

ROLL CALL:

Members Present - Robert Amadon, Chairperson
Danielle Bagley
Barbara Lipiew
Thomas Mudd, Jr.
Ryan Taylor
Ben Szablewski
Councilmember Scott Robertson

Absent - Evelyn Hicks

Associate Members present: Brittany Hernon and Leane Schultz

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Chairperson Amadon introduced new commission members Barbara Lipiew and Ben Szablewski.

MINUTES APPROVAL

Mr. Mudd stated his name is legally Thomas Mudd, Jr., and requested the minutes be amended to reflect this. Chairperson Amadon noted the correction.

Motion by Mr. Mudd, seconded by Mr. Taylor, to approve the Meeting Minutes of February 5, 2024.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Motion Carried

FARMER PIRATES COMPOSTING EVENTS

Deputy Supervisor Amelia Greenan shared handouts for the Farmer Pirate composting program. The town is funding a pilot program for 120 residents to participate for a year at no cost. Current enrollment is at approximately 103 participants. There are two upcoming informational event at the Senior Center and the Recreation Department on March 28th and April 22nd respectively.

Chairperson Amadon invited Environmental Commission members to attend the events with him. Ms. Schultz stated she will attend the Senior Center event and Mr. Szablewski will attend the Earth Day event. Ms. Bagley questioned if the commission could hand out the free compost bins for kitchen counter tops provided by Erie County at the events. Deputy Supervisor Greenan stated that would be a good idea and suggested the bins be made available at the Environmental Commission's table at the Farmers Market, also.

TREE SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr. Mudd referred to the attached meeting minutes from February 26, 2024, and summarized them. The Tree Sub-committee requested a motion to update the approved Street Tree List for the Town of West Seneca with the attached listed tree species noting Town Code §103-19.1.A and §110-13.D are affected by this change. Chairperson Amadon stated he would like to amend the motion to also include updating the Highway Department's webpage on the town's website.

Ms. Shultz questioned if the trees are being added to the current list. Chairperson Amadon stated the new list will replace the current list. A commission member commented on the new list and Mr. Mudd stated the Crimson King Maple is a Norway Maple which is a non-native species; it holds its leaves longer than native trees in the

Fall and causes an extra burden during leaf collection. The Japanese Lilac tree is very close to being considered an invasive species in New York. The Red Sunset Maple is a variety of Red Maple and Red Maple is included on the list. Ms. Lipiew questioned if the tree sub-committee came across the Katsura tree and stated this tree was an option offered in 2016 when her street was rebuilt. Mr. Mudd stated Katsura trees are not on the current list. A member questioned the Linden tree. Mr. Mudd stated the Tree Sub-committee's intention was to add to the current list to diversify it and not replace it. Currently the town is over-planted with Maple trees. A concern with the commission members have is a future insect infestation targeting Maple trees. Ms. Hernon mentioned a previous suggestion from a committee member limiting the number of the same trees that can be planted in one location to mitigate future losses.

Councilmember Robertson questioned what entity determines the tree selection in neighborhoods. Ms. Lipiew indicated homeowners received a list to choose from during the road reconstruction. Councilmember Robertson does not recall a selection of trees offered, simply the choice to have a tree or not, and commented all the trees look the same in his neighborhood. Mr. Mudd stated it is hard to diversify with only six trees on the list.

Chairperson Amadon questioned if the proposed list of trees contained any invasive species. Mr. Mudd stated he would consider the Japanese Tree Lilac to be an invasive species.

Motion by Chairperson Amadon, seconded by Ms. Bagley, to update the approved replacement Street Tree List for the Town of West Seneca, to update the list on the Highway Department's webpage of the town's website, to remove Japanese Tree Lilac, and add the attached listed tree species, and noting that Town Codes §103-19.1.A and §110-13.D are affected by this change and should be updated to reference and link to the Highway Departments list.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

Chairperson Amadon stated he will forward a letter with these recommendations to the Town Board.

CAWTILE RESOLUTION

Chairperson Amadon stated the Town Board requested the Environmental Commission provide feedback on the request of CAWTILE, Citizens Against Wind Turbines In Lake Erie, to pass a resolution opposing wind turbines in Lake Erie.

Councilmember Robertson stated Ms. Meckes, of CAWTILE, attended a recent Town Board meeting to bring awareness of the environmental impacts of windturbines on drinking water, wildlife, economy, and general quality of life in Western New York. While the Environmental Commission cannot act on issues not directly impacting the town, the Town Board requests any feedback that can be provided. Councilmember Robertson has prepared a resolution for the Town Board to consider and stated the wind turbines would affect anyone that enjoys activities in and around Lake Erie and is also concerned with their long term maintenance.

Mr. Mudd stated the wind turbines do negatively impact bird migrations that move through the Town of West Seneca and hundreds of thousands are killed by them every year.

Chairperson Amadon stated Ms. Hicks advised him that the West Seneca Environmental Commission typically receives an opinion from the Erie County Environmental Council regarding large issues such as the wind turbines. Ms. Schultz attends the meetings and stated this issue has not been mentioned.

Councilmember Robertson stated he did not realize the amount of fluid and residue the wind turbines discharge into the water, and the disturbance to the lake bed during installation.

Chairperson Amadon noted the proposed bill does not reference the feasibility study. Mr. Mudd stated the person pushing for more power (from wind turbines) is not from this area. Chairperson Amadon stated a wind turbine project near Long Island came online today.

ISSUES OF THE PUBLIC

No comments were received.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Mudd, seconded by Mr. Taylor, to adjourn the business portion of the meeting at 7:10 P.M.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Motion Carried

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Chairperson Amadon presented the attached chart which includes the Environmental Commission's mission statement followed by environmental issues facing the town as listed. Ms Bagley and Councilmember Robertson stated they liked the format and details. Ms. Lipiew stated the list provides the commission something to work toward.

Chairperson Amadon pointed out the priority ranking of the categories he included on the chart and explained he ranked the ongoing projects as high. Councilmember Robertson stated he is working with Highway Superintendent Adams to get the storm drain medallions ordered.

Chairperson Amadon questioned Councilmember Robertson on the status of the tree grant. Councilmember Robertson will investigate the status provide an update. Chairperson Amadaon stated the commission will be supporting the grant activities. Mr. Mudd stated the Tree Sub-committee had the following questions related to the grant:

- Where does the town get the trees from
- Who do we use for the grant
- What is needed from the Sub-committee

Chairperson Amadon stated the town needs to conduct a request for proposals from arborists for the tree inventory. The town will need to have a kick off meeting and the Tree Sub-committee will support this. Councilmember Roberston stated he will find out the answers to the Environmental Committee's questions. Chairperson Amadaon stated the timeframe for completion of work related to the grant is two years.

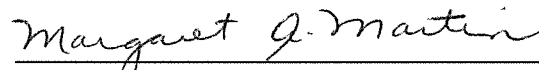
Chairperson Amadon stated deer overpopulation is still a big concern to residents. Ms. Herson advised the Deer Task Force is no longer in existence and Dr. Robin Foster from Canisius College is awaiting communication about from the Environmental Commission about the details of the follow up survey called for in the Deer Management Plan. Mr. Mudd questioned if the the town has a plan to use lethal means to control the population. Councilmember Robertson stated it is a consideration and noted it will be a very involved process. Ms. Herson stated the Town of Cheektowaga has held culls at Stiglemeier Park. The commission members were in agreement that there is a deer overpopulation problem in the town. Ms. Herson reiterated that Dr. Foster has the follow-up survey prepared and is awaiting the town's direction to procede. The question was raised if the Environmental Commission has a budget to cover mailing the survey. Other suggestions for distributing the survey included

Facebook, the town's website, and the West Seneca Bee. Ms. Herson stated the goal of the follow-up survey is making it accessible to everyone. Ms. Martin, former Secretary to the Deer Task Force, encouraged the commission members to visit the Deer Task Force webpage on the town's website to review the information that was gathered.

The commission members discussed the challenges of members leaving and being added and Mr. Mudd suggested a shared folder be created for the commission. Chairperson Amadon stated he agrees and suggested using Google Docs.

Chairperson Amadon referred to pesticide and herbicide and mentioned the Cornell Cooperative Extension provides gnome lawn signs for those property owners that do not use chemicals on their lawns. Ms. Schultz stated Erie County has previously made the gnome signs available at the library.

Chairperson Amadon thanked the commission members for their participation and input on the long term plan.



Margaret A. Martin

Deputy Town Clerk/Secretary to the Environmental Commission

2/26/24

PRESENT: Danielle Bagley, Thomas Mudd, Ryan Taylor

Meeting came to order at 6:30 PM

The committee had a presentation by Dr. Kathleen Contrino regarding the importance of native trees in our community. Dr. Contrino holds the following degrees: AA in Criminal Justice from NCCC, BS in Criminal Justice from Northeastern University, MS in Criminal Justice from Northeastern University, JD from SUNY Buffalo, PhD in Sociology from SUNY Buffalo. She is an Associate Professor in Sociology, Criminal Justice, and Environmental Studies at Canisius College. She is the owner/operator of CW Native Plant Farm and CW Native Botanika in Akron, NY. We thank her for her time and appreciate having someone to ask questions to and receive advice from.

The Tree Subcommittee would like to offer their recommendation to the Town of West Seneca to include the following species of trees to be added to the list of approved trees that residents may plant on town easements/right of ways, that developers can choose from, and to be included in Town Parks as necessary. The development of this list is from our time spent with Dr. Contrino, and a review of the NYC Parks approved street tree list, and the City of Buffalo approved street tree list. Please see attached list.

We are asking for a motion to update the approved Street Tree List for the Town of West Seneca with the listed tree species. This would affect the following town codes: 103-19.1 sec. A, 110-13 sec. D.

We discussed a trash clean up and tree planting event at Ridge and Seneca. We would like to plant the following natives in this area:

Swamp White Oak, Black Willow, Birch spp., Black Cherry

In regards to the Tree Inventory Grant we have the following questions:

Where does the town get the trees from?

Who do we use for the grant?

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONS TO THE TOWN OF WEST SENECA STREET TREE LIST

Small Trees (<30)

<u>Scientific Names</u>	<u>Common Name</u>
<i>Amelanchier arborea</i>	Common Serviceberry
<i>Amelanchier laevis</i>	Allegheny Serviceberry
<i>Alnus alnobetula</i>	Green Alder
<i>Alnus incana</i>	Speckled Alder
<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>	Black Chokeberry
<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>	American Hornbeam
<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Eastern Redbud
<i>Crataegus spp.</i>	Hawthorn
<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	Crabapple
<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Chokecherry

Large Trees (>30)

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>
<i>Acer x freemanii</i>	Freeman Maple
<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Red Maple
<i>Acer saccharum</i>	Sugar Maple
<i>Betula alleghaniensis</i>	Yellow Birch
<i>Betula lenta</i>	Black Birch
<i>Betula nigra</i>	River Birch
<i>Betula papyrifera</i>	Canoe (White, Paper) Birch
<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	Northern Hackberry
<i>Gymnocladus dioicus</i>	Kentucky Coffee
<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Tulip Poplar Tree
<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>	American Hop-Hornbeam
<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Black Cherry
<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	Swamp White Oak
<i>Quercus coccinea</i>	Scarlet Oak
<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	Bur Oak
<i>Quercus palustris</i>	Pin Oak
<i>Quercus prinus</i>	Chestnut Oak
<i>Quercus velutina</i>	Black Oak
<i>Salix nigra</i>	Black Willow
<i>Tilia americana</i>	American Basswood

WEST SENECA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to protect and improve the environment as a valuable resource and asset for the people and the Town of West Seneca. We strive to advise the Town Board and make recommendations that will promote a clean, healthy, and well protected environment supporting a sustainable society and economy. The committee shall also provide community outreach and education to achieve these goals.

Environmental Issues for current action and long term planning purposes for the West Seneca Environmental Commission (WSEC)					
Category Sub-categories	Priority: 1 = High 2 = Medium 3 = Low	Details	Actions	Team Members	Status / Comments
Water Quality					
Buffalo Niagara River - keeper	1		Assisting with National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant for implementation of flood control methods along the Buffalo Creek.	Evelyn Hicks	
Storm Water Coalition					
Pesticide / Herbicide Use					
New subdivisions impact on Sanitary Sewers					

Storm Drain Medallions	1	Was a past major project for WSEC. A recent study (sampling) determined about 46% are now missing from where placed.	1. Purchase replacement medallions. Determine how and when to replace. 2. Idea: What can be done to have developers install these on storm drains in new developments? Update town codes for new subdivisions?		
Trees					
Tree Inventory Grant	1	Grant awarded to the town in Dec. 2023.	WSEC to partner with the town for grant activities through public outreach and education during grant implementation.	Tree Subcommittee	
Urban Forestry Management	1	Subsequent to completion of tree inventory above	See above.	Tree Subcommittee	
Tree City USA		Is this something the town board would support?			
Invasive Species					
Approved Tree List	1		1. Tree Subcommittee has a proposed tree list.	Tree Subcommittee	Links to tree inventory grant, future grant opportunities.
Green-Space					
Town Parks					
Buffer Zones for Subdivisions					

Growth / Zoning Impacts							
Community Gardens	1			Agenda topic for 4/15/24 WSEC mtg. Town resident input.			
Hiking trails							
Bike Paths	?		GObike and West Seneca Bikes	Interface with these organizations to identify priorities for WSEC.	Danielle Bagley		
Road Traffic							
Bike Lanes	1		GObike and West Seneca Bikes	Interface with these organizations to identify priorities for WSEC.	Danielle Bagley		Letter was sent to West Seneca Town Board in April 2023. Need status.
Pedestrian Walkways							
Growth / Zoning Impacts							
Wildlife Concerns							
Deer Overpopulation	1		Deer Task Force / Survey	West Seneca Deer Management Plan			
Coyote Overpopulation							
Growth / Zoning Impacts							
Recycling							
Hazardous Waste							
Electronics Waste							

Composting	1	1. Farmer Pirates (Farmers Market) 2. NEST (Northeast South Towns) Solid Waste Management Board	1. Attending events in March and April 2024 to support the events and inform the public about the WSEC. 2. Attend NEST meetings and bring back information to the WSEC.	1. Bob Amadon, and others? 2. Barb Lipiew	
Climate Change Impact					
Water Quality					
Forest / Trees					
Impacts from Extreme Weather Events					
Climate Smart Community	?	Refer to what East Aurora and Lancaster have done on this.			
Air Quality					
Traffic congestion					
Industrial Pollution					
Pesticide / Herbicide Use					
Noise Pollution					
Highway Traffic					
Industrial Sources					
Noise Ordinances					
Other					

Survey Town Residents (voice of the customer)						
Rank and summarize Environmental issues important to them						
Effectiveness of the town's environmental policies						