL TO ORDER

At 6:33 p.m., Vice Chair Himmelfarb called the meeting to order and the Staff Liaison called the roll.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Compher, Dennison, Hill, Himmelfarb, Matthews and Sultan

Members Absent: Bogot, Naftzger and Beck

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

Staff Present: Staff Liaison Barbara Cates

Also Present: Councilman Mandel

MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting of the Natural Resources Commission— May 9, 2012

Commissioner Hill moved for approval of the presented minutes of the regular meeting of the Natural Resources Commission held on Wednesday, May 9, 2012. Commissioner Sultan seconded the motion.

On a voice vote, Vice Chair Himmelfarb declared that the motion passed 5-0-1, with Commissioner Compher abstaining due to absence at the May 9th meeting.

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

Don Miller of 281 Woodland Road noted that he was present on behalf of a large group of residents who signed a petition indicating that the interpretive center planned for Rosewood Beach by the Park District of Highland Park was a poor use of this particular piece of public land.

Aaron Wolff of 591 Broadview Lane discussed possibilities for the purchase of a residential property north of Rosewood Beach which is currently for sale and could satisfy area needs and provide additional parking.

Vice Chair Himmelfarb outlined the role of the Natural Resources Commission in the review process and noted that the City has not yet received an application for proposed improvements at Rosewood Beach.

Cal Bernstein of 491 Laurel Avenue noted that he was present for a separate matter but, as a Park District Board member, he wanted to report that a special task force workshop has been scheduled in the near future to further discuss opportunities for improvement of the Rosewood Beach site, and that no action is anticipated to take place at the workshop.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 251 Cary Avenue-Consideration of a Request for a Steep Slope Variation to Maintain an Existing Outdoor Fireplace

Staff Liaison Cates delivered a presentation outlining the applicant's request for the Commission's consideration of a variation to maintain an existing outdoor fireplace that was constructed in the Steep Slope Zone at 251 Cary Avenue without a permit. Cates noted that, with respect to the outdoor fireplace, relief was also needed from the side yard setback requirement. In addition, the applicant will be seeking relief from the side yard setback requirements so that a pergola constructed without a permit can also remain.

Cal Bernstein of 491 Laurel Avenue, the applicant's attorney, noted that the outdoor fireplace and pergola were mistakenly constructed without a permit; the applicant erroneously believed that because the new structures were replacing existing structures that had been demolished, a permit was not needed. The applicant, Susan Heller, noted that the improvements were constructed ahead of schedule in order to take advantage of unseasonably warm weather.

Commissioner Matthews noted that because the outdoor fireplace was constructed prior to the meeting discussion, the impact of the encroachment could be observed. Matthews observed that it did not appear that the existing vegetation, drainage pathways and topography had been significantly impacted by construction. Commissioner Sultan observed that the requested Steep Slope Zone encroachment is minor, and the structure appears to be sound.

Commissioners Hill and Sultan expressed concern over the prospect that the project's landscape architect and contractor had not been informed of the City's Steep Slope Ordinance. At the Commission's request, Staff Liaison Cates agreed to reach out to the project consultants to ensure that they received a copy of the Steep Slope Ordinance for review.

The Commission reviewed and discussed the outdoor fireplace encroachment in light of each of the standards listed in Section 150.1903(C).

Commissioner Sultan moved to direct staff to draft Findings of Fact recommending Zoning Board of Appeals approval of a Steep Slope variation to allow the outdoor fireplace to remain in its existing location and encroach a maximum distance of 3.5 ft. into the 10 ft. ravine Steep Slope Zone setback for a maximum distance of 5.6 ft. and a total square footage of approximately 20 sq. ft., on the condition that the applicant submit a landscape

plan detailing native vegetation to be installed behind the outdoor fireplace, which must then be approved by the City and implemented by the applicant. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hill.

On a voice vote, Vice Chair Himmelfarb declared that the motion passed 6-0.

Staff Liaison Cates explained that draft Findings of Fact will be brought to the Commission for consideration and approval at the regular July meeting. If the Commission votes to forward the Findings at that time, the matter will likely be heard at the July 19th Zoning Board of Appeals meeting.

B. Discussion of July 4th Event Planning

The Commission discussed the July 4th festivities and determined: the theme of this year's participation will be composting and electric vehicles, Councilman Mandel has arranged for 3 electric vehicles to participate in the parade, the Park District will assist with making promotional magnets for electric vehicles as necessary, Commissioners will walk alongside the vehicles in the parade and collect recyclables and promote the City's sustainability initiatives, Steve Meyer has arranged for a booth to be available for the Commission to display educational materials, Commissioners Matthews and Sultan will provide small scale educational models for display, Staff Liaison Cates will provide bags for recycling collection, available educational materials as needed to supplement leftovers from the previous year, and a composting bin and book to raffle, and GreenTown staff will be contacted to pitch in on the effort and provide promotional handouts. Staff Liaison Cates indicated that she will coordinate participation before the event.

C. Status Report on the Park District of Highland Park Ravine Cleanup Event on June 16, 2012

Park District Representative Meyer reminded the Commission that a ravine cleanup is scheduled to be held on June 16th, and the event will focus on cleanup and planting at Ravine Drive. Commissioner Sultan noted that the Commission is always eager for co-sponsorship opportunities with the Park District.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Status Report on the Recycling Task Force

Councilman Mandel noted that the Task Force is waiting for the City to hire a sustainability coordinator so that there is staff support to move forward.

B. Status Report on the Residential Composting Pilot Program

Councilman Mandel reported that a press release is scheduled to go out to the public shortly to announce the details of the program and promote a website with additional information.

C. Status Report on the Polystyrene Recycling Pilot Program

Councilman Mandel reported that the quarterly meeting will be held on June 14th, and a status report will be provided to the Commission at the next monthly meeting.

D. Status Report on the GreenTown Event on October 19, 2012

Councilman Mandel reported that the GreenTown advisory committee is working to promote GreenTown, and information on the event will be provided for the July 4th festivities.

E. Status Report on the Green Team

Vice Chair Himmelfarb noted that there is no new information to provide, and a status report will be provided to the Commission at the next monthly meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilman Mandel read a copy of a Resolution put together by SWALCO in support of municipal rights to require commercial plastic bag recycling receptacles and indicated his intent to bring a similar Resolution to the City Council for consideration and approval. The Commission expressed unanimous support for the item.

Staff Liaison Cates reported that the City Council approved an Ordinance to approve the beach structure permit for the proposed work at 25 Lakeview Terrace. The applicant is working with the City's Corporation Counsel to finalize a restrictive covenant and once it has been recorded, permits will be issued.

Staff Liaison Cates reported that the City Council is tentatively scheduled to consider a report regarding Central Business District recycling bin options at the July 23rd meeting. Commissioner Matthews indicated that he will try to attend the meeting on behalf of the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Himmelfarb adjourned the meeting at 8:25 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

Date: July 3, 2012

Re: Agenda Items for the July 11th Meeting of the Natural Resources Commission

NEW BUSINESS:

A. 251 Cary Avenue-Consideration and Approval of Staff-Drafted Findings of Fact Recommending Zoning Board of Appeals Approval of a Steep Slope Variation to Maintain an Existing Outdoor Fireplace

At the June meeting, the Commission considered a request for a Steep Slope Variation to allow an existing outdoor fireplace built within the Steep Slope Zone at 251 Cary Avenue to remain. The Commission voted (6-0) to direct staff to draft Findings of Fact recommending Zoning Board of Appeals approval of a Steep Slope variation to allow the outdoor fireplace to remain in its existing location on the condition that the applicant submit a landscape plan detailing native vegetation to be installed behind the outdoor fireplace, which must then be approved by the City and implemented by the applicant.

Staff-drafted Findings of Fact are attached for the consideration and once they are approved, the Findings will be forwarded to the Zoning Board of Appeals for final determination. Please note that the applicant is scheduled to appear before the Zoning Board of Appeals on July 19, 2012.

B. Discussion of Commission Participation at the Adopt-A-Beach Event on September 15, 2012

During the discussion of this year's budget goals, the Commission expressed an interest in participating in the Adopt-A-Beach event on September 15, 2012. The event is a series of coordinated beach and shoreline cleanups along Lake Michigan, which is organized by the Alliance for the Great Lakes. The Commission is being asked to discuss the desired level of participation in the event so arrangements can be made as necessary. For more information in advance of the meeting, please see: <http://www.greatlakes.org/adopt-a-beach/SAAB>

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Recap of July 4th Event

Chairman Bogot will provide information on this agenda item.

B. Recap of June 16th Ravine Cleanup Event

Vice Chair Himmelfarb will provide information on this agenda item.

C. Status Report on the Green Team

Vice Chair Himmelfarb will provide information on this agenda item.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Draft Findings of Fact Recommending Zoning Board of Appeals Approval of a Steep Slope Variation at 251 Cary Avenue

FINDINGS OF FACT

For the Natural Resources Commission on June 13, 2012

Findings of Fact in Support of Zoning Board of Appeals Approval of a Variation to Article XIX of the City of Highland Park Zoning Code of 1997 (as Amended) to Allow an Existing Outdoor Fireplace to Remain within the Steep Slope Zone at 251 Cary Avenue

Per Section 150.1912, the Natural Resources Commission made findings based upon the basic technical standards outlined in Section 150.1903(C):

Sec. 150.1903(C) Basic Technical Standards.

All land use and development controlled by this Article shall be judged by the application of the following basic standards of landscape planning, soil mechanics engineering, hydrology, geology, environmental design and architecture.

- (1) Planning development to recognize and fit the natural topography, soils, geology, hydrology and other existing conditions on the proposed sites.**

Finding: The Natural Resources Commission finds that the existing outdoor fireplace has been constructed in a manner which reflects the existing conditions of the site. The Commission finds that the encroachment is minimal and will not significantly impact the existing hydrology; as a condition of its recommendation, the Commission requests that the applicant is required to submit a landscape plan featuring native ravine plantings at the base of the outdoor fireplace which must be approved by the City and implemented by the applicant.

- (2) Orienting development so that earth moving, landscaping and other site preparation is kept to an absolute minimum.**

Finding: The Natural Resources Commission finds the outdoor fireplace has been constructed so as to minimally disrupt the adjacent Steep Slope Zone. The Commission finds that a patio and outdoor fireplace previously existed in the vicinity of the newly constructed outdoor fireplace, and that the former outdoor fireplace was replaced with a new outdoor fireplace featuring a footprint that minimally encroaches into the Steep Slope Zone.

- (3) Preserving and enhancing the landscape through minimized disruption of natural terrain and existing vegetation.**

Finding: The Natural Resources Commission finds the existing landscape has been minimally disrupted and preserved to the maximum extent possible. As a condition of its favorable recommendation, the Commission stipulates that the applicant should be required to submit a landscape plan featuring native ravine plantings at the base of the outdoor fireplace which must be approved by the City and implemented by the applicant.

- (4) Minimizing disruption or alteration of natural drainage ways.**

Finding: The Natural Resources Commission finds existing natural drainage ways have not been disrupted or altered and that the planting of native ravine plantings at the base of the outdoor fireplace will address any stormwater runoff from nearby impervious surfaces.

(5) Minimizing the time in which areas are bare and exposed.

Finding: The Natural Resources Commission finds that the outdoor fireplace was recently constructed within the Steep Slope Zone, and that the surrounding area was not disrupted or left bare and exposed following its installation.

(6) Minimizing the amount of impervious surface to be placed on the tableland adjacent to steep slopes.

Finding: The Natural Resources Commission finds that there was an existing patio and retaining wall near the Steep Slope Zone which remains relatively undisturbed, and that the new outdoor fireplace replaced an older outdoor fireplace which was located in the vicinity of the new structure. The Commission finds that native plantings planted at the base of the new structure will minimize stormwater runoff.

(7) Designing and properly locating structures so that structure weight does not jeopardize slope stability.

Finding: The Natural Resources Commission finds that the new outdoor fireplace replaced a pre-existing outdoor fireplace that was similar in size. The Commission finds that the structure has been located in a manner which does not jeopardize slope stability.

CONCLUSION

Based on the forgoing, the Natural Resources Commission concludes that the variation requested at 251 Cary Avenue is consistent with the Steep Slope Ordinance standards and recommends Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the variation *on the condition that the applicant submits a landscape plan detailing native ravine plantings to be installed at the base of the outdoor fireplace, which landscape plan must be approved by the City and installed by the applicant following the approval of the requested variation.*