



### Wheeling High School Program

Seth Marcus said that Agnes and he provided an introductory lecture on the PHNRC and what we do at Wheeling High School on March 4, 2020. Seth felt it went very well. Agnes provided an educational portion for the students then everyone walked outside.

The school has provided permission for us to plant native plants in two areas: (1) one section of the school's courtyard, which perhaps may be enlarged later; and (2) another section by the school's library, which is large. This is a wonderful opportunity. These are sizable areas to receive native plants and an ongoing educational experience for the students with planting, maintenance, signage, etc. Additionally, the students will be able to collect seeds for years and even build a temporary Greenhouse to grow their own native plants.

On April 22, 2020 (Earth Day), the high school students will visit our site and transplant seedlings into larger pots from 9:00 – 11:00 am. Then in mid-May, the students will plant the seedlings on site at the school. We will herbicide the turf where the plants will be planted before April 22 to prepare the area.

### Prospect Heights Public Library/Park District Program

#### 1) Nature Speaks Program

The April 22, 2020 spring speaker will be Izabella Redlinski, Conservation Ecologist at the Keller Science Action Center, The Field Museum. Izabella will provide a talk on restoration in the face of climate change and the techniques that are being utilized are they still pertinent.

Dana has good candidates as resources for future speakers that he is investigating.

#### 2) Fly A Kite Day – April 11, 2020 (Prospect Heights Park District)

The Fly A Kite Day brochures have been distributed. Artwork for the kite has been sent. We now must coordinate creating the seed ball. However, there exists the possibility this event could be postponed re: Coronavirus.

#### 3) Midwest Grows Green – Ryan Anderson

Midwest Grows Green is currently searching for Ryan Anderson's replacement and marketing the new tool they developed. Therefore, we will pursue Midwest Grows Green in the future.

### Peggy A. Montes Unsung Heroine Award

Ed Madden with Dana and Agnes attended the Peggy Montes Unsung Heroine Award on March 5, 2020 at the Chicago Cultural Center from 8:00 to 10:30 a.m. The Women's Commission, Cook County Board of Commissioners, and Cook County Board President, Toni Preckwinkle, honored Agnes J. Wojnarski, MD, as well as 17 other Unsung Heroine's throughout Cook County.

Agnes Wojnarski, Chairperson of the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission, was nominated by Mayor Helmer and Isabella Redlinski for this award. Agnes was the only nominee nominated by multiple people and not one person.

Ed said it was a phenomenal award ceremony for both Agnes and the Commission. A lot of dignitaries were present. Judy Su, Broadcaster with WLS Channel 7, hosted the event. The event was provided a 30-second spot on local news with general footage.

Agnes was also featured in a full-length prominent article by Joanna Marszalek in the Polish newspaper, *Dziennik Zwiazkowy*, highlighting this auspicious event. The article also noted fun stuff, such as saying: As a doctor, Agnes trades in her stethoscope for a chainsaw and her lab coat for a burn suit after hours.

Agnes received recognition for her dedicated environmental work, but also felt humbled to be included with women noted for the incredible things they have accomplished for their communities.

#### Seed/Greenhouse Program

Dana and Agnes provided a presentation to the Planning and Zoning Board on February 27, 2020 in pursuit of the annual permit for the temporary greenhouse. After a lengthy discussion, the Board voted 5 to 1 to recommend City Council approve the text variance and permit the greenhouse for a 60-day period with an annual approval request to be made to the Board for renewal.

Two members from the community were in attendance to support the PHNRC and the project and one resident was not pleased with the idea of the temporary greenhouse structure. Therefore, if approved, the NRC will install camouflage as a compromise.

The permit is good for 60 days starting April 1, 2020.

Dan Petersen of the Planning and Zoning Board was instrumental in guiding the permit through the process.

Dana attended the City Council Meeting of March 9, 2020. Approval has been granted from the Planning and Zoning Board for constructing the temporary Greenhouse at 9 Marion. Installation of the temporary Greenhouse along with duck blinds will be accomplished on April 1, 2020.

Thousands of seedlings are now maturing plants. We can expect 30,000 native plants this year and another 10,000 in the second year. We are in good shape.

Agnes is working in the Greenhouse every night overseeing the seedlings' progress. Horse Gentians rare variety seed received from Fermilab are propagating! Agnes prepared 64 individual tests, and quite a few are growing. No one has been able to accomplish this before!

## NEW BUSINESS

### Tree Ordinance Discussion

Discussion of creating a tree ordinance for our town began when we learned of the existence of a 200-year-old oak tree on property located on Palatine Road just east of Elmhurst Road and the fate of this tree now that the property has been sold to a developer.

The City of Prospect Heights does not have a tree ordinance. The Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission is interested in protecting heritage trees in our community.

Dana and Agnes met with Robyn Flakne, Natural Resources Manager for the Village of Glenview and Certified Arborist. Ms. Flakne is very knowledgeable and helped to create her town's Tree Ordinances by working with Emily at the Morton Arboretum. Ms. Flakne is also responsible for the implementation, monitoring and enforcement of the Tree Ordinances. Ms. Flakne spends 30% of her time as the Natural Resources Manager for the Village of Glenview managing the Tree Ordinances Program.

The primary objective of the Village of Glenview is to maintain the canopy and carbon sequestration that trees provide.

City Government cannot prohibit a resident from removing a tree on private property; however, ordinances are created to become obstacles and roadblocks to prevent removing healthy trees by initiating high fines and the stipulation to replace trees. All trees are categorized based on a four, tree value class based on the tree's diameter (the multiplier), aesthetic and ecological value, rate of growth and whether they create nuisance conditions. The tree value classes are: A – outstanding quality; B – good quality; C – moderate quality; and D – nuisance. For example, if an oak tree (species A) with a 15-inch diameter, may require eight to 10 trees to be planted as a replacement value or issuance of a huge fine if the tree is removed. People pay into a tree escrow to remove a tree, and upon demonstration that the replacements have been planted and cared for during an "X" amount of time, the money will be returned to the people. Trees may be planted with permission in locations other than their property, if they are in Glenview. If not accomplished within "X" amount of time, however, the money in escrow is forfeited.

Replacements must be a prescribed height, diameter and species. Buckthorn is exempt and may be removed without a permit. All trees on Public property are protected.

Dangerous trees, diseased trees and/or owner hardship are all reasons to deviate from the schedule of replacement value and permit costs.

The Village of Glenview has a large staff and resources to manage Tree Ordinances.

For the City of Prospect Heights, the Natural Resources Commission does not have a large staff or resources; therefore, our City must agree to this proposal plus have the staff and ability to fund the infrastructure.

Dana and Agnes asked the Assistant City Administrator of these possibilities, they were informed that the City is pursuing budget cuts for the upcoming year; therefore, the chances of funding anything new is slim.

Recommendation: If the PHNRC wishes to pursue Tree Ordinances for our community, we would need to propose our idea to the City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission first to see if it is something they would be interested. Then a plan would need to be produced and approved followed by Public Hearings and a final approval from City government. A budget would have to be proposed and funded. Additionally, adding a Certified Arborist to staff to manage the Tree Ordinance program followed by a City-wide tree inventory is necessary.

Dana provided Commissioners with copies of information received from Ms. Flakne: Comparison of Communities' Standards; Tree Preservation Ordinance; and Village of Glenview Tree Standards Manual.

The PHNRC also received an e:mail message from a resident noting that a new neighbor cut down every tree on their lot, estimating that over 10, 50 to 80-year-old trees were removed. The resident had before and after photos, and it was visually difficult to comprehend the reasoning.

Instituting a tree ordinance must be along the lines of a middle ground between voluntary action and the law. It is not so much illegal, but issuance of a penalty is what is persuasive.

Trees provide so many benefits, such as combating climate change. Trees absorb carbon dioxide while releasing oxygen back into the air. Trees clean the air, cool the streets and the city, provide food, conserve energy, save water, help prevent water pollution, help prevent soil erosion, shield children from ultra-violet rays, mark the seasons, provide a canopy and habitat for wildlife, provide wood and increase property values.

Jill contacted Michael Brunk, State Urban Forestry Coordinator, and learned of the Urbana Legacy Tree Program. Jill provided copies of the Legacy Tree Brochure, Nomination Form, Owner's Participation Guide and Owner's Consent Form to Commissioners for consideration.

Our town has many trees that are historic, unique, rare and one-of-a-kind specimens. Having a Legacy Tree Program celebrates, recognizes and protects a town's most significant trees.

The program works through a resident nominating a tree by completion of a Nomination Form, and the City Arborist would contact the property owner of the nominated tree. Participation in the Legacy Tree Program is voluntary, and the property owner must consent to having the tree evaluated and designated. A formal process is followed if a property owner wishes to have their healthy tree taken out of the Legacy Tree Program.

If a property owner of the nominated tree provides written consent to participate in the Legacy Tree Program, the City Arborist evaluates the tree, using the eight Legacy Standards Assessment criteria referenced in the Program brochure

Specific guidelines would be instituted on what denotes a Legacy Tree, benefits the Program offers to owners of Legacy Trees, if a Legacy Tree becomes unhealthy or in decline beyond repair, removal of a healthy Legacy Tree, how to participate, etc.

The Legacy Tree Program would be administered by the City and is managed by the City Arborist perhaps in partnership with an established Tree Commission.

Dana said Robin was happy with the Tree Ordinances because they act as an effective deterrent. It is useful and limits the amount of a resident going crazy with a chainsaw. However, John said Robin seemed to be dissuasive. The main negative is the quantity of work involved. Also, we must consider manpower and perhaps do a modified program. Is the City Arborist available?

Seth said we must consider manpower and perhaps have a modified Tree Ordinance program by increasing awareness and having an ordinance that applies basically to a tree over “X” number of inches in diameter must be looked at by the City Arborist. We do not need to go as far as tree replacement or certain tree types.

The beauty of a big, old tree is at the heart of a Tree Ordinance.

John said it seems the penalty is dissuasive. The cost to take a tree down is significant. Ed likes the Legacy Tree Program of Urbana.

Dana said he will provide more information from Robin Flakne from the Village of Glenview to Commissioners, and the Tree Ordinance discussion will continue at our next meeting.

If PHNRC proceeds with the Legacy Tree Program, a presentation would be made to the City Council.

#### Com Ed/Openlands Grant Application

Dana was contacted by Joe Wade, advising that Mayor Helmer asked us to consider applying for a Green Regions Grant because the City could possibly provide \$2,000. Therefore, Dana completed the Grant Application (13 pages) and a conservative Budget for a Project entitled Hillcrest Lake Pollinator Park. The Project would run for two years at an estimated cost of \$53,830. Volunteer Labor is estimated at 2,307 hours at a cost of \$19,000.

Our continuous anonymous donor offered \$2,000 to equal the City’s funds of \$2,000 for a total of \$4,000 to be matched by ComEd of \$4,000. Joe was receptive to this idea. The Grant Total is \$8,000.

The Project objective is to place pollinator plants along the buffer zones in between Hillcrest Lake and Hillcrest Drive. The areas on the corner of Willow Road are not affected by the MWRD Project.

#### MacArthur Middle School April Science Fair

MacArthur Middle School asked if we would be interested in participating in their April Science Fair (one evening) with expanded space either in the gymnasium or the Library. It is a District-wide event, so many children are expected to be in attendance.

All Commissioners agreed to participate, especially since this is an opportunity to reach young minds. Jill suggested we contact our Junior Volunteer, Lauren, to see if she would assist. Dana suggested contacting our volunteers, too.

With the additional space, we can bring microscopes for interaction with the students along with books, storyboards and animal pelts.

#### Spring Prescribed Burns

Dana queried Commissioners on their availability for the week of March 16 for assistance with prescribed burns to be conducted possibly on Sunday afternoon, March 15; and Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday. After Wednesday, the ground will be too green.

Dana and Agnes will know more by Friday afternoon and Saturday of the possibility to burn and will communicate via e:mail.

Late Friday afternoon, March 13, Dana was contacted by Aaron at Stanic, informing him that ComEd planned to burn the ComEd seeded prairie and the remnant prairie on Sunday, March 14. We cannot participate, but available Commissioners will be present.

#### Management Plan Protocol - North Slough and Hillcrest Lake

Dana did not have updated information to present due to time required to complete the ComEd/Openlands Grant Proposal and Budget.

#### PHNRC Treasurer Report

John Kamysz mentioned we received delivery of the materials purchased with the remaining current-year budget funds (\$1,640).

When the new budget is available on May 1, 2020, we will contribute the proceeds from the Art Show.

#### Comprehensive Equipment List and 2020-2021 Budget

John mentioned that purchasing six-inch PCP pipe in two, 10-foot sections for our inventory and to be utilized in trail maintenance would be beneficial. With the remaining \$51 of current budget funds, we can purchase PCP pipes for trail maintenance. Dana will discuss with Mark Roscoe, PHPW, on Friday, March 13.

#### City Budget Presentation 2020

Dana reported that our proposed budget of \$5,500 has been provided to Joe Wade and Peter Falcone. Dana attended the City Council Meeting of March 9, and our budget proposal was an agenda line item. A budget presentation was not necessary, and no City Officials objected to our budget proposal.

Dana confirmed with Joe that the budget is officially approved in April, and we are confident it will be approved without question.

The Prospect Heights Park District Board approved our request for funding of \$6,500. The funding will be coordinated between the City intergovernmental agreement with the Park District.

The Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission is very appreciative of the support and consideration from City Council and the PHPD Board. Thank you!

#### Earth Day (April 22, 2020) and Earth Week Activities

Our plans for Earth Week are as follows: Volunteer Workday on April 19; activities, such as site tours, starting on April 19 through the weekend; the Nature Speaks Program Speaker on April 22, 2020 (Earth Day); and meeting with Hillcrest Lake residents to discuss the Hillcrest Lake Project on Friday evening, April 24, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

Dana will prepare an informational piece then speak with Peter Falcone on mailing invitations via postcard to Hillcrest Lake residents.

#### City Civic Meetings and PHNRC Representation Reporting

##### Ad Hoc Willow Road Project Committee (Hillcrest Lake)

The Ad Hoc Willow Road Project Committee last met on January 8, 2020. The City's website does not indicate when the next meeting will be held.

##### McDonald Creek Commission Meeting

The McDonald Creek Commission meeting of February 25, 2020 was cancelled. The next MCC meeting is not reported on the City's website; however, if scheduled, it would be held on Tuesday evening, March 24, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

##### Prospect Heights 2020 Block Party

Jill reported that the Prospect Heights 2020 Block Party will be held on Saturday, June 27, 2020 from 2:00 – 11:00 p.m. (Food Trucks are available from 4:00 – 11:00 p.m.)

##### Proactive Nature Management Plans

No current information was provided on Proactive Nature Management Plans due to the time involved in completing the ComEd/Openlands Grant Application.

##### Announcements to the Public

No announcements of valuable information and/or resources were provided at this time.

Visitor's Comments

No visitors were present at the March meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission is scheduled for Thursday, April 16, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in City Hall Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the meeting. Therefore, the meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Jill E. Moskal, CPS  
PHNRC Commissioner and Recording Secretary