

**MINUTES  
GLENVIEW NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION  
December 13, 2004**

**Call to Order by the Chairman**

The December 13, 2004, meeting of the Glenview Natural Resources Commission was called to order by Chairman Fuller at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room 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 Ahlberg, Beck, Blomquist, Freeman, Chairman Fuller, and Ms. Robyn Flakne, Nat. Res. Manager and Staff Liaison

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Glennemeier

**GUESTS:** Mr. Paul Hayes, Science Teacher at Loyola Academy  
Mr. Joe De Albert  
Mrs. Hayes, Teacher at Regina  
Ms. Nancy Halliday, Naturalist

**Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Fuller asked for corrections or comments to the November 15, 2004 minutes of the Natural Resources Commission meeting. There were no corrections.

Commissioner Beck moved to approve the November 15, 2004 minutes. Commissioner Blomquist seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion carried.

**General Communications**

None.

**Consideration of Cases on the Agenda**

None.

**New Business**

**Overview of Loyola Academy Ecological Restoration along West Fork**

Chairman Fuller said the Natural Resources Commission has been focusing on the West Fork and examining what natural resources are found in Village and how they can be protected and restored, as well as exploring local biology and biodiversity. Glenview is a village of three rivers, two of which are mostly owned by the Forest Preserves. The

remaining river is the West Fork which goes through the middle of town. The NRC would like to consider the West Fork's condition and how the Commission can help it.

Mr. Hayes reported that Loyola Academy had been using Park District space for its athletic events and, therefore, needed more space. The President of the Academy was interested in purchasing available land, which led to acquisition of the former Lutter landfill site. Mr. Hayes noticed that there were about two acres of wetlands on this property. One of the Environmental Teachers at Loyola, Ms. Jenny Snyder, recommended contacting Friends of the Chicago River to discuss its possibilities. The property was purchased and Mr. Hayes and others toured Deerfield High School and parts of Northbrook to garner ideas.

Loyola then concentrated on raising money for ecological restoration. The first grant they received was a 319 Clean Waters Act, for about \$47,000 which paid for a gravel swale. It was recommended to Loyola to first repair the uplands, then the wetlands, then the river. Experts in ecological design and water-quality issues were brought in from Loyola University and DePaul University. The Prairie Nursery from Westfield, Wisconsin was the primary prairie consultant who suggested planting prairie around much of the periphery of the property. Three detention basins were installed. The outfalls were redesigned to get more aeration. All of these technical and prairie changes were covered in the first grant cycle. Loyola was allowed to use the purchase cost as part of the matching amount for the 319 grant, in a 60 / 40 split, the sixty percent covered by the purchase cost.

The second phase concentrated on the wetlands which had buckthorn, thistle, and loosestrife. Loyola Academy students were brought in for assistance, first as volunteers then earning curriculum credit for botany. A survey was completed, and test wells, followed by buckthorn removal (ten percent removed by volunteers; ninety percent was removed by professionals). The primary contractor for the wetland work was supplied by Integrated Lakes Management.

The volunteers created an access trail so an A.T.V. could pass through. Box elders were then removed to allow more sunlight for the wetlands.

A design has been created for the second wetland which is south, and mitigation funds have been raised for a second phase, primarily through The Conservation Fund / Foundation. This Fund / Foundation will help with exotic removal and a three-foot water-control structure at six-inch intervals, which floods part of the wetland plants. The control device will allow the wetland to fill with water to the appropriate level for plants and to prevent backwash of river water. The Army Corps visited the site two weeks ago to work on permits. The contractor for this job is Landscape Resources, Incorporated from Montgomery, Illinois.

The third phase will be to rejuvenate the river. Some of the river bank has very steep banks and Loyola hopes to moderate the bank and to protect the condition of the river. Funding for this phase is supplied by another 319 grant as well as private funding.

Loyola has a working relationship with Valley Lo Sports Club which owns some property on the other side of the river. There is a thirty-foot easement for removal of buckthorn. Most of the anticipated work will be on the northern third where the topography is flatter and more accessible.

Mr. Hayes suggested viewing Loyola's website (address is on the handout received at the meeting) for additional information. Most grants from Federal agencies require matching from non-Federal funds. Each year Loyola Academy applies for fifty percent over the amount they have been receiving and yet is barely meeting their budget. It is difficult to plan for long-term maintenance as the endowment is estimated at \$10,000 a year for basic maintenance once the original installations are completed. If Loyola Academy can establish a conservation easement, this might be another avenue to address long-term funding.

Valley Lo is working with Friends of the Chicago River to do further work on their part of the stream. It would make sense aesthetically and biologically to take several properties and tie them together to have a common management plan. Perhaps it would be wise to apply for grants as a group rather than applying individually and competing for funds.

Ms. Hayes, finds giving students experience outside of the classroom very rewarding. One class conducted a survey on the diversity of the prairie. She joined the Adopt a River network. Some students have collected seeds and used them to plant prairie vegetation. Every hour of volunteer time is compensated ten dollars.

The entire property is sixty acres. The prairie planting is five to six acres. The river frontage is just short of 3,000 feet. Chairman Fuller noted that the river is not well connected with the landscape because of ditching and its steep banks.

Part of the problem with having the water level change three feet several times a year is that the plants cannot establish their baseline for how wet they want their feet to get. The Academy is unsure of what plants to establish until the wetlands are stabilized. At one point, Loyola considered letting the river flow through an area, but Dr. Roger Klopec of the Shedd Aquarium persuaded the Academy that a particular type of rare mussel was located on the stream bottom and should not be disturbed. In total, four different species of mussels were found.

The south wetland is dominated by cat tail and loosestrife. The north wetland is almost pure cat tail with a muskrat. It is heavily forested, mostly buckthorn and box elders. There

are some big cottonwoods which will remain. Some natural green ash will be selectively maintained.

The entire property is now under-drained. The original landscape was designated by the different watersheds; some of it went west towards The Glen, some went southwest, a little bit went north, and a good bit went east. The rules are one cannot disturb the drainage. Water goes to the detention basins first and then out.

Some red oshtre shrubs have been incorporated in the wetland. Loyola would like to get some nine-bark shrubs. There is some concern with planting shrubs on the riverbank in terms of their catching flood debris. There is a problem of log jams which threatens the natural riffle pool habitat. Chairman Fuller noted that not all log jams are detrimental to habitat.

Chairman Fuller suggested a coordinated partial burn for Lot 16.

What Loyola is interested in is a wild land with natural areas. There is a mowed-grass path for a cross-country trail, part of which will double as a Village walking path. Ms. Flakne said work has begun on the walking trail along the river on an easement on Loyola's property which goes up to the North Navy Ditch.

Commissioner Blomquist said a good model of a cross-country trail that is used as a nature trail is in Middleton, Wisconsin called the Pheasant Branch Creek Nature Area. It is contiguous with the middle school and Middleton High School. The cross country team uses it as part of their course.

## **Old Business**

### **Report on Downtown Plan Meeting**

Commissioner Beck attended the Downtown Plan meeting. Mr. Kim Woodrow of the Village Board, Chairs the Committee. This meeting essentially was a consultants' presentation to the Downtown Committee to which the public was invited. The Downtown Committee's interest in the river is to ensure the downtown does not flood; so their concern was about flood plane and topography. The private market is going to determine what direction is taken. Chairman Fuller said the public interest has to be clearly articulated and the ground rules can be set by the Village. Some space can be made into an amenity, an attractive part of the environment. Commissioner Beck said the consultants have suggested which parcels are best suited for redevelopment. Some parcels are on the river and some are not. The OLPH parking lot was not addressed. The triangle piece (the area of Glenview and Waukegan Roads and the river) would be a good open space.

Chairman Fuller asked Commissioner Beck to begin writing a draft letter to Mr. Woodrow which will be e-mailed to other NRC Commissioners for comments. Chairman Fuller will send it to Mr. Woodrow to pass it on to the consultants and other Board members. Ms. Flakne will remind NRC Commissioners when the next Downtown Plan meeting will be held.

The downtown issues are the: business community; traffic safety; and zoning issues regarding density. The river concern will be interjected among these other matters.

#### **Discussion of the Final Draft of the West Fork Assessment**

Ms. Flakne said the consultants view this edition as their final report. They have yet to provide a disk of the report.

Chairman Fuller's comments on the final draft:

- 1) Some of the material in this draft is being seen by the Commissioners for the first time. The consultants may be obligated to refine those areas;
- 2) What work should the consultants do in the future;
  - a) How to connect the river with the landscape;
  - b) In the spring they could visit the detention basins and determine if there are any surface tributaries in any of them;
  - c) Look at a map of the Village and see if there are still open tributaries that could be naturalized to provide wildlife habitat and provide benefit to the river even though they flow through pipes before reaching the river;
  - d) The report says there are other opportunities to connect publicly owned land to the river and how can that be accomplished. Could the consultants do a feasibility analysis of what are the alternatives for the extra piece or Lot 16;
  - e) On Lot 16, perhaps a proposal could be developed to re-meander the river. Mr. Randy Stowe might be a good person to ask;
  - f) It would be enormously helpful to have a map in the Public Survey Land Notes section showing Northfield Township and what plots they are referring to;
  - g) Suggestions on how to remove log jams.
- 3) Is this report sufficient for the Commissioners to begin writing a NRC plan.

While the report credits Reaches One and Two with being nice open space, the conclusions do not make the case that this is, after all, what was here originally and is missing from the Forest Preserve rivers because they are all overgrown. Whether or not the Des Plaines and the Main Fork of the West Branch were always overgrown, they are currently clogged with brush and trees. We have the one place where the river is really open. There are birds there that cannot live in the Forest Preserves. This is something the Commission can work into its version of the report.

What would the Commissioners like to see modified in the report—are there additional consultants' comments the Commission needs to hear? Chairman Fuller asked Commissioners to read the report and offer comments via e-mail by December 17, 2004.

The Natural Resources Commission should work on via e-mail for the next meeting:

- 1) Downtown Plan Meeting
- 2) Consultants' report
  - a) What should the Commission add to the report?
  - b) What should the NRC say to the community?
- 3) Spring river clean-up.

The Commissioners agreed not to meet in January, 2005. The next scheduled Natural Resources Commission meeting will be on Monday, February 21, 2005.

### **Adjournment**

Commissioner Freeman moved to adjourn. Commissioner Blomquist seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheri Scott  
Recording Secretary