



1200 Wilmette Avenue
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091-0040

**MEETING MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY COMMISSION**

**THURSDAY, June 10, 2021
6:30 P.M.**

**VILLAGE HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS – REMOTE MEETING
(VILLAGE HALL CLOSED DUE TO THE VILLAGE PRESIDENT’S DELCARATION OF
LOCAL DISASTER AND PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ORDER)**

Members Present: Julie Wolf, Chair
William Muno
Joel Feinstein
Arthur Haut
Ken Parkhill
Bruce Davidson

Members Absent: Amanda Ault
April Cesaretti

Staff Present: John Adler, Director of Community Development
Kate McManus, Planner III
Alex Arteaga, Management Analyst

Guests: Linda Kurtz, Go Green Wilmette
Karen Glennemeier

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wolf called the meeting to order at 6:48 P.M.

Mr. Arteaga provided a roll call vote to take Commissioner attendance,
Commissioners Wolf, Feinstein, Muno, Davidson, Haut, and Parkhill were in attendance.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Wolf directed the Commission’s attention to the draft minutes of the Environmental and
Energy Commission meeting of March 3, 2021.

Chair Wolf called for a motion to approve the minutes, Commissioner Muno motioned to approve the minutes, Commissioner Feinstein seconded the motion, and Mr. Arteaga called a roll call vote on the approval of the minutes. All Commissioners in attendance voted in favor of approving the minutes, and the March 3, 2021 minutes were approved as drafted.

III. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Wolf mentioned that she did not have many items to discuss, but rather questions for the Village staff present. Chair Wolf inquired about the Village Board's Land Use Committee, and whether or not they were pursuing any work on updating the Village's Tree Preservation Ordinance. Mr. Arteaga and Mr. Adler responded that the Committee will be further examining the issue, after a June 27 Land Use Committee meeting dedicated to recreational cannabis, the Committee will start to meet regarding tree preservation. Chair Wolf thanked staff for the information and mentioned that she's looking to make the EEC be of use as needed for any other Village Boards, Commissions, or Committees.

IV. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Arteaga briefed Commissioners on the latest version of the Draft Sustainability Plan that was included in the meeting packet, mentioning that the Commission would need to meet again to take a final vote on recommending the Draft Sustainability Plan for adoption by the Village Board, due to various chapter reference lists needing to be updated or removed.

Mr. Adler updated the Commission the Village's Comprehensive Plan, noting that a consultant has been selected to draft the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Adler added that staff liaisons for the EEC and Chair Wolf were a part of the interview group, and that the plan will address issues that relate to sustainability and environmental matters. Mr. Adler informed Commissioners that the EEC will be involved in the planning process as needed and he will update the Commission accordingly. Commissioner Muno asked for Mr. Adler to provide additional information as to what the consultant will be required to do. Mr. Adler responded that the consultant will be crucial in helping with public outreach and addressing certain items that the Village's previous Comprehensive Plan did not address entirely like diversity, sustainability, housing, and various neighborhood commercial districts. Commissioner Muno added that the Comprehensive Plan seems to be rather broad and that he hopes the consultants will be able to reference the EEC's Draft Sustainability Plan as needed when it comes to sustainability issues in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Adler concurred saying that the consultants have been provided a copy of the most recent Draft Sustainability Plan and are aware of the framework that the EEC is working within. Chair Wolf added that as a participant on the consultant interviews, she saw how intertwined certain issues are and added that she's confident that the Comprehensive Plan consultant will adequately address all Village needs and lean on the EEC for further information and guidance as needed.

V. SUSTAINABILITY PLAN UPDATE

Chair Wolf discussed the final updates that need to be made to the Draft Sustainability Plan, mentioning that she still needed to revise the references section in chapter five.

Mr. Arteaga added that in the chapter finalization guidelines that were emailed to Commissioners, they did mention that a few, general references would be permissible if the chapter author felt them to be relevant. Mr. Arteaga instructed Commissioners that he would email them as necessary to make any final updates to reference sections throughout the Draft Sustainability Plan. Commissioner Muno added that while working on chapters nine and ten, he left a few references listed because they were general and would be of support for the chapter in its entirety, Mr. Arteaga agreed noting that he sees the value of incorporating those references if the chapter author found them to be helpful. Commissioner Haut added that the references section of chapter nine are able to be embedded within the chapter easily as footnotes.

Chair Wolf then discussed the several portions of the Draft Sustainability Plan that were still awaiting an update. Chair Wolf suggested modifying Section 3.4.2 to reflect the emissions goals that were outlined in chapter one. Commissioner Davidson added that when he was reading through the most recent Draft Sustainability Plan, he noticed a number of common recommendations that were outlined in each chapter, Commissioner Davidson suggested removing these repeated recommendations from each chapter and instead incorporating a broad recommendations section that would be added to the beginning of the Draft Sustainability Plan. Commissioner Muno added that in the GRC2 framework, each chapter is relatively free standing in its goals, so the incorporation of repeated goals and recommendations was done to stay in line with GRC2 framework.

Chair Wolf then discussed section 2.4.3, noting that any updates made to the Village's Tree Preservation Ordinance following review by the Village Board Land Use Committee will be incorporated into the Draft Sustainability Plan. As for section 3.4.1, Chair Wolf added that dates are in need of updating before finalizing the plan, and that these repeated general recommendations would serve as great initial tasks for any sustainability roles that the Village may have. Chair Wolf then added that she thinks the most recent version of the Draft Sustainability Plan reads in a more single tone, and that she's pleased with the continued updates Commissioners have provided. Commissioner Feinstein inquired as to where the Draft Sustainability Plan mentions residential fire pits, noting that they had previously discussed the topic at length, including public comment. Mr. Arteaga pointed out that residential fire permits were previously mentioned in chapter one of the Draft Sustainability Plan and that its possible the item was removed following Commissioner Davidson's updates to chapter one. Chair Wolf noted that section 1.3.2.1 does include a reference to residents effects on air pollution, so a mention of residential fire pits could be slotted into this section as appropriate. Commissioner Feinstein asked if previous language pertaining to fire pits could be used, Mr. Arteaga noted that an earlier version of the Draft Sustainability Plan did include language pertaining to residential fire pits and could be copy and pasted into the most recent version. Mr. Adler clarified that the language would need to include a review of current practices, because fire pits are a topic that would receive plenty of public feedback. Next, Chair Wolf briefed the Commission on the Village's increased enforcement of the gas-powered leaf blower ban, Mr. Adler concurred, adding that the Village is issuing more citation this year than in years past and Village staff have already started to received positive comments regarding additional enforcement. Mr. Adler explained that enforcement procedures would be reviewed and modified as necessary at the end of the leaf blower ban

season. Commissioner Davidson revisited the issue of residential fire permits, adding that the issue would definitely require plenty of public feedback and consultation. Chair Wolf then moved to Chapter nine, noting that more information could be added to the chapter regarding the several composting programs that are available to Wilmette residents. Commissioner Munro added that WGN recently featured a story regarding composting programs offered to Chicago residents, Chair Wolf added that the services are similar to that of Collective Resource Composting, a women-owned business located in Evanston. Mr. Arteaga added that he has previously been in contact with Collective Resource Composting and would support the inclusion of further information on composting programs as part of chapter nine.

Chair Wolf then asked staff if there were any updates regarding Community Solar programs, Mr. Arteaga responded that depending on the research being conducted by the renewable energy working group, the EEC can determine how they want to approach involvement in such a program following research. Commissioner Davidson added that he has been in contact with representatives of Clearway Energy who is involved in the North Shore Collective Community Solar program, and that the program is currently struggling with low user registration.

Next, Chair Wolf discussed the Village's public meeting policy regarding in-person and remote meetings, noting that all Village meetings would return to in-person meetings starting on Friday, June 11. Commissioner Haut inquired about the strictness of this policy, if in-person meetings are mandatory or if the decision can be made by the Chair of the Commission. Mr. Adler added that the policy is strict, and that meetings will need to be conducted in-person starting June 11, Mr. Adler also noted that once the State of Illinois disaster declaration expires, he does not believe remote meetings will be permissible under the Open Meetings Act. Chair Wolf asked about masking policies for future meetings, Mr. Adler responded that for unvaccinated individuals, masks will be required, for vaccinated individuals, masks are optional.

Next, Commissioner Davison addressed section 4.4.1-16 in the Land chapter of the Draft Sustainability Plan, adding that he thinks the current language of "neat and orderly" could be misconstrued since some native plantings are harder to keep in order compared to a traditional grass lawn. Last, Commissioner Davidson added that the purchasing and utilization of Renewable Energy Credits (REC's) is rather complex to understand, as such, the renewable energy working group needs to conduct further research into the topic in order to determine if REC's are truly beneficial. As it stands now, Commissioner Davison doesn't believe that the purchasing of Renewable Energy Credits is beneficial since it doesn't actively lead the Village of Wilmette to decrease its total emissions.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Arteaga noted that no public comments had been received at publiccomment@wilmette.com and no public comments were provided through YouTube Live.

Linda Kurtz thanked the Commission for their ongoing work and informed the Commission of an upcoming Go Green Wilmette webinar regarding various composting programs available to Wilmette residents and the benefit of composting in general, Ms. Kurtz added that the webinar would include testimonials from two residents who are currently composting and a testimonial from the owner of Collective Resource Composting in Evanston. Ms. Kurtz added that the Commission should consider reviewing refuse and recycling programs and associated charges to residents, noting that the current pricing system doesn't incentivize residents to produce less waste.

Karen Glennemeier also thanked the Commission for their ongoing work on the Draft Sustainability Plan and mentioned that she hopes the Commission will meet again soon to conduct its final vote on the plan. Ms. Glennemeier then discussed the previous conversation pertaining to Commissioner Davidson's findings on Renewable Energy Credits (REC's). Ms. Glennemeier added that the Commission should look to require REC's that exceed state mandates, Commissioner Muno added that the topic will continue to be examined by the renewable energy working group, and that Commissioner Davidson's previous comments regarding REC's will not be ignored.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Muno moved to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Parkhill seconded the motion. Mr. Arteaga provided a roll call on the motion to adjourn the meeting, all Commissioners present voted in favor of adjourning the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alex Arteaga
Management Analyst, Village Manager's Office