

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, MAY 19, 2015  
7:30 P.M. at Courtroom, 169 Mt. Pleasant Ave., Mamaroneck, NY 10543

PRESENT: Monica Barach (Co-Chair), Joan Heilman, Phil Horner, Marc Karell (Co-Chair), Shonna Keogan, Kristen Carpenter, Laura Holbrook, Sarah Richards, Greg Cutler, Assistant Planner, Maria Karsou, Martin Hain, David Finch, Liaison to BOT, Sarah Robertson – Tree Committee

ABSENT: Cathy Hiller

1. Tree Committee – Sarah Robertson joined the meeting to discuss the work currently being undertaken by the tree committee. Tree committee has been leading the process for the VOM the last 4 years, picking sites and has revised planting procedures. It is possible there will be a tree ordinance in the future. They have identified what trees the committee would like to plant but it hasn't been formalized.

The committee has recently been awarded 2 grants, one will be used to develop a management plan for the Village's trees and the other was awarded for maintaining existing trees. The committee is interested in pursuing a streetscape plan, rather than responding solely to resident requests. Sarah did feel they did not receive enough requests. The committee's initial plans are to create and plant 1-2 tree pits during the planting season. Each pit costs \$10,000. Right now they have targeted a strip mall on Boston Post Road, (location of Pizza Gourmet and Solo Cleaners) where they would like to plant. Tony from DPW had told the committee that utility lines would preclude cutting tree pits in the sidewalk in that area so they were considering installing raised plantings although they are not ideal for the health of the trees. Monica suggested another resource that might be helpful work around utilities. Marc asked if retailers are concerned about trees blocking storefront view from street. Sarah said they are definitely working with the retailers to make sure all are happy with plantings and have looked for examples for suitable trees in other areas including Greenwich where columnar trees were used.

The tree committee is working with Cornell Agriculture extension and arborists to develop the grant funded maintenance plan and long range maintenance plans. The CFTE suggested some other resources including a native plant expert, contact information will be sent by the individuals.

There was also a question whether trees could be planted on private property in areas where there was not a wide enough sidewalk to accommodate tree pits. Sarah said they were exploring option of planting on private property, there is a NY State law called 'beyond the right of way' that says that municipality should be able to spend money on trees in areas where no place on public property. The management plan would address that option as well enable to plant trees in areas with no area now including Washingtonville where residents have expressed interest.

One member asked if when trees are diseased or determined to create a public hazard does VOM work with tree committee? Sarah cited two examples when this has happened. The first of a tree that looked diseased, but when additional tests were done it was shown to be healthy. The second example was when trees were taken down on the main retailing blocks of Mamaroneck Avenue. The committee had several experts look at the trees, and they did attempt to find another solution instead of taking them down. Their goal is to make sure decision to remove trees is not made too hastily. Committee would like to get into place a consultant on retainer; the management plan would address these steps.

There was some discussion of how can CFTE can help. Sarah suggested a member of CFTE occasionally attend the tree committee meetings. They could use help with outreach to the community and managing the website. Some conversation about Facebook page and CFTE will include contact information and tree care to PR and marketing efforts. Phil mentioned CFTE collaboration with Save the Sound and Marine Ed center. Any suggestions for additional member for tree committee would also be welcome.

2. Clean & Green Day – Agreed that day was generally a success. In the future additional volunteer help with morning refreshment pick up and clean up when the event ended was suggested. There was also a suggestion to assign clean up location leaders in advance so teams can be assembled as volunteers arrive rather than waiting for larger group. Gift certificates were well received. Added benefit of cleanup day preparation was scouting report by the Water team, which located some areas where maintenance by Village parks or DPW were more appropriate than volunteers. These included areas by Columbus Park where native plantings needed maintenance and invasive plant control. List of locations was sent to Barry at Parks dept. Greg mentioned that a RFP had been issued last summer for native plant control but no proposals had been received. The RFP would need to be reissued.

There was some conversation about organizing another clean up around International Beach Day in the fall. Martin mentioned benefits of community bonding as well as Village beautification. If the committee wanted to organize the VOM for an official clean up in conjunction with International Beach Day, organization would have to begin very soon.

### 3. Subcommittee – Water

a. Phil reported on overflowing sanitary sewers, which the DEC issued a consent order last fall. – the neighborhoods with particular concern are Orienta and the Flats. VOM paid a fine and agreed to a remediation plan. In March, board passed a resolution to furtherance testing & repairs. Village has allocated \$84,000 for home inspection visits. There is a suspicion that much of flow issue comes from illegally hooked up drainage and leaking lateral pipes. In particular the sewage pipes from house to street, an issue that has not taken care of in the past. To test the VOM sends a letter requesting access for inspection to residences. The residents do have the right to refuse access. In 2008, there

was 50% compliance and no enforcement action for the 50% that didn't allow access. Suggestions to encourage residents to cooperate include issuing a ticket. Currently when the resident's title changes, a plumber must certify that the residence is in compliance. Dave Finch suggested the CFTE continue asking how the issue, is being handled so it is not being forgotten.

To help educate homeowners about proper drainage of sump pumps and drain placement, Phil will write an article and suggest images from Arcadis to illustrate. Arcadis has data base of what piping has been inspected by them.

b. The committee expressed concern that the resolution passed in response to the consent order was not brought to the attention of the CFTE in advance.

c. Question from subcommittee about what was being done about already identified water pollution hot spots. Additional testing needs to be done to locate the source of pollution but lack of rain has hampered testing. Again, CFTE needs to continue to ask questions to make sure issues are resolved.

c. There is a snafu in funding for the Marine Center from the VOM. The VOM had allocated funds to support staffing for camp visits but had not allocated funds for salt water tank maintenance. Dave suggested the Marine Center ask the Harbor Island Conservancy to accept donations earmarked for tank maintenance, donations would then be tax deductible. If donations funneled through VOM, they would not be tax deductible.

d. MS4 report required yearly by Federal law for municipalities that release water into an open water body. Phil has given comments re report, which for the most part, are fine tuning. But last point – municipal gov own maintenance. Emphasis on catch basin cleaning. Phil proposing that pilot program, be included (for leaf bagging pick up).

e. LWRP – recommendations due from HCZM, document has only just been delivered. CFTE has been included in LWRP as having an ongoing advisory role to watch over water. The CFTE does have the ability to bring concerns to HCZMC but it was noted that the committee volunteers do not have formal scientific certification, therefore must remain in an advisory role.

4. Energy Subcommittee: The VOM is actively discussing converting streetlights to LED's as has been done in Town of Mamaroneck. New Rochelle is also undertaking replacement with LED's and VOM has been investigating piggy backing on the New Rochelle contract. Marc expressed concern that issues that should be considered including whether the street lighting would improve conditions, including addressing locations that are under lit and if the lights would have the appropriate spread (leaving no dark zones between lights). Dave felt currently the proposal was simply replacing lighting but not improving the field conditions. Marc advised the Village to hire an experienced consultant that could scrutinize the proposal, suggest revisions to improve, and supervise the initial study. Marc also advised the VOM to self finance the conversion for greater savings.

5. Recycling Subcommittee: Murphy Brothers may be a possible location for fabric recycling location. Village will follow up on request. Larchmont Farmer's market now has vendor that accepts all fabric.

6. Quality of Life Subcommittee: Community Garden – Greg reported the VOM is trying to get the garden in place by June 5, Sarah noted concern about too much shade at location. It had been suggested that a tree be removed but Sarah asked what kind of tree would be removed and noted if a native tree, would be possible repercussions. Project manager for community garden will be Rich.

7. Communication Subcommittee: Committee would like to develop materials to publicize and educate about environmental issues including the leaf blower ban, a push to compost lawn droppings, leave mulching during the fall, etc. Greg will find out if budget is available for signage or other materials for outreach. Dave Finch requested the subcommittee consider raising awareness of additional issues with environmental impact including backyard pick up of garbage. If backyard pick up was discontinued, vehicle emissions would be lowered.

Additional business:

Leaf blower ban goes into affect May 15. TOM is discussing a ban on leaf blowers unless they are certified at 65 decibels or less. CFTE will watch progress of their conversation and may consider recommending adoption of a similar regulation.

Erosion – sediment, in construction. Building department personnel are being certification for sediment inspection. In the Building department software, a new field for tracking inspections will be added.

Solarize program is going very well, 26 people have signed contracts. After being approached about program, BAR agrees that solarization is important and will consider when reviewing proposals. Program ends June 22, asking for extension for commercial buildings.