

# Village of Fox Point Tree Commission

Minutes of October 13, 2022

A meeting of the Village of Fox Point Tree Commission was held at the Fox Point Village Hall on Thursday, October 13, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.

## 1. Roll Call

**Present:** Trustee Eric Fonstad (Chair), Kim Caviggiola, Jonathan Knopp, Louise Petering (arriving at 4:40 p.m.), and Ramsey Radakovich

**Absent:** None

**Ex Officio:** John Gall, Village Forester

Mr. Fonstad welcomed Kim Caviggiola as the newest member of the Commission.

The meeting notice was mailed to the *North Shore Now* and to all others as required by the State open meeting laws, and posted on the Village website and bulletin boards.

A quorum being present, Mr. Fonstad called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**Persons Desiring to be Heard:** Jill Macek, 7870 N Mohawk Rd., Fox Point, joined the meeting at 4:20 p.m. and asked the Commission to consider how the Village regulates pesticides.

## 2. Approval of Minutes.

Following discussion, the minutes of the June 7, 2022, meeting were approved.

## 3. Old Business.

### a. No Mow May Going Forward

The Commission discussed the Village's first experience with observing No Mow May. No changes to ordinance were suggested. It was requested that Forester Gall ask Village staff to post information about No Mow May on the Village website. Forester Gall reported that he spoke to DPW staff about including Village property in the observance of No Mow May and was told that staff intends to hold off mowing as much as possible but that they do not want to fall behind to the point that it becomes difficult to mow. DPW staff will use their discretion in determining when to begin mowing Village property.

### b. Indian Creek Woods Update Picnic and Woods Tour

Forester Gall reported that the Indian Creek Woods tour was not widely publicized and only a handful of people participated. The Fox Point Foundation and the Indian Creek Woods Stewardship Group will be encouraged to hold this event again and to publicize it more.

### **c. Further Discussion on Revising Clearcut Ordinance**

Forester Gall reviewed the history of the Village's clearcut ordinance and noted challenges in enforcing the ordinance as written. He said that in the twelve years he has been the Village's forester he has dealt with only two or three incidents of alleged clearcutting. He recommends that the ordinance be clarified so that it better serves the purpose of protecting high value trees in the Village. He also recommended that residents who propose removing trees be required to present plans for replanting trees and to get permission from the Village Forester.

The Commission members reviewed sample ordinances from Mukwonago and Fontana-on-Geneva Lake and discussed features that could be added to the Village's ordinance. The ordinance should not be triggered by the removal of diseased, damaged, or invasive trees but there should be a mechanism for determining when a tree is diseased, damaged, or invasive. The ordinance should encourage the protection of large, high-value trees that form the Village's tree canopy.

The Village's tree canopy is rated very high compared to the rest of the state. The canopy helps manage stormwater runoff and is much valued by Village residents. The sample clearcut ordinances reviewed by the Commission contain good "Purpose" language which could be added to the Village's ordinance. The Commission asked Forester Gall to work with the Village Attorney to revise the ordinance for further review by the Tree Commission.

### **d. Update on Review of Village Landscape Screening Existing Ordinances**

The Forester noted that properties in the Village that are zoned Business or Institutional are required by ordinance to present screening plans whenever they make changes. These plans are reviewed by staff and are further subject to review by the Building Board, Plan Commission, and Village Board.

Screening on residential properties fall under fence and wall ordinances and is subject to setback and height rules. The members of the Commission discussed the importance of restricting vegetation at corners of intersections so drivers, bicyclists, motorcyclists, runners, and walkers have a clear view of oncoming traffic.

No ordinance changes were suggested.

## **4. New Business**

### **a. Forester's Activities Report for 2022**

Forester Gall reported that 100 new trees will be planted in the spring. Seventy stumps will be ground this fall. The Village has 8,500 public trees with a value of about \$16 million. There are 828 ash trees, 1,000 Norway maples, and 290 sugar maples remaining on Village property.

### **b. Updated Forestry Webpage**

The members of the Commission complimented the Forester on the updated forestry page on the Village website and suggested that information about No Mow May and links to selected Village "tree" ordinances be added.

### **c. Steps to Become a Bee City**

Eric Fonstad summarized the requirements for becoming a Bee City and noted that the Village could easily comply with most of the requirements except for the requirement of amending the Comprehensive Plan.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission that the Village should embrace the ideals represented by Bee City but not formally apply to become a Bee City at this time.

**d. Yard Waste/Brush Generated by Private Contractors**

It was noted that, upon the recommendations of the Tree Commission, Village ordinances were amended in late 2018 to provide Village staff with the tools they need to charge residents for extra costs incurred by the Village because of excess amounts of brush left by the side of the road by private contractors. Forester Gall reported that he has received no reports of problems with this issue since the ordinances were changed.

**e. Marketing the Tree Commission Mission**

The members of the Commission discussed possible ways to provide residents with information about the work of the Tree Commission. Forester Gall asked the members of the Tree Commission to send their ideas to him.

**5. Any other matters that may come before the Tree Commission (informational only – no action taken).**

None

The next meeting of the Commission was scheduled for February 2, 2023, at Village Hall beginning at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.