

WEST SENECA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION (WSEC)
ANNUAL REPORT 2020

MEMBERSHIP:

Evelyn Hicks, Chair (EH), Rick Rutkowski, Vice-Chair (RR), Mike Wass (MW), Lauren Masset (LM), Emily Baker (EB), Tracy Skalski, Andrew Beehler, Youth Member (AB)
Karl Spencer (KS), Camie Jarrell (CJ) Town Council Liaison: William (Bill) Hanley (BH)

* Note that Karl Spencer resigned from the Commission in 2020, Cynnie Gaasch was appointed to complete Karl's unexpired term.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

1. Meeting Minutes from 2020 are posted on the Town's web site.
2. Financial Report – 2020 WSEC Working Budget
 - a. Town Budget: \$1500.00
 - b. Funds held in Escrow for the Environmental Commission:
 - i. National Fish and Wildlife Federation (NFWF) - \$2,710.76
 - ii. US Fish & Wildlife Service - \$29,000.00
 - iii. National Grid Mitigation Fund - \$61,000.00

WSEC PROJECTS - UPDATES/DISCUSSION

1. Oxbow (2805 Clinton St.)
2. Standing Subcommittee reports:
 - a. Tree Issues Subcommittee
 - b. Creek Awareness Subcommittee:
 - i. The Commission had scheduled and prepared an in-person presentation for the Creek Awareness & Safety program. Two dates were reserved as we anticipated a large turnout. The programs were scheduled for 04/02/2020 and 04/14/2020 at the West Seneca Community Room. Unfortunately this event had to be cancelled due to the pandemic.
 - c. Know your Backyard video presentation and talk with Margaret Wooster and Evelyn Hicks at the West Seneca Community Room.
 - d. Education Subcommittee:
 - i. TS set up our Facebook page and also made a page for Birds of West Seneca. She also created an Environmental Corner for the Town's Website.
3. Water Quality Issues (WQI) Subcommittee:
 - a. Residential Rain Barrels – one Rain Barrel was installed
 - b. Municipal Rain Barrels – one Rain Barrel was installed at the BNAC
 - c. Storm Drain Medallions – 177 Storm Drain Medallions were placed on 44 streets in West Seneca.
 - d. 2019 WQI Accomplishments RR to sent the Annual Water Quality Report to the Town Board so that activities can be included on the Town's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Annual Report for 2020.

TOWN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

945 Center Rd – (proposed construction of 32 residential units by Young Development) - Environmental Commission was asked to assist the Town in establishing a resolution to the situation at 945 Center Road where the fully-treed lot was illegally cleared of trees and brush without a permit to do so.

Several meetings ensued and the Environmental Commission evaluated the information prepared by the environmental consultant and developed a remediation plan which was presented to the Town Board for further handling by the WS court system.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

WSEC worked with Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper on securing a National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Grant titled: National Coastal Resilience Fund 2020. This grant opportunity seeks to mitigate the effects of high-water events and ice-jam flooding along the Buffalo Creek in West Seneca between Union Road and Harlem Road.

OTHER

The Commission participated in the GoBike Initiative which seeks to include multi-modal transportation lanes and trails through the Town. We evaluated the Clinton Street reconstruction project and sent a letter to the Town Board with the fact sheet prepared by TS. The letter requests the Town Board to: support our position that bike lanes be incorporated into the project, and create a committee to develop a "Bike Master Plan" for the Town.