

Village of Hamburg Environmental Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday, March 14, 2023
Hamburg Village Hall, 100 Main St., Hamburg, NY 14075

Present: Village Board Liaison - Holly Park, Chair- Adrienne Punturiero, Gerry Stockmeyer, Mike Reilly, Kathryn Walsh, Kim Bourke, Stu Wheaton

Excused: Andy Schrauth

Absent: n/a

Guests: Matt Bourke

General Notes:

- Mike brought in an article from the Buffalo News about No-Mow May, and lawns in general, to share with the group
- Mike also alerted the group to a Catholic Care for Creation event happening on June 12, 2024, site TBD
- Kat is going to figure out how to make a sign or banner for our group, so we can start being more visible within the community, and tabling at events

Solar/ Climate Smart Communities (CSC)

- Matt Bourke, from the Climate Smart subcommittee updated us on the progress of their group:
- They are currently working on the community solar campaign
 - They received one proposal to their RFP, from a company called Power Market. The group will likely go a head and contract with them, once the Village Board has been alerted to this contract (this is a no-money-exchanged contract)
- Once Power Market is contracted, the goal is to have Village Residents sign up for community solar (i.e. subscribe to receive solar energy from a solar provider, at no cost to them or to sign up).
 - If the Village has 10 people sign up, the Village receive \$5,000; for 60 people the Village receives \$15,000, for 160 people the Village receives \$35,000. This funding can be used for a variety of clean energy projects and spending

Bird Sanctuary

- DPW did clear the trees overhanging the trails in the Bird Sanctuary, A VERY BIG THANK YOU goes out do the crew that did the work! They did a great job.
- Justin Sondel met with Adrienne and Kim at the bird sanctuary to do a “feel good” story about the trees being cleared, and the trails being opened back up, and safe to use again
- Stu is going to try to have his Eagle Scout contact come to our next meeting to discuss his project that he might like to complete in the Bird Sanctuary
 - The Eagle Scout may be interested in constructing a new kiosk in the entrance of the sanctuary (Other projects are still on the table for him to consider, including benches, bat/ bird houses, or something else completely)
- Kat has made contact with another scouting group that will be removing some invasive woody shrub species in the Bird Sanctuary at the end of March

- Kat and Kim are working with this group to mark out an area for them to work in, and make sure they are identifying and removing the correct plants.
- Gerry installed two Bluebird houses in the meadow of the Sanctuary, Kim and her sons made baffles to hang below the two houses to deter predators
- Our group would like to trim some of the brush growing on the north side of Eighteen Mile Creek (down below Overlook Park) so the view of the creek is more direct once the trees leaf out
- The DPW crew really liked the tree carving statue, and introduced the idea of having these statues made in other parks in the Village (when large trees have to be taken down)

ACTION:

1. Holly (or Kim) will ask the Board if we can trim the shrubby trees on the north bank of the creek

Recycling/Compost

- Holly will be inquiring further with the Village Board at their next meeting which will take place on Monday, March 18th about both of these topics.
- Both topics were tabled at our meeting until more can be ascertained from the Village Board

ACTION:

1. Holly will discuss the Compost bin placement with her fellow Village trustees
2. Holly will speak with someone from the County about recycling/compost

Village Trees

- Tree Management Plan is being tabled for the time being, Kim spoke with our DEC Region 9 Forester (Nate Morey), and he gave her some insights into Tree funding opportunities for the Village. One of these insights included that the Tree Management Plan needs to have Village Budgetary information in it (which ours currently doesn't) in order for it to qualify for much of the DEC Municipal tree canopy funding. The Village also needs to update its tree inventory, therefore, combining these two projects into one is probably the best way to go, but funding needs to be found in order to complete these projects.
- Forester, Nate Morey, also informed Kim that tree gaiters can be a helpful tool in helping to establish young, newly planted trees, if they are used properly
- Stu brought up an idea to have an "adopt a tree" campaign for newly planted trees in the Village. The idea being that when a new tree is planted by the Village a person/group/family would pledge to take care of it for the first few years to help it become established
- Marc Shuttleworth asked our group to choose two new trees that need to be planted in two of the empty tree squares in front of Staub Square. Our group chose either American Elms and/or Ginko for the spaces
 - Our group will put gaiters on these two trees in front of Staub Square as an experiments, we will water them if the DPW, Parks Dept, or Business owner can't

ACTION:

1. Kim will confirm Staub Square tree choices with Andy, then fill out a service request form for Marc Shuttleworth

Re-Tree:

- 20 trees have been purchased to be planted during the spring planting, some are donated trees, and are being planted in parks or other public property

Sesquicentennial:

- The tree that our commission is donating has been ordered (Bur Oak)
- \$220 will be used from our budget to pay for the tree, Andy will take care of the payment
- The picnic to dedicate the tree will take place on June 30, 2024
- Our group needs to order a plaque that will be installed on a rock, near the tree
- We need to think of what we would like the plaque to say

ACTION:

1. Andy will take care of the order/payment of the Bur Oak tree
2. Everyone is welcome to come up with ideas for what should be inscribed on the plaque

Earth Day Movie

- We have reserved the Palace Theater for Saturday, April 27th.
 - Set up of tables for the event will start at 9:30, doors will open at 10:00, movie will start at 11:00
- Tables will include:
 - Our Commission
 - The Solar Campaign for the Village
 - Hamburg Trails Committee/Girl Scout Troop 34747
 - Re-Tree Hamburg
 - Erie County Gnome
 - Village Engaged
 - Catholic Care for Creation
- A PO from the Village has been sent to the Palace Theater, so payment is in progress
- Our table will include:
 - A small poster board with Village tree facts
 - A flyer of what our commission does
 - Info on how to get the Village to plant a tree in front of your house (Service Request Forms?)
 - Joyce's Pesticide handout

Next meeting date: **Tuesday, April 9, 2024** at Village Hall, 100 Main St. Hamburg, NY 14075

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Bourke