



Village of Westchester

10300 ROOSEVELT ROAD, WESTCHESTER, IL 60154

(708)345-0020 FAX (708)345-2873

WWW.WESTCHESTER-IL.ORG

Village President
NICK STEKER

Village Clerk
JENNIFER HALL

Trustees
TRACY JENNINGS
CATHY KURATKO
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Village Manager
GREG HRIBAL

Village Attorney
MATTHEW WELCH

GROW Ecological Commission Regular Meeting

December 1, 2022 @ 6:30pm

Village Hall Board Room

1. Call to Order

Call to order at 6:33PM.

Attending Commissioners: Liz Wiseman-Chase (**LWC**), Lee Kaufman (**LK**), Nicole Molinaro (**NM**), Matt Downs (**MD**), LeeAnn Kruszynski (**LAK**), Evie Slavic VB liaison & Steve Crowley (**SC**) PW liaison

Recorder: Nikki Way (**NW**)

Absent: Diane Scott (**DS**)

Attending Residents: Leann Pettis, Rob and Julie Orr

2. Pledge

3. Inspiration

- Mike Doman – “Green is a process not a status, we need to think of Green as a verb and not an adjective”
- Next Month: 1/12 - Rob Orr

4. Roll Call

5. Public Participation - In order to give as many visitors as possible an opportunity to speak and in the interest of adjourning the meeting by 8:00 p.m., please limit your comments to 3 minutes in length, unless further time is granted by the Commission. **No public comments.**

6. Review of Minutes

a. Approval of 11-3-2022 minutes

b. MD motions to approve, LAK seconds

7. Old Business

- Pumpkin Smash Debrief** - Worked through cold and windy weather. Follow-up on 15 minute educational bit each month. 1.18 tons of pumpkins composted. Second location in works for next year, Mayfair had parking lot construction this year.
- Tree Canopy**
 - Westchester’s Municipal Canopy Summary between 2010 and 2020 our canopy dropped 4% from 30% to 26%. Below county average. Less plantable space. SC-2014-2015 cut 827 mature ash from Emerald Ash Borer. Severe weather a factor with recent micro burst 39 tree lost on public parkway trees. 2022 removed 142, 39 just one storm. Way down on removals, was 179 trees or more a year. Now planting more than taking down, 182 trees planted this year. New species, ironwood, scarlet oak, chestnut oak, shingle oaks, swamp and white oaks, catalpa, American linden.
 - Public Works planted several species of native trees, waiting for grant to see what the tree inventory is so that we can mix in a variety of trees. On year 2 of 10 year plan to have an urban forest. Happy with PW is happy with tree vendor, have been with them since 2008. The relationship is valuable, the pricing is good, they plant the trees. The grant is still TBD.
 - There are several issues in the Chicago region - many trees are young, many trees are invasive species like buckthorn, many are susceptible to invasive pests. More education to our residential land owners on healthy hedges and noxious trees.
 - ACTION ITEMS:** Need to update ordinance if we get the grant. Would like to do more tree-focused events, including public land owners together to talk about trees, and invasive species mitigation. Evie offered to help on the village side to set something up. Public Tree Summit in future for community education.
 - LeeAnn encouraged everyone to read the Morton Arboretum Tree Census Report - which provides a lot of information.

- f. The new exotic weed bill allows for us to take action and see how we can coordinate to educate residents on soil health, flood plain, insurance, etc. Evie mentioned that education is key because there are 17k people who can do something, vs village resources. If we talk about flooding, people will listen.
- g. Amendment to Illinois Exotic Weed Act, have Westchester update the ordinance to reflect state law. Sent email to Jim regarding buckthorn and adjust milkweed to reflect common milkweed not all. Reference July newsletter article.
- h. Steve - people don't know why we are moving to all native trees, seconds the education piece. We assume people know more than they do, they see trees around the village that we wrongly planted in the 90s and want them, if they are educated on why, they have an understanding.
- i. Evie: As a village, let's see if we can get a nursery to work with us to discount native trees for residents. We should ask for volunteers for a Buckthorn committee to spot and report it (call it the buckaroos). If the Village removes buckthorn and educates residents, it would be a good first step.
- j. Chicago Region Tree Initiative - Westchester Urban Forestry Summary <https://chicagorti.org/app/uploads/2022/09/WestchesterSummary.pdf>
- k. Morton Arboretum Tree Census Report https://mortonarb.org/app/uploads/2021/05/2020-Chicago-Region-Tree-Census-Report_FIN.pdf

b. Bee City

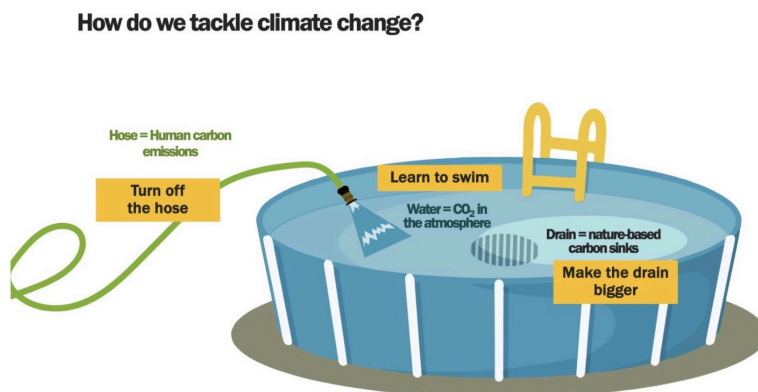
- a. Nicole spoke with landscaper, but the village cannot endorse a company. It goes back to education. There should be a snippet that helps people talk with their landscaper. Get back to soil health quality and cultural controls we can use.

c. City Sticker

- a. Evie has a giant stack of artwork, and has a date set up with judges to pick the artwork. Nicole has a sponsor to award the winner. Presentation to winners would be at a village board meeting.

d. Climate Action Plan - Katharine Hayhoe: Three Climate Change solutions: <https://baptistnews.com/article/yes-global-warming-remains-dangerous-but-the-evidence-shows-human-action-does-make-a-difference-leading-climatologist-contents/#.Y3qzl-zMLtU>

- a. Lower emissions by going to clean energy, preventing deforestation and reforming food systems
- b. Identify where there is too much carbon and remove it, use nature based solutions put back into soil
- c. Adapt, because we cannot go back, and those who did the least damage will suffer the most
- d.



e. Nicor + Comed - Free ComEd and Nicor Energy Efficiency Assessments <https://www.comed.com/WaysToSave/ForYourHome/Pages/SingleFamily.aspx> / <https://www.nicorgas.com/residential/ways-to-save/free-products-and-services.html>

- a. Reminder that they have programs to help with energy efficiency. Looking to have an event in late January.
- b. Will be in newsletter, village can put it on their facebook page.
- c. Nicor Time-limited enhanced rebates for sealing and insulation improvements (12/31/22) <https://www.nicorgas.com/residential/ways-to-save/rebates/air-sealing-and-insulation-rebates.html>

f. Metropolitan Mayors Caucus' Community Solar Clearinghouse Solution (CS2) recognized by the US Department of Energy <https://www.energy.gov/communitysolar/sunny-awards-equitable-community-solar>

- a. Awarded Community Solar as a good program.
- b. Grant writer? Evie - need to have a legal review.
- c. C4 also looking into community solar farms and solar for all program

g. 2022 Board Report Assignments

- a. Sections have been assigned. Liz has a work plan, asks that we link to a climate action plan as applicable. Due end of January.

h. 2023 Calendar

- a. Steve: Get more residents to participate in the 50/50 through the newsletter. The more people who split with the village, the more trees that we can plant. MAY is the next plant date. Spending 60k each year, but not hitting goal of 200 trees planted this year. Evie: Donate a tree to the village? This could be a part of the Buckthorn education event - "Replace it with a native" - also what to put around a tree education on volcano mulching trees/bricks
- b. May - Composting
- c. March - Reduce reuse recycle
- d. Waste Management event in Feb or March - also a graphic of what cannot go in recycling
- e. Potential WM GROW field trip?

Meetings	Events	Newsletters (due 15 th prior mo.)	Snippet
January 12th	Nicor Energy Efficiency	Low-Salt Streets (Lee)	New Commissioner search
February 2nd	WM event	Reduce Reuse Recycle Julie upper hierarchy of waste mgmt - graphic/ image	Graphic of Top 5 things not recyclable
March 2nd	Replace with a Native event Buckthorn and 50/50	50/50 plantings why no maples for 5 years and a species list to educate	5 questions to ask a landscaper - ask residents for their questions
April 6th	Why Plant Native?	How to properly mulch and what is proper mulch	Picture on what not to do
May 4th Planting month	Composting		
June 1st		No Mow June & July	
July 6th			
August 3rd			
September 7th			
October 5th			
November 2nd			

