

MINUTES
GLENVIEW NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
October 18, 2004

Call to Order by the Chairman

The October 18, 2004, meeting of the Glenview Natural Resources Commission was called to order by Chairman Fuller at 7:00 p.m. in the Lunchroom of the Village Hall.

Roll Call and Declaration of a Quorum

Roll call was taken and Chairman Fuller noted a quorum was present.

PRESENT: Commissioners Beck, Blomquist, Freeman, Chairman Fuller, and Ms. Robyn Flakne, Natural Resources Manager and Staff Liaison

ABSENT: Commissioner Glennemeier

GUESTS: Ms. Kara Miller, Applied Ecological Services, Inc.
Ms. Nancy Halliday, Naturalist
Mr. Peter Salamoun

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Fuller asked for corrections or comments to the September 20, 2004 minutes of the Natural Resources Commission meeting. There were no corrections.

Commissioner Beck moved to approve the September 20, 2004 minutes. Commissioner Freeman seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion carried.

General Communications

None.

Consideration of Cases on the Agenda

None.

New Business

Presentation and Comments on Draft of West Fork Assessment Report

Chairman Fuller explained that this report is an internal product which will be used to create an external document of broader perspective. Commissioner Beck suggested the draft keep as much detail as possible for background information

Ms. Kara Miller, from Applied Ecological Services, Inc. (AES), reported on the draft submitted to the NRC Commission regarding the West Fork Assessment. AES worked

with Mr. John White, to provide the Commission with an historical and current ecological assessment of the West Fork. The historical segment was handled by Mr. White, whose objective was to locate, identify, and briefly describe some of the available studies about the West Fork. Ms. Miller worked with Mr. Steve Zimmerman of AES, who is a stream expert. Ms. Miller and Mr. Zimmerman, along with Chairman Fuller and Ms. Flakne, canoed the river and looked at stream bank erosion, plant communities, and the current ecological condition in order to gain an understanding of general assessment of the riparian corridor and aquatic habitat.

Ms. Miller explained there is not high-quality aquatic habitat there now, with the exception of the First Reach where mitigation projects on the flood plain and wetlands have occurred. The primary problem is the river is no longer connected to its flood plane. There are steep, overgrown banks and very little space for good habitat to establish and provide habitat for wildlife. Ms. Miller displayed colored maps of the different Reaches which show extreme erosion condition.

Chairman Fuller had a comment on page four: the Techny Basin where the developer had been required to provide mitigation and wondered

- a) if any records were discovered
- b) what was required
- c) whether the Corps of Engineers considered the obligations to have been met.

Ms. Miller responded Mr. White did not look specifically for those answers. Perhaps Mr. White could use the Freedom of Information Act with the Corps of Engineers to see if they have any information on the mitigation. Chairman Fuller suggested asking Ms. Mary Bak, of the Development Department, and the Engineering Department of the Village of Glenview.

Ms. Miller asked Chairman Fuller about his comment about pulling the main recommendations of the three CDF documents. Chairman Fuller hoped the annotated bibliography would identify the main points of interest in each. Ms. Miller will ask Mr. White to take care of this.

Chairman Fuller said Ms. Glennemeier's comment on page seven referring to the natural history of the Chicago River region is a good reference, but it is not the definitive work and there are a couple of other things such as the Chicago Wilderness Biodiversity Atlas and Biodiversity Recovery Plan.

Ms. Miller explained Mr. White contacted Mr. Steve Swanson regarding the West Fork, and will follow up on their meeting regarding what the Kennecott's might have reported and also any anecdotal material.

On page sixteen, Ms. Miller read some of her corrections, starting with Reach 3:

“Reach 3 begins on the southeast corner of Valley Lo Golf Course and continues south to Chestnut. For this report Reach 3 also includes the North Navy Ditch and the Loyola Academy Wetland Restoration Area south of Navy Ditch. Navy Ditch receives outflow from Lake Glenview at Old Willow Road, south of the Metra Station. During extreme flood conditions, water from the Lake flows east down the full length of the ditch into the West Fork. During normal and moderate flood events, a rock spillway located approximately half way down the ditch diverts water northward into the river.”

When it flows north, it doesn't go into Techny Basin unless the river is high enough to flow over the spillway into the basin.

Ms. Miller thinks it would be a good idea to set a score goal for the entire river or for certain Reaches. It would then make it important to reassess and routinely survey the river after restoration work is completed. The QHEI assessment is quick. Perhaps each region should be further divided into smaller regions where restoration projects could be done along an entire subreach. The score for that subreach could be evaluated. By adding some riffle pool complexes, the banks could be pulled back and add different substraight for habitat, or add planting, that will increase the score by 3, 4, or 5 points. Certain areas will prove unreachable because of accessibility.

Perhaps Mr. Swanson could determine what numbers would be realistic for the Reaches. The Commission needs technical information from AES. It would help people get an idea of where we are and where we might get to. We could look at a biological index and explain that if Glenview can get to a certain score we are likely to have certain kinds of critters, and if a higher score is reached, other critters will be around. It would be helpful if the report could include IBIs and Simple Species List. Also, suggest achievable goals for the Commission.

Ms. Miller will report on mud flats in its own section. Commissioner Freeman requested some designation be made to highlight whether a bird is an alien or a native species. A bird's common name and scientific name should remain in the document. Ms. Miller will send Chairman Fuller a copy of the revised mud flats section for his review.

On page 22, Tributary from the North, Figure 1A, on the old river channel which carries almost no water along the trailer park, there is a clogged pipe and stream bank erosion.

On an unnamed plot of land, unidentified on Village maps, there is open space of old flood plane forest which should be restored. Maryhaven may own it. Ms. Flakne will check on the ownership of this land. If it has a private owner, the Commission could do a

conservation easement on it and wouldn't have to worry about getting ownership. The land could be kept in its natural state and the owner could get a tax advantage.

On page 22, Lot 16, Chairman Fuller said it would be nice to cut the buckthorn, regrade the bank, and make an attempt to connect the land with the river but it would take a lot of earth moving. AES should identify the range of possibilities for this area. Ms. Miller said it would be nice to create more mud flats that would go down the center of the channel if the stream could be widened. Commissioner Freeman said Lot 16 attracts a number of birds including meadowlark which nest there, and warblers.

Chairman Fuller said the Baxter area is in great need of attention.

Ms. Miller said some rip rap could stabilize the bank where the water is exiting. If pipes are starting to disarticulate from other sections of the pipe, they should be repaired or they will blow out the stream which will result in a stream channel forming on the other side of the pipe.

Ms. Miller suggested the Commission may want a hydrology study where someone models the flows, and determines how much water is coming in from which pipes. There is a study by the Friends of the Chicago River which has a comprehensive list of all of the pipes.

Chairman Fuller said he hopes the report will have a brief section of conclusions.

Under Reach 1, site specific recommendations on page 26 regarding mowing banks, Ms. Miller said 'mowing' also meant any kind of mechanical removal which could mean weed wacking teasel. Mowing probably wouldn't work for many, if not all, of these banks as they are too steep. Some mechanical form of removing seed heads is suggested before they go to seed or flower. Mechanical removal is recommended because there may not be enough grass fuel to make a burn effective. Chairman Fuller said the Commission will probably rely on herbiciding most of the problem species. Ms. Miller said one can herbicide more than once during a growing season for canary grass and purple loose strife.

Chairman Fuller hoped the report could include a section on Opportunities on Public Lands as noted in the previous sections. "There are segments of river banks that are public ownership and provide local government the opportunity to demonstrate what can be done to restore the river and keep it in good health. Those opportunities are summarized below . . ."

Commissioner Blomquist stated when AES writes its recommendations, it would be of great help if there was an appendix listing some of the benefits which the Commission

could bring to the public's attention. Commissioner Beck said some of that information could be culled from the Chicago Wilderness material.

Commissioner Freeman asked if there was a local river similar to the West Fork that received improvements and is now in better health. Ms. Miller believes it would be the Des Plaines River because they have the River/Ecosystems partnerships and have received grants. Ms. Miller will ask Ms. Eva McRoberts, of AES, for other examples. Chairman Fuller said in Northbrook, riffles were put in the stream. The Nippersink in McHenry County is a great success. Ms. Freeman said there is an article on this at the Chicago Wilderness website.

Chairman Fuller said to Ms. Miller that that the Commissions discussion had identified what it thinks AES needs to do to complete the work for its current contract. He then asked Ms. Miller if she had any thoughts as to what further work the Commission ought to do and how AES might assist. Ms. Miller replied:

1. Some of the biological information is lacking. AES has not come across good alien information. The local birders might have information that is not documented.
2. The mussel study is not particularly comprehensive; this is important if the NRC wants to restore habitat for mussels.
3. AES is not very knowledgeable about the Loyola wetland restoration. Ms. Miller wondered how this project could be connected to the restoration of the West Fork.
4. The hydrology issue and what is actually coming into the West Fork.

Chairman Fuller added that if finances could be arranged, it would be beneficial for AES to go up through the storm sewers to the detention basins and see what opportunities lie there for naturalizing detention basins. The Commission should examine a detention basin recently built on The Glen along the west side of Lehigh Road for which the Village is set to take ownership.

Ms. Miller said that the SMC watershed study that Mr. White describes in his report has good information on detention basins in this area. Chairman Fuller suggested a future study should include finding detention basins and explaining what could be done to give them habitat value.

Ms. Halliday is on the Board of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club (the Chairman is Mr. Jeff Sanders who lives in Glenview) and will inquire what bird information is available, particularly for the river corridor. The Commission will compile a bird list as soon as possible and send it to Ms. Miller.

Commissioner Beck said there are old aerial photographs from the Soil and Water Conservation District in Streamwood, Illinois. A contact person there is Mr. Rick McAndless.

Ms. Miller will endeavor to complete the report by the Thanksgiving holiday.

Wild Ones

Commissioner Blomquist spoke with Mr. Peter Chen, of Naperville, who has long been a member of the DuPage chapter of Wild Ones. He updates the website for his chapter (www.forwild.org) and helps with the regional website. Mr. Chen explained that in order to start a local chapter of Wild Ones, just a few interested citizens are a start. The closest chapter to Glenview is Chicago, which meets at the North Park Village Nature Center. There are Illinois chapters in Lake County (called Lake to Prairie), Macomb, and Rock River Valley. Commissioner Beck suggested advertising in the Park District brochure, although it might be easier to start working with the Chicago chapter first.

2005 Budget

Chairman Fuller appeared before the Board of Trustees at its recent budget meeting and requested \$10,500 for the Natural Resources Commission's 2005 budget. Some of the funds are earmarked for the costs of layout and printing of the AES report. It would be good to have AES perform additional work, perhaps going upstream to the detention ponds.

Tyner Center

Regarding the Tyner Center, the Environmental Review Commission and the Glen Redevelopment Commission (GRC) have approved the proposed building and site development except that the GRC suggested taking one of the three lanes of Compass Road (the left turn lane at Lehigh could be turned into parking) and not push into the prairie. A traffic study must now be done. This will be presented to the Village Board for final decision and approval in late November. We are still on track to get a bid this winter and start construction in the spring.

A well-attended national conference of the Natural Areas Association was held last week in Chicago at the Holiday Inn, west of the Merchandise Mart. Among the attendees were Chairman Fuller, Ms. Flakne, and Mr. Salamoun. Mr. Salamoun said it takes a lot of skill and dedication to help nature. He wondered how to gain support or interest from the public. Chairman Fuller said McHenry County has a Conservation District which attracts people who are focused on conservation issues. DuPage County changed their system whereby they divided the County Board from the Forest Preserve District. Lake County has the same people sitting at the table for both functions. Commissioner Beck said they have a strong, proactive storm water management district.

Old Business

Summary of NRC Evaluation Visit to Sleepy Hollow Park

Chairman Fuller reported that he, Commissioner Glennemeier, Ms. Halliday, and Mr. Fred Gullen visited Sleepy Hollow Park to consider the feasibility of a cooperative project. The logical place to start removing buckthorn is the south side of the bridge. There is a possibility Mr. Gullen could arrange for a chipper and hand tools. The Commission has yet to hear from Mr. Gullen on when work will begin; hopefully it will be at 9:00 a.m. Saturday, November 13. Ms. Halliday will speak with Commissioner Glennemeier and Mr. Gullen to determine what signage should be established one week to ten days prior to the event. A leaflet should be prepared that explains why it is important buckthorn should be removed.

Chairman Fuller said the Commission should address the weed ordinance. The NRC should list local invasive species such as: purple loose strife, buckthorn, garlic mustard, and thistle.

Ms. Halliday spoke to Ms. Libby Hill about Ms. Hill addressing the Commission. Ms. Hill is available for either the November 15 or December 20 NRC meeting. Chairman Fuller would like Ms. Hill to come to the NRC's November meeting and speak for about 15-20 minutes. For the following meeting we will invite Mr. Paul Hayes, the science teacher from Loyola who is leading their wetland restoration project.

Adjournment

Commissioner Freeman moved to adjourn. Commissioner Beck seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheri Scott
Recording Secretary