

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Ad Hoc Working Group  
Meeting Minutes  
February 23, 2022

A meeting of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Ad Hoc Working Group was held on Wednesday, January 12, 2022 at 3:30 pm via Zoom. Chairperson Mary Oppenheim called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

Present:

Trustee Mary Oppenheim, Chairperson  
Camilla Dadey, Go Green Deerfield  
Elaine Jacoby, Village Trustee  
Art Wilde, Go Green Deerfield

Absent:

Don Anderson, Sustainability Commission Chairperson  
Bill Mertes, Sustainability Commission  
Victoria Street, Executive Director, Deerfield Township

Also Present:

Clint Case, Building and Code Enforcement Supervisor  
Andrew Lichterman, Assistant Village Manager / Director of Community Development  
Dan Nakahara, Planner  
Robert Phillips, Director of Public Works and Engineering

Document Approval

Commissioner Jacoby moved to approve the minutes from the February 9, 2022 Greenhouse Gas Working Group meeting. Commissioner Dadey seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Dadey, Jacoby, Wilde, Oppenheim (4)  
NAYS: None (0)

Public Comment

There were no Public Comments received via Zoom or email or in person.

Business

1. Discussion of Possible Policies, Programs and Resources
  - Focus Area:
    - i. Transportation Review and Wrap-Up

Mr. Lichterman worked with Christopher Call on the transportation statistics. He noted approximately 30% of the Village's fleet are administrative vehicles. The proposal is that the 16 vehicles be converted to electric by 2030 which will save 2.8 tons per vehicle (44.8 metric tons). The goal is to convert 90 percent of the fleet to zero emissions by 2050.

Mr. Lichterman noted approximately 5 percent (200) of the residential vehicle permits are electric. He questioned whether there should be benchmarks on how many electric vehicles should be in the Village by a certain year. He noted the Village is discussing adding Level 2 charging stations in the Village. They also discussed amending the Zoning Ordinance to make electric charging stations a permitted use.

Mr. Wilde noted Chris Call also summarized the key initiatives. He noted the Village can change the municipal fleet, anti-idling policies and infrastructure. Mr. Wilde suggested the Village can also assist with education and heightened awareness.

Mr. Call asked if the Village has a no-idling policy for municipal vehicles. Mr. Lichterman explained there is an anti-idling policy but there are some exceptions. Mr. Call asked about idling at schools. Mr. Lichterman noted it is a new group of parents every year. The Sustainability Commission has partnered with the schools on an anti-idling campaign. It often requires forming a partnership at the schools, as well as an active group of parents. Ch. Oppenheim noted there are signs at the schools, but the challenge is the streets around the schools.

## ii. Ecosystem Introduction

Mr. Lichterman indicated ecosystems include land, water (potable, wastewater, storm water), trees, air quality, tree canopies and other. Ms. Dadey presented the 2020 baseline, based on information from epa.gov and a consulting firm. Most of Deerfield is private property. Green infrastructure strategies use trees, vegetation, soil and natural processes to mimic natural hydrological functions to provide habitats for flora and fauna, air pollutant filtration, flood reduction and groundwater recharge functions. The Village has 40 percent tree coverage, but has lost a lot of trees. She suggested increasing green infrastructure by increasing quality, quantity and diversity in the number of trees as well as increasing native vegetation, rain gardens and garden swales. Ms. Dadey noted all of these things go together and have multiple purposes. She explained the Village is already doing a lot to help the ecosystem.

Ms. Dadey discussed getting botanic garden trees in the 50/50 tree program so they have a better chance of survival and provide more life for the community. She noted the Sustainability Commission partnered with the library on a program and suggested it be ongoing.

Ch. Oppenheim noted the baseline report discusses increasing the tree canopy and diversity for a 12 percent increase in the number of trees. She believes it would be beneficial to somehow regulate the type of tree that can be planted under powerlines. Ch. Oppenheim noted aside from the carbon sequestration, trees have a tremendous effect on groundwater. They are all connected.

Mr. Wilde shared the National Geographic definition of an ecosystem. An ecosystem is a geographic area or plants, animals and other organisms, as well as weather and landscape working together to form a bubble of life. The Village is supporting the bubble of life. The Task Force has to determine what to encourage to ensure the right information is being communicated. Ch. Oppenheim noted as a municipality, the Village can directly impact a limited amount of property. The Village can regulate, educate and influence how private property is handled.

Ch. Oppenheim noted traditionally, lawn mowers were required to mow at a certain height and people were not allowed to plant certain things in their front yards. It took the Village a long time to allow people to keep chickens and bees. One person's definition is different than another person's; therefore, the Village can establish codes or encourage people to adopt more sustainable measures, but have to be sensitive to the public perception.

Director of Public Works and Engineering, Bob Phillips, explained the Village is in the process of revising the Municipal Code regarding management of parkway areas. He noted it is tough for the Village to regulate grass height. Mr. Phillips suggested starting to allow people to have tall grass in their front yard but not in the right of way. It looks very nice if it is well maintained.

Mr. Lichterman believes the Village can influence commercial properties and Village property. Commercial properties are putting in drought-resistant landscaping that does not require irrigation. The Village also discusses matching incentives with behavior. Many times, there are incentives for incorporating recreation and open land. Mr. Lichterman believes the Village could have greater influence on commercial properties because they need to attain approvals from the Village. He suggested this would have a greater effect because of the property size.

Ch. Oppenheim noted the Village has planted rain gardens and bioswales. Mr. Phillips noted the Village has also done a lot at wastewater treatment plant as well. There are some other areas that have rain gardens. Unfortunately, similar to electric vehicle charging stations, people do not know what they are looking at and just walk by.

Ch. Oppenheim believes there is an opportunity for a lot of education. The Village can also do things with codes and set examples. The Village can have a section on the Village website with ecological plantings, sustainability gardens, etc. Ch. Oppenheim questioned whether the Village has enough room to plant 12 percent more trees. Mr. Phillips explained getting trees is also a challenge. The Village of Northbrook is required to plant 1500 trees each year and have to find a place to plant them on public property. Ch. Oppenheim believes that would lead to over planting, which is one of the largest killer of trees and does not lend itself to strategic, thoughtful horticulturally correct practices. She noted some areas are not suitable for planting trees. Code Enforcement Officer Clint Case explained trees cannot be planted in areas where it obstructs the water flow. Mr. Wilde noted these challenges make it more apparent how valuable the existing trees are to the Village. Mr. Lichterman noted the Sustainability Commission has pushed the 50-50 tree program and plant approximately 75 trees a year. At some point, it is not realistic to see it continue. Ms. Dadey suggested targeting the areas that do not have any parkway trees. Trustee Jacoby noted the Village can add a note with the vehicle stickers with a did you know.

Village Planner Dan Nakahara explained the Village has an Appearance Code for commercial properties that was updated a few years ago. There is a section on parking lots with a guideline of having a tree every six parking spaces. There is a delicate balance between the number of trees and the number of required parking spaces. The trees do provide value including shade. Developers are given guidelines and have to provide a landscape plan when going through the Zoning approval process. Ch Oppenheim does not believe trees belong in parking lots. Many times, they are improperly placed and do not survive. Mr. Phillips noted trees were popular in the past. People are now putting in more native grasses. Ch. Oppenheim noted the Village can try to influence people to do certain things, but if we do not do it properly, they will not survive.

Mr. Wilde suggested getting a bird's eye view of what we have now and where the best places are to accomplish what we want to accomplish. Mr. Phillips will do that with the mapping system.

#### Public Comment

Amy Call believes the Village can help with Ordinance topics, education and the tree survey and mapping of the canopy. Ms. Call suggested the Village be a leader and have a demo garden with an island of meadow or a wet sedge path. She does not believe new residents are aware of the 50/50 program.

Ms. Call noted Northbrook has a reimbursement program for rain gardens as well as private trees, which would provide the opportunity to bump up the number of new trees. Ms. Call noted the Appearance Code suggests native plants but does not dictate a certain percentage of native plants.

#### Adjournment

There being no further business or discussion, Mr. Wilde moved to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Jacoby seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Dadey, Jacoby, Wilde, Oppenheim (4)

NAYS: None (0)

The next meeting of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Ad Hoc Working Group will take place on Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at 3:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeri Cotton  
Secretary