



MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 2021, 5:00 PM
Virtual Meeting. Public may join via Zoom.

A. ZOOM MEETING INFORMATION.

I. This item contains documents which provide call in information and instructions for the Zoom meeting.

B. ROLL CALL.

I.

Present: John Arendt, Randy Scannell, Seth Hoffmeister, Julia Noordyk, Mark Walter, Kaurie Mihm, Ned Dorff, Excused: Cody Sandahl, Absent: Stephanie King

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.

I. Approval of Sustainability Commission meeting agenda for May 19, 2021.

Moved by Ald. Randy Scannell, seconded by Mark Walter to Approve the agenda of May 19, 2021..
Motion Passed.

Yes- Randy Scannell, Ned Dorff, Seth Hoffmeister, Julia Noordyk, Mark Walter, John Arendt, Kaurie Mihm, Abstain- None.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

I. Approval of minutes from April 21, 2021.

Moved by Ald. Randy Scannell, seconded by Professor John Arendt to Approve minutes from April 21, 2021.

Motion Passed.

Yes- Randy Scannell, Ned Dorff, Seth Hoffmeister, Julia Noordyk, Mark Walter, John Arendt, Kaurie Mihm, Abstain- None.

E. REGULAR BUSINESS.

1. Discussion with possible action regarding sustainable landscaping and land use at East River Park / Emilie Park. Brought forward by Ned Dorff.

Moved by Ald. Randy Scannell, seconded by Ned Dorff to Refer to Staff and apply for possible grants and work with outside groups to restore park areas along the East River.

Motion Passed.

Yes- Randy Scannell, Ned Dorff, Seth Hoffmeister, Julia Noordyk, Mark Walter, John Arendt, Kaurie Mihm, Abstain- None.

2. Discussion with possible action to implement a No Mow May policy. Brought forward by Alder Scannell.

Moved by Mark Walter, seconded by Ald. Randy Scannell to Refer to I & S Committee to establish a policy to allow Green Bay residents to voluntarily participate in No Mow May.

Motion Passed.

Yes- Randy Scannell, Ned Dorff, Seth Hoffmeister, Julia Noordyk, Mark Walter, John Arendt, Kaurie Mihm, Abstain- None.

F. INFORMATIONAL.

1. Resiliency Coordinator update.

Progress updates were give for Green Infrastructure Code Amendments, Planned Natural Landscape online registration, and resiliency plan progress.

2. Committee updates.

John Arendt gave an update from the clean energy sub-committee.

3. Trex Plastic Film Recycling Challenge

Kaurie Mihm gave an update regarding the plastic film collection challenge, which begins June 1. Collections bins and signs will be set-up at City Hall, Wildlife Sanctuary Nature Center and Observation Center.

G. ADJOURNMENT.

Motion to adjourn moved by Ald. Randy Scannell, seconded by Mark Walter to Adjourn.

Motion Passed.

Yes- Randy Scannell, Ned Dorff, Seth Hoffmeister, Julia Noordyk, Mark Walter, John Arendt, Kaurie Mihm, Abstain- None.

VERBATIM MINUTES

- All right, wonderful, thank you. We'll call the meeting to order at 5:03 PM. Item A, Zoom meeting information, success, and move on to item B, Chair, Seth, I am here. Vice Chair, Ned.

- [Ned] Present.

- [Seth] Alder Randy.
- [Randy] I am here.
- [Seth] John.
- [John] Present.
- And it doesn't look like we have Stephanie, Kaurie.
- Present.
- [Seth] Julia.
- [Julia] Here.
- And you said Cody is excused, and Mark.
- Here.
- [Seth] All right. Onto approval of the agenda.
- [Randy] So moved.
- Motion by Randy. Is there a second?
- [Mark] Second.
- [Seth] By Mark? All those in favor of approving the agenda for today's meeting, say aye.
- [Group] Aye.
- [Seth] All those opposed. All right, approved. Minutes from last meeting.
- I move to approve the minutes.
- [Seth] Move to approve, all there Andy. Is there a second?
- [John] Second.
- By John? All those in favor of approving the minutes from last meeting, say aye.
- [Group] Aye.
- [Seth] Wonderful, all those opposed? That carries, alright onto regular business, discussion with possible action regarding sustainable landscape and land use at East River slash Emily Street Park, brought forward by Ned. Ned or Melissa, would you like to speak to that to start?

- This was brought up in the last meeting, and we tabled it or held it over for this meeting. I don't have a lot to say at this point, other than for the land use part of it, Ned, I don't know if you were referring to the dog park suggestion, or just the sustainable landscaping conversion to potential pollinator habitat and maybe better adapted plants for that area of the East River Parkway.

- Sure, I can speak to that. I think it'd probably be best to separate that, the dog park discussion and to direct that directly to the parks, and work with Elder Galvin on that question. So really this one is about sustainable land use over there at the park on really both sides of the East River as it flows through the Aster East River area, into the Joanna's area. That that area that is flooded pretty regularly, and mostly landscaped in lawn, grass. As we've seen over the last few years, a lot of that lawn has died off. It's been flooded over and over again, and there are pretty vast swaths of land that are muddy and brown and dead, and it is, I think kind of a- If we're the group that sent forward the water resolution to respect our local waters, and I think part of that is paying attention to how our local waters behave, and not trying to fight those waters. There are plants that we could be putting in place on those large dead areas that would have more flood tolerance, and, and certainly, I know Melissa, you had said if I would like some screen-sharing, I can show you some of the pictures I've taken and then talk about-

- [Melissa] Sure.

- [Ned] Some of those resources for flood tolerant plants.

- [Melissa] I think you can go ahead and share your screen, should have permissions.

- Looks like I'm still not able to do so. There we go. All right, thank you. So I'll go, I have several pictures. I'll just show you a couple of what I'm talking about. One, there are a lot of areas on both sides of the river down in that neck of the woods that are huge brown spots basically, and it is due to a lot of the flooding over the last few years, pretty regular flooding. Around this is the grass. So this picture I took a little bit, probably a month ago, so it is greener down there now. But, these large areas keep dying off, and if you get up closer to some of them, you'll see there's even some standing water in those areas, and some Canada geese nesting as well, and these are in like the athletic fields. So, I think one solution in both aesthetically addressing it and environmentally addressing it is to look at what some recommendations are for wet prairie planting in the area, grasses and wild flowers that are tolerant, and I found some resources from the Michigan DNR, and then also from the Wisconsin DNR that I think would be useful if we were to kind of delve into this. I wouldn't suggest us picking plants tonight. I think that would be something that would be better handled with the discussion with staff members. But, I do believe that we can recommend to move away from lawn grass in some of those over flooded areas, and put in some native pollinator-friendly, drought and and flood tolerant plants along the East River. What was asked, actually before this meeting, by a member of the media, if this was to address flooding in the neighborhood, and I just want to make it clear that it is not to address flooding in the neighborhood on any kind of a grand scale. Certainly it could be used as an example of here's what you can do at home. You can put in some rain gardens and things like that for minor flood water mitigation. But really, this is not a goal of mine right here to completely get rid of all the flooding in the East River. This is just to address some of those spots on the parks alongside the East River. So I can stop sharing that. And I remember, actually, I saw Randy's item about No Mow, and it kind of ties into my item here, ties into the discussion last year we had about No Mow May. After we talked about that, I talked with director Grenier for quite a while, and we kind of came

to a conclusion of let's look for land that the city owns that would be kind of ripe for some of these native perennials, and to my mind, we have quite an opportunity down along the East River to replace some of the long grass that keeps dying off with some of these Wisconsin native perennials, so.

- [Melissa] As a staff person, I think it's a segway when we get to that point, and I'm in support of that as well.

- [Seth] Thank you Ned, Julia? You have your hand up.

- I just wanted to, I'm going to put it in the chat. So, just so folks are aware that I'm in partnership with Baylor Regional Planning Commission, did an East River floodplain study and looked for areas to improve habitat already, and so, the link I just put in there is specifically one of the action plans or, I'm sorry, recommendations specifically for this area in Green Bay. Kaurie I'm surprised they didn't work with your parks on this actually when they were doing it, but it has basically the recommendations already, Ned, for what you're looking for anyway. So it's already teed up to be a project area that you could apply for our grant and do restoration in this area for. And they even identified the types of habitat types that you would be planting like to that area, and so it would be in terms of flooding, what you can say though, is it's protecting the flood plain, and like, so not developing it, and it's a really important piece of not developing in the flood plain. Therefore, it does have a flood benefit, flood protection benefit. And then that, it would be to, their project was to enhance fish and wildlife habitat, but also protect and enhance public land and park access too.

- Thank you, Julia, could I ask you a question? So I remember you, actually, you and I talked about this, the idea of planting along the East River maybe a year or two ago, and I think you had mentioned that doing a large scale planting in that neighborhood, either on the Van Beaver side or on the Astor side, wouldn't necessarily be kind of a one and done project to control flooding in that area. Does that sound familiar to you?

- Yes, so your question?

- Would you, okay, so is the recommendation that you shared with us more about flood control, or is it something else?

- It's exactly kind of what you, it's what you said. This is a really great opportunity to improve like, fish and wildlife habitat and restore wetland floodplains. Right now it's turf grass. You're likely not going to do development, but it is in terms of it's in the flood plain, so which means you can count it towards being an action to increase flood resiliency, but yes, it's not going to solve the problems that exist there because it's, there's more, there's houses in the flood plain that are beyond the park area, but it is a flood benefit because you're protecting and restoring the flood plain.

- Wonderful, wonderful.

- Does that make sense?

- That does, you know, I don't want to, I guess, based on the conversation that you and I had, whenever that was, I don't want to give anyone kind of the false hope that putting a bunch of plants in the park is going to solve our flood problems along the East River in that part of town. So I just want to be mindful about how we would communicate that recommendation.

- That is correct. I think, again, your message that is really accurate though, and we want to promote restoration of the floodplain in other areas too, like naturalizing it also. So it's not gonna- It's protecting flood storage.

- [Ned] Okay.

- And it's like, it's an important asset that that is an area that is allowed to flood.

- Right, right. What do you recommend, I guess, based on what I talked about on those patches, those are mostly, that I took the pictures of on the west side of the river, would you recommend a different maybe motion, or?

- I don't know, I guess what I'm thinking is, it's not just- I guess I would just encourage it as a, there's a lot of people in this area outside of city staff that are interested in doing a restoration project like this and to, you know, have city step work and leverage that, those opportunities in terms of grants. So like, the city could work with the Nature Conservancy to secure a grant and then do the restoration kind of things, you know? Basically, like, or something like that. So I guess my point is, it's not all just left up to city staff. Like there's a lot of people and partners around in this area who would want to collaborate on a project like this and then the worst of the site has been done before this conversation. So it's already been started. So it's like a great opportunity and say from like us, yeah, let's move forward and make this happen.

- Awesome, yeah that's really good news.

- Alder Randy, you got your hand up? Just saying hi. So I'm wondering then, would a motion be, and would it go to parks, or where to go for Melissa, for staff to work on a grant with to apply to get a grant and work with these groups to restore as much of the East River that has been studied and looked at and planned for, would that be- Which way would it go, which would be better, parks or Melissa, do you think?

- Well, we could keep it general, because it is a park area. It's a park, you know, it's a designated park area. It would likely be park staff, but that doesn't mean that I wouldn't be involved necessarily. you know what I mean? So I don't know if we need to direct this, at this point to the parks commission, or the park's, you know, that committee that deals specifically with that. Kaurie, do you have any thoughts?

- [Randy] She's frozen in thought.

- Oh, she just says she has a poor internet connection. So I guess my recommendation- yes, yes we can.

- [Kaurie] Okay, my internet- I'm actually not sure if you're hearing me. I'm trying to call in.

- Should we have her type what she wanted to?

- Kaurie, if you can hear us try turning your video off, just using your audio.

- [Randy] You got to unmute your audio.

- [Kaurie] Hello?

- [Melissa] Yes.

- [Kaurie] Can you hear me now? I, it keeps freezing up on me, so hopefully this will help maybe now, sounds like, can you hear me? Okay.

- [Randy] It's a lot better.

- [Kaurie] Great, I don't know. It sounded like you're maybe looking for input or I'm not sure, sorry.

- The question is, you know, as far as a motion, how to refer this, does it just refer to staff? Does it go specifically to park staff and then, you know, using some inner, you know, interdepartmental collaboration with outside agencies or does it need to go to a- Does the sustainability commission now need to refer it to a standing committee? Which is kind of what I'm thinking it needs to go to.

- [Kaurie] As standing committee, like within the sustainability commission, you mean?

- No, a standing committee, yeah. Yes, the parks committee. That's what I'm wondering if it needs to go to.

- [Kaurie] I guess I like the idea of referring it to staff. We are in, you know, to do this type of initiative, so to speak. We are currently looking at the possibility. It looks like I'm- Okay, I think I'm back maybe?

- Yep, yep, we can hear you now.

- [Kaurie] Sorry, we're back? Okay. We are exploring other areas of the city right now, like potentially acquiring some property. Am I, is this working?

- You are now.

- [Kaurie] Maybe I should try calling in again or maybe refer to park staff, and we can go from there if you're comfortable with that?

- Okay, I just have one question for Julia. Do you know what all was studied? Was it all in the city park's per view, or was it outside?

- It looks like, I think they just looked at the opportunities along the, I dunno, you'd have to read the beginning of it. I think they looked at public properties along the East River to try to figure out where there was opportunities for restoration. So it's more than Green Bay, but their recommendations are all based on municipal recommendations. So that leads me to think if they looked at public property. I would like to add like, just this area though, is having been down there and understanding the flooding in this area. I feel like this goes a little bit beyond just restoring, like, wetlands down there, and the neighborhood itself could really do from like a master plan of redevelopment. Like, whether it's like the home buyouts along with improving public access and open space in that area, and like,

what that even looks like in that area, just around flooding. So, like the restoration stuff is like an immediate thing you could do probably right away, 'cause you have the land, but does it fit within like a broader, how can we make this area more resilient? Not really, which would take a little bit more of a focused planning process, so. With the community, 'cause then you could find out, like, what that community wanted in that area, whether it's like amenities and stuff, but just a thought, you know? It goes beyond just frustration of, to me, in this area, if you're going to start doing stuff, why not have like more of a master plan for the neighborhood in general?

- I think there was, that was started I think, back when there was flooding. I don't know. I mean, I wasn't involved in that. It wasn't my area, but I don't know. We've we checked with other Galvin and see we're all- But I thought there was a plan of foot to address that. I don't know where they are or who's doing it even, or what, public works? I'm not sure.

- Well, it's all part of, you know, what part of this position, my position, is for flood resiliency, not just in that neighborhood, but you know, throughout the city for flood resiliency, whether it's coastal flooding or other areas. So I would say yes, it's being looked at and you know, do we have a master plan specifically for that neighborhood? No, there's not a master plan at this point.

- No, yeah, and I just meant to say that, that's like a great, that's another great project, you know what I mean? That could be teed up for a grant that would include, you know, restoration and potentially increase the open space there. But like, low-hanging fruit, you could get a grant probably pretty easily too, do the wetland plants and restoration in that area. Just as is. Maybe think about public access though? Like boardwalks and stuff, you know.

- So the resource, sorry, I just want to say the resource Julia shared is great for that east side of the river, so I think we'd still have to look at what we could do along the west side. The pictures I took are from the west side of the river where that Emily Park is an East Lawn and Optimist, It looks like they focused pretty heavily on the Van Beaver, north and south, if I'm not missing something. Which isn't bad at all, I think both sides need to be attended to, just wanted to point that out. That's a cool, that's a great resource. Thank you for sharing that.

- [Kaurie] Okay, I think I'm back. Are you hearing me?

- Yeah, we're good now.

- [Kaurie] Okay, great. So yes, I mean, we actually were involved with some of that planning with the, that link that Julia shared and with the Nature Conservancy and going through that process, the parks department was, we've also been, the parks department has been working with other municipalities to explore the flooding along the East River trail to see if or what should be done about the areas of the trail that gets flooded, and if we kind of want to work on that as a collaborative effort, or really kind of permit municipality. So we're definitely exploring that right now. One of the things we're taking into consideration with that then is along with that, do we have to plan for storm water management? And if so, what does that look like? And where would that happen? And, you know, as part of the engineering to go along with getting the areas of trail out of the flooded areas. So that's definitely discussions we're currently having. I think too, parks is definitely open to in general and throughout the city we took like, under-utilized turf or flooded turf or, you know, that don't really serve the city well. I think probably two of our biggest struggles with making, you know, the reduction of turf grass is really budget to implement the new plantings, but also to maintain them.

We're not really set up right now to be able to manage a lot of native turf planting or native plantings, you know, versus turf grass, and so it's just something that we'll have to consider as we move forward, how are we going to manage these areas once they're converted? And the hope is, you know, hopefully it's only a few years, once they're established, they for the most part kind of maintain themselves. Of course everything needs maintenance. Once we get it established, I would love to be able to put a metric to the cost of maintenance of these naturalized areas versus turf grass. I put just a little bit of research into that and was not really successful in finding that, but I really think it could be a great way to help sell the cost of implementing these types of spaces to say, yes, it's going to cost money up front to convert, but look at what it'll save us in the long run, and not only, you know, economically, but also it would increase our pollinators, you know, plantings for pollinators, that sort of thing. So we definitely think there are great benefits to it. We are exploring a couple of other areas in the city right now for doing this type of conversion. We're looking at trying to acquire Parkway at the Woods golf course, so kind of the northern portion of that is being developed right now, and as part of that development, we're trying to acquire 12.1 acres, which is adjacent to as the south branch, or Southern branch of the Bear Creek, and so with that, our hope is we can convert that, you know, all that old turf from the golf course into native planting to make it more of a nice riparian buffer. So that's a project we are currently looking at also, and even like right now, also working with the Wilder Neighborhood Association, they just got a grant for a thousand dollars for native plantings at Wilder Park that we're planning to put around the new playground area, which is like Laura Ingalls Wilder theme, so somewhat appropriate with the bed. And so again, just kind of using that as a sort of a learning tool for us as we convert from turf to, you know, native type of planting to see what goes into even a small project like that. So yeah, we're definitely on board. I think figuring out budget and maintenance is going to be our biggest obstacle as we move forward, so. Yeah, I guess that's all I have unless anybody has any questions or anything.

- Then I make a motion that we refer this to staff to look into getting grants and working with outside groups to restore whatever areas we can get restored.

- [Seth] Motion by Randy.

- I want to make sure I have that before we completely move on, motion to refer to staff and apply for

- Grants.

- [Melissa] Grants.

- [Randy] Work with outside groups to restore areas along the East River. Not going to say anything, anyone?

- [Seth] Julia, you went off mute?

- I did, I don't know if it's, do we have discussion before we, is the time for that?

- Yeah, we had a first by Randy second by Ned, so discussion before a vote.

- Yeah, I just wanted to, you know, recognize what Kaurie was talking about with thinking about long-term with maintenance, do you have a way that you're prioritizing which areas you're working at?

'Cause you know, it's not like we want to just like, butt-in to whatever your planting thing is too, you know, we don't want to direct something that's, you know, giving kind of, trying to shortcut stuff. We don't want to make, you know, the workload bigger when you already have what your plan- Yeah, I'll just stop. I think you understand what I'm trying to say.

- [Kaurie] I guess with that I would say right now, for the parks department, our priority in that area of the city is the flooding along the trail and trying to medic along with potential storm water management that comes along with that, and knowing, you know, that that for us is a priority right now, and I think you don't necessarily want to put in a nice native planting knowing that all of a sudden it's going to have to be torn up because we got to implement the right kind of stumped base to capture the storm water to clean it, you know, that kind of thing. So I definitely think we want to keep it on our radar and it's an area we're exploring, but as far as kind of that prioritization right now for us, it's I think the trail flooding, but not to say that that the planting can't go along with it as we're exploring that, so. I guess that's the best way I can answer that.

- And I know the trail flooding has come to committee, and that was okay. I know we tried to, I think we gave staff a directive to try and get coordinated with other municipalities, and then licenses to work on hours, and then the rest of the- other part slide out, and, I don't really know-

- [Melissa] And we happened, oh hang on. Randy, I was just going to say, I've been involved with the East River resiliency collaborative, which is a partnership between the Nature Conservancy and a lot of different villages and municipalities and other stakeholders. So there is action being taken and momentum along that front.

- [Seth] Great, further discussion on the motion? Hearing none, we will call a vote, all those in favor of said motion, say aye.

- Who was the one that seconded Randy's motion?

- [Seth] Ned.

- Could you read back, we do have a member of the media that was interested in this item, if we could just reread the motion so she can catch that? I think that'll be nice.

- Motion to refer to staff and apply for grants to work with outside groups to restore areas along the East River.

- All right, so that's the motion. We had everybody signified their "Ayes". Were there any "Nay" votes? Hearing none, that passes. All right, great. Thanks everybody. Onto item two, discussion with possible action to implement a No Mow May policy that was brought forward by Alder Scannell. Randy, I'll let you take that away.

- Okay, I know I'm bringing this back because of discussions I've had with people in the community and on Facebook, there really seems to be a lot of people who would like to do this, and I started thinking, you know, I don't know if it's very helpful or not, but it's, I think if we can get people engaged in green behaviors, that's a good thing. And with redoing our ordinances now, and the idea of native gardens and registering those, I thought, perhaps we could piggyback on that, and if anybody wants to do it, they would register. They would again, you know, let the DPW register that they

wanted to do it, and they'd signed an agreement that, you know, after, you know, a week after, by one week after May, that it would be they'd mowed, and if not, they would pay a hundred dollar fine, or whatever Grenier thinks is appropriate, and if necessary, DPW could then farm out that work so they're not overworked, because that was part of the equation there of why DPW was big in this, really wasn't all that helpful. So I just to bring it back, kick it around, see what you think. And I'm wondering, do we want to encourage people to not mow their lawn? Or would we rather encourage them to get rid of the lawn and put a native garden? Is that maybe something we'd rather emphasize? Yeah, there we go. Instead of No Mow May, if people say, you know, I want to a grass road to help the pollinator say, well, you know, get rid of the grass, go native. So that's, I wanted to bring that up to, to see, you know, I'm not sure I want to do this or not, depending upon our discussion here, but I think there's a few things I think we should- The more we can get people engaged in green behaviors the better, and so what's the best way to do that? I'm open to whatever, but I think if we do decide to go with No Mow May, I think if we make it a part of being registered like the native gardens, I think DPW would be all right with that, I think. We'll have to go there. We'll have to have that discussion, but I think it makes it more possible anyway.

- I'd like to- I have a couple of things that I'd like to say before it opens up to the board. So I did review the minutes and I had a conversation with Steve also, 'cause this was brought up last April to I&S, and you know, as it stands right now, in general, I would say the feelings have not changed. You know, the rationale that was presented last year at this time hasn't changed as far as what the overall benefit to a No Mow May may really provide for pollinators. In our current ordinance, it allows for eight inches, which in some cases may be enough to allow for some of those early season flowers. And then the long grass complaints. I mean, that is a reality, that's a reality that that DPW faces every year. So that's something we need to bear in mind if we go down this, if the committee goes down this path, you know, I did ask for some information on what the complaints have looked like over the last few years and in 2019, and these are just May statistics, 115 long grass complaints. In May of 2020, there was 72 complaints in the month of May, and then so far this month we have 38 complaints for long grass, and what that translates into is in 2019, about 25% of those properties, of those 115, the city responds to and had to ultimately go out and cut the grass at those properties. There's a whole process involved, but basically when the city receives a complaint of long grass, they respond within a day, two days at the max, they have to go out to that property and do a site evaluation. And then they're, you know, and then the property owner is given some time to cut the grass. So I guess what this means is if we go the No Mow May route, it will definitely increase that complaint process, and the resources are already stretched pretty thin in regards to that. There was also a couple of experts, I guess, local experts, that were consulted last year, and Steve brought that forward in the meeting last year about the, you know, the potential benefits of No Mow May and really, I guess, the conclusion was, if someone's letting their grass grow long, but they're still treating it with, you know, with herbicides to treat dandelions. Now we just have really, we have long grasses and not a lot of flowers that are available. And I also agree with you, Randy. I think we need to promote to plant natural landscape areas, and encourage registration and really do a good job of getting the word out there so that, you know, if people want to do pollinator habitat, that it's maybe a long-term sustainable thing, than just one month, you're not mowing your grass, versus a whole section of your yard that's dedicated to pollinators. So my recommendation is to go that route.

- [Seth] All right, thanks, Melissa. Ned, you have your hand up.

- [Ned] I do. Can we, okay so, the long grass, some of that nine inches, wasn't that the level, where is that laid out? Because I thought it used to be nine inches for what was allowed to grow unmanaged in the city.

- I think with the revision, I was just looking at the noxious weeds and maintenance of vegetation revision, and it went from nine inches to eight inches.

- Oh, okay. Okay, I think, you know, we brought up last year and kind of arrived at the same question. Should we promote No Mow May or should we really be advocating for permanent pollinator plantings? I think that maybe there could be some kind of a compromise by mid may maybe to allow, I mean, this year it would've made a difference, right? Last year, it probably wouldn't have, depends on the weather kind of, how much is actually blooming by May. I think there's enough lawn violets and dandelions this year that would have made a pretty big difference this year. So I think, the initial impetus came out of the pollinator corridor working group, and we kind of pitched it to the city as, could we do this with city properties? The answer to that was no, because it would gum up the lawnmowers, and the machinery used on the city properties, and that the city would take the position of identifying areas owned by the city to convert from turf into pollinator habitat. Now immediately after that conversation that we had with Steve, COVID hit, everything kind of ground to a halt, the elections came about. So I do think we need to get back on the horse looking for city land that we can convert from turf in pollinators habitat. As far as allowing private residents to do it, I think we could refer that idea to I&S again, or wherever protection policy, probably not there, okay. I&S-

- [Randy] I&S.

- And then have a public kind of, you know, a publicly attended meeting to hear what people have to say about that. And the folks on I&S make a recommendation. That would be what I think we should do as a committee. I'll make a motion eventually if needed, but I think Julie has her hand up too.

- Yeah, I really, that was good comments, Ned, and Randy I so agree with what you said about, I see why you're coming from, from if people are specifically excited about it, too. So that is challenging. I just- The people last year, and I, it's not like I'm agal&St, I feel silly. I wouldn't say I'm like agal&St the No Mow May, but I just find it kind of silly, because it's not, like, just from my own experience, I mow, there's still dandelions and stuff, literally everywhere, but you look at my next door neighbor, who sprays, and it's bare. So like that to me is like a much bigger issue. It should be No Spray May, maybe, I think. But, so there's that, and then if you, if we let our grass grow through May, you could not mow it with our normal lawnmower either. I just don't even understand how that would be possible. So I think that causes like a whole bunch of other issues. So I, and then also my last thing is, from a stormwater perspective, healthy lawns soak up more water rather than running off and the best practices for lawn maintenance to have a healthy lawn with like root systems is to mow frequently actually, and keep it, mow with like three and a half inches or something, and mow it frequently at the beginning so it encourages root growth and you have a healthy lawn that can like absorb a lot of water. So it's actually the opposite of like stormwater management for a healthy lawns too. And weeds.

- All right, Kaurie?

- [Kaurie] Yes, so, I guess, kind of touching on what Julia said my last- So my understanding is the recommendation for mowing turf is you don't want to take off more than one third of the leaf plain for the health of the turf itself. And so, yes, I think, you know, to let it grow super long and then cut it down to that three inches isn't necessarily great for turf grass. I did too, and I can't remember the source or the article, but I did just recently read an article actually that explored the idea of No Mow, and I recall what it said, that actually mowing every two weeks was more beneficial, and providing flowers for pollinators, than letting your grow for like, say all of May, which I thought was interesting. I'm not sure how much research has been done on that, but just thought it was worth mentioning. But I do have to say, I am in favor of the No Mo May. I think- So I live in the city of De Pere and they are allowing No Mow May this year. They also are providing like a sign you can put in your yard that says, like, No Mow May and it has a bee on it, so people can understand, you know, what you're trying to achieve by letting it grow. You're not required to put that there, but it's something we could explore if we want him to move forward with it. I do think though, I like the idea. I think kind of what Alder Scannell was touching on is for me, I think it's too about teaching people to maybe change their perception about what your homeowner's yard needs to look like, and do we need that perfectly green manicured lawn? In my opinion, I don't think so, but you know, a lot of people in my family and that I talked to prefer to have that perfectly green manicured lawn, and I think it's mainly because of perception and really that's it, that's what they're comfortable with. So I think just kind of stepping outside the box by allowing something like this, maybe is a way to start changing people's perception about that, and I definitely liked the idea of encouraging the planned natural landscapes. I just think the average home owner doesn't know how to maintain them, so many will be afraid to implement them because they don't know what to do with them. Can we give them tools to teach them how to take care of them? Yes, I think that would be great. But yeah, I dunno, I'm in favor of it. So I think any way we can get it to happen would be great, and maybe having some sort of signage or other registration of it to help alleviate concerns would be a good way of achieving that.

- Thanks, Kaurie, Mark, and then Julia.

- Yeah, and actually Kaurie, those comments were right in line with what I was thinking of educating the public on No Mow May. It may not benefit the pollinators, it may or may not, you know, it depends on the season every year, but at least getting that idea into play that you don't have to mow your lawn right away, you don't have to have this super green over fertilized piece of property in your front yard or backyard, and I think it also sends an additional message. I mean, Appleton's been doing this for a couple of years now, De Pere's now doing it. If you're comparing successes, Appleton and Green Bay would be more comparable in terms of how many complaints they may get on yard issues on grass length, things like that, and I think it's more of an educational component than it is a specific pollinator benefit, but it may get people to think longer about mowing down their yards when the lovely dandelions do come up. I mean, I'm a huge fan of dandelions. I love it. My neighbor one side of my street is dandelions, one side of my street is not a dandelion to be seen. So, my dog and I walk one side and not the other, just, she's fertilizing the lawns anyway, so. But yeah, I guess, from just the standpoint of broader education, I think that No Mow May has merit in those terms on a regular basis for the city.

- As I'm thinking about it, I guess I'm not necessarily opposed to No Mow May, I still want more effort in promotion of pollinator areas, I think we need to get more education out there for city residents, but, you know, I liked what Kaurie was saying in what De Pere is doing in terms of the signage. I'm wondering if anybody has taken a look at what the cost of the complaints for long grass are, versus what the cost of perhaps that signage would be. So if we've got people identifying their

lawns as a No Mow May lawn, perhaps that reduces some of those complaints as well, it maybe does both, takes care of the pollinators, and maybe reduces the cost of the complaints, because they've self identified as No Mow May. Just a thought.

- Alright, thanks John. Other thoughts?

- [Randy] Yes.

- Randy.

- Yeah, I just want to reiterate, I think for me, the difference from last year to this year is the idea of, you know, registering the native gardens. I think some kind of registration process with signage. I like the idea of signage too, is the difference here. I think that should help. 'Cause if people have registered, and the complaint comes in, I mean, we talked about this for the native gardens. You know, people are going to complain about the hose, and DPW with that registration, can handle it. So I think I would look at this as being the same kind of processing kind of thing. I think if we push this forward, registration and signage, excellent, really nice, which should definitely be a part of it. I think, I don't think, without it I'm not sure we'd get PPWs buy-in, but I think with it I don't see, I think there's a, you know, Steve should be more amendable to that if we're helping him, if we're not giving him a headache, I think it makes it more doable. I guess I wasn't sure if I wanted to support this or not either. I just want it to have the discussion with all the new details and everything, and I really liked the idea of pushing native gardens. I didn't know you had to take care of them. I don't take care of mine. But anyway, so I guess, I guess I would like to push this onto I&S, that committee that this commission would, well I'll make a motion that we refer this to I&S with the, however it works, that people cure their lawns for No Mow May.

- Can you repeat that, Randy? That refer to I&S that-

- People can register their lawns for No Mow May.

- Okay, do we want to say anything like, adopt a resolution or, you know, for No Mow May, you know, including registration, I don't know how specific we need to get in the motion.

- I don't know if it'd be a resolution, it would be part of the- It would become part of our ordinance then, wouldn't it? Or part of a DPW policy.

- Would we say that we refer to I&S to establish a policy for allowing lawns to be part of a No Mow May program?

- Okay, sure. That sounds good.

- Refer to I&S committee to establish a policy-

- To allow for individuals to participate in a No Mow May program.

- [Ned] Could we- Anyway, I would like to amend it just slightly when we get to that point.

- Well then why haven't we been working, what would you like to see?

- Yeah, we're kind of work shopping this right now. So, the other thing that I just want to ask, as a part of discussion, is the pollinator work group willing to be a part of the work involved with promoting this, and I guess community outreach and some of those other aspects of, if this goes through really being a part of the whole process? Is there a capacity in the pollinator work group to help support this?

- Yeah, I think we need to, I would agree that it should be something that the working group takes on, along with what John is doing maybe out at GB as well, and he's connected to some of the folks that are also in the working group too, so, with GB's B program, I think John and I maybe should set up some time to talk about how we can effectively work together to promote this with our separate working groups.

- [Randy] Before I&S so that you can come to I&S.

- Yeah, I mean, I would ask as a staff person that, if this gets approved and it goes to I&S that there's good representation from the sustainability commission at that meeting. I guess that's what I wanted to say.

- Well, how do you want to amend it?

- I thought Julia had a really important twist on this, and not just calling it- and that way it can be kind of our own unique twist on that, and also push the message a little further that it's not just about cutting. It's also about what do you apply to your spin. And also to make it clear that we're not recommending that the city not cut, because that's not going to go anywhere with Steve and his crews.

- Right, this would be for property owners, and the thing that would be weird about- I like the idea of messaging with the No Spray, but there is no- you know, there's no city policy on that. So I don't know how that would look. I mean, if there's a policy, it makes sense.

- That's the thing, you know, we're not mowing anymore, we're not spraying. Sorry, Melissa, I cut you off.

- Well, I wanted to add, and please don't quote me on this, but I heard from the parks director, Dan last week, I was looking for different types of sustainability, things that the different departments have implemented over the last couple of years, and one comment that he said was the parks, they have stopped using pesticides. I don't know if that was- Other than for ball fields, other than for turf grass maintenance in ball fields, they have stopped spraying. So maybe it wasn't a big policy. I don't know, but that I do have record of that.

- Yeah, I'm not sure if there's anybody else, I don't know if any other departments sprays. I don't think DPW does. I could be wrong.

- It could be like, depending on, like, if there's certain facilities that a department has that they need to maintain clearance, they might use spraying, you know, utilities routinely do that. So I'm not really sure.

- Yeah, I'm not opposed to adding that to the communication, but it does, it does come across, I think the city has a- We're talking about property owners. We don't have any kind of policy or ordinance prohibiting or correcting that behavior. So maybe we should start looking at it all. Do we want an ordinance of no spraying?

- Do we want to have it be so that it's limited to Green Bay residential properties, you know, versus commercial properties or vacant lands or things like that?

- I think private property. So if there's a business that wants to do it, I think, you know, I think that just private property, this is the focus is for private property.

- Yeah, and I think it would be hard to I think it would be a bigger benefit in some ways to have it privately, you know, think about the paper mills, where they have set aside land that they spend hours mowing all the time. That would be great for a No Mow May experiment and demonstration project. Just in terms of the comment though, about the no spray, I would love it, you know, on a personal level, I have a breed of dog that is highly susceptible to yard pesticides and herbicides, Scottish terriers die more than any other breed because of it, and there's a clear connection between yard chemicals and tumors that they get in their bladder. So I'm adamantly against spraying stuff and always look at my neighbor's lawns when I walk with her. But I think it would be difficult to enforce any, then police in some manner, just because how do you identify a lawn that has not been sprayed? It's easy enough to identify the ones that have been sprayed, but how do you, you know, the absence of it is a tough call, while you could make it, you know, suggest that people don't don't spray during May as well. I would rather us get the No Mow May part down and then approach the other, because you're also, I suspect, going to get pushback from the yard companies on, you know, if you were saying, oh we're not going to tell people not to spray during May. Okay, go through any neighborhood in May, and that's one of their busiest times a year where they're fertilizing and spraying and doing all sorts of other things this time of year. So, rather than getting, you know, not getting a No Mow May policy put in place, because we're combining it with no spray policy, rather to get the No Mow May policy, set, put in place, get people used to that idea and then start talking further, or immediately after that start talking about, you know, not spraying as well as part of a larger effort, so.

- I think that's a fair point, I can remove my amendment idea for a later conversation. But I do like it, Julia, I think no spray is something that we should be promoting. Whether our yard company gets mad at us or not.

- There are cities that have city-wide policies for city properties that have stuff too. So, that could be something to start with here and look at.

- [Mark] Well, I think-

- [Julia] The parks already did it. So, you know, it could be just extending it to all city properties or something.

- Yeah, I think all the school districts have pretty well enacted that kind of policy too, haven't they?

- I hope so. That would be good. That would be an important one.

- So the main motion then, which was by Randy, or Mark? Can we get the motion repeated and can we get a second?

- Mark, go ahead.

- How about Melissa? Weren't you typing it up as we're going along? 'Cause I've gotten lost in this swallow and then- You're on mute.

- Refer to I&S committee to establish a policy to allow Green Bay residents to participate in No Mow May. I would say voluntarily participate.

- [Seth] Sure. That's the motion and that was by Mark?

- [Ned] I'll second.

- [Seth] Second by Randy. All those in favor, say aye.

- [Randy] Aye.

- Aye.

- [Julia] Aye.

- [Seth] All those opposed? All right, onto committee. Thanks everybody.

- Well, before we leave this, though, can I just ask that we come back to Ned and Julia's points about a no spray thing. Can we make sure that we get that onto an agenda sometime in the future so that we don't leave it behind for too long?

- Actually I'd like to have an even broader one. Could we do a- Could we look at all the types of pollution residents, you know, create and and start working on ways to mitigate that. I mean, how do homeowners pollute every which way, carbon footprint, everything, and what can residents start doing to mitigate their pollution? And I would think that would include spraying and hopefully a lot more.

- [Seth] Done, noted. I think we might for future discussions, want to to narrow that a little bit, Randy, otherwise we could be here a really long time, but I think we'll make sure the note June or July, or whatever discussion gets added to a future month. All right, moving on then to resonator update, under information.

- Okay. All right. So for my updates, let me just get my notebook. The latest update on the green infrastructure code audit project is that the chapter 13, which deals with landscaping standards in the zoning code, those are all, all five, there's five separate areas of that code that have been looked at and amended it's, you know, gone through various levels of lots of different staff input. Kaurie was very involved with that as well, and it's gone through law review. So we are at the point now where we have- We are going to do public outreach for chapter 13 before it goes to committee. It cannot go to committee until the municipal code, the entire code gets re-codified. So it's going to kind of wait, and it gives us time then to do some public input, public outreach sessions for the chapter 13.

Chapter 30, which deals with the stormwater code updates, that is still in progress. I made quite a bit of headway this week on it so far with some staff in my department. So the plan going forward is to wrap up the amendments to chapter 30 and then bundle those together, send them off. We're going to do a joint public input session for both chapter 30 and chapter 13 for the green infrastructure amendments, and after that, they'll go to each of those chapters will go to the respective committees, and then we will present those to council as one package. It saves on staff time. It also, you know, it's all part of the same project. So I think just messaging it, like that will avoid confusion for people thinking like, well, didn't we already hear a presentation on this? So that's my plan that I'm recommending, and it's been shared with senior staff to go that route as well, and then also just having more talks in regards to the American, the recovery, the funds that are that are coming towards the city of Green Bay on potential projects to pursue for green infrastructure. So having discussions with staff and the mayor on that, and then also drafting some of the components for the flood resiliency plan. What else? We're also putting together some survey questions for the residents in the East River area for neighborhood outreach, which will help guide some of the resiliency planning efforts as well. I guess those are the main things. Any questions?

- I have a question. Do you know how far along the process is for registering natural landscapes?

- Yes, yes.

- Thank you for bringing that up. So the process, it's just one, I mean, there's like a thousand updates now. It's just so that one I've been working, Steve, primarily myself, but Steve also and I have been working with Shelby for an online registration form that will guide residents through the process. So we have sort of a beta version right now, ready. Steve is putting together a sample plan so that we can have a PDF of, you know, what an example of a sample plan would look like that, so that when people go on to the city's website and they want to know, you know, how do I register my natural landscape? They can see, you know, these are the different components, you know, a site drawing, a list of plant species and whatnot, and right now we've, I'd say we're probably about 90% there. The goal was to have it ready to go by June 1st. So I think we're still on track for that. We also want to make sure that we have just regular downloadable PDF forms that people can print off and do it the old fashioned way if that's the way they would like to do it. But I think this will really streamline the process, and it'll alert staff when we have a registered landscape that's been received through that portal.

- So there's folks from the pollinator corridor working group that are interested in that, and this might be a service they could provide, is looking at a draft or just giving feedback on the beta form. Just as an idea. I'm not saying that you have to, but-

- Well, I mean, it's primarily kind of an IT thing, you know, the form, it's not like, it doesn't have pictures of plants on it or anything like that, and that seems like super pretty. I think the question is, you know, ideally, or, you know, logistically it should be housed somewhere within the DPW section of the website, but people might not know to go there, and so, you know, that's just kind of a logistical thing that I'm kind of toying with is where's the best place to put it? Where's the best so that people know to find it, because honestly, I'm sure everyone would love, every department would love their stuff to be front page news on the city's website. So that's kind of an internal question, so that people know where to go.

- Right, could it be linked to our sustainability page as well?

- It could, yeah, it definitely could be, you know, I'm thinking we could probably have multiple ways of getting there, but again, it's not necessarily as clear as day.

- Yeah.

- [Melissa] When you go to the city's website where to find everything. An idea that I've been toying around, this is kind of, you know, broadening the question a little, you know, answering your question a little bit. But one thing that I would really like the city to do is to have just the dedicated area for sustainability things the city's doing. Not necessarily just the sustainability committee, but different efforts in different projects that the city has done. So it's not just, this is our community and this is where everything lies, you know, because it's, there's really great things that are happening out there. It's just that we don't really have like one consolidated way of showcasing those efforts.

- [Ned] Okay, yeah, I like that idea.

- [Melissa] So that's just kind of my, in the back of my mind, where I'd like to see things go. So, we will need help promoting this. We will need help getting it through different channels in the communities so that people are aware of it, and hopefully it spurs more interest in doing this. We'd also like to link resources, local resources, you know, if someone's interested in creating a natural landscape, but maybe they don't know where to start. You know, not necessarily like, you know, to pay for a plan, but just, you know, maybe volunteer services that are out there for people to tap into.

- Yeah, if you think, well, maybe you and I can talk later.

- Yeah, Yeah.

- [Ned] Sounds good, thank you.

- Were there any other questions?

- I was just wondering for that landscape ordinance update, when you say you're doing outreach, is that to developers or who are you doing outreach to? That will be some of the stakeholders that the city will be contacting, and inviting, local landscapers, contractors, builders. Those will be the primary, you know, because the people that are doing construction in many cases also have to do stormwater plans. So that's why the idea was to combine a virtual Q & A listening session, input session, for both those chapters. Does that include like some- The people, developers who do subdivisions, or is it more of the commercial, anyone who has a parking lot kind of thing?

- I don't know that level of detail yet. I'm leaning on community and economic development to assist with that process. Last call.

- Hearing no other questions, we'll move on to a committee updates. Thank you, Melissa. Go ahead John.

- I'll just report out on the clean energy work group, our most recent meeting, you know, our starting point has been the city's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2050, and we've started looking at a few areas. One was with our carbon footprint. That's sort of our starting point, but

we're also starting to look at, okay, what's the next step? And ultimately, if we're going to reach carbon neutrality by 2050 or earlier, we need to develop a plan, and we're starting to look at several Wisconsin communities that actually have climate action plans. We want to- We're starting to review those to determine a couple of things. First of all, what is the makeup of a typical steering committees that are involved in developing these plans for a community? We're looking at the plans themselves to find sort of the common elements, the things that we need to consider for Green Bay. We're also trying to look at just the general timeframe, what's involved in terms of time to achieve a carbon climate action plan for the community. So, we're going to take the next couple of months and sort of dig in a little deeper to see if we want to move on to the next step, but we want to develop a plan what really is required to make this happen. So that was the most recent discussion.

- All right, thank you John. Other updates or questions for John? Alrighty then, hearing none. We'll move on to item three of informational the Trex plastic film recycling challenge update.

- Kaurie, would you like to give an update or would you- Or I can, I wasn't sure if you were still there.

- [Kaurie] Yeah, I'm here. Yeah, so we have the materials which are basically some recycled containers, and then signs to go along with them. We're planning to start collecting the plastic. Although actually it sounds like some people are- Since we put something on social media, they're already bringing things into like the wildlife sanctuary, but we're going to officially start June 1st we'll have two collection bl&S there, one at the nature center, one of the observation building, and then we're also going to have a bin at city hall. We kind of initially talked about placing it l&Side, but then we also talked about how it might be maybe not as convenient for folks to do it that way, because with the parking meters there and that type of thing we're trying to probably do an outside location there just to make it as simple as possible for people. And so we'll be getting- We'll be collecting and just, well, I think I already shared that we're going to take the materials that would collect. We're going to get them weighed at the Brown County facility and then they'll end up going to festival foods, which will then ship them off to the recycling center. So we'll see how it goes. Hopefully we get what we need, so we can get that bench and kind of keep promoting it, and I think, you know, if it's successful we definitely are open to seeing about maintaining that program, and then also to possibly expand it. So yeah, that's about it. Unless anybody has questions.

- No I just,

- Kaurie, is there,

- Go ahead, I was gonna say, go ahead, go ahead Ned.

- That's okay, call me whatever.

- I tried to try to do some of this at the school, ran into the issue of the fact that the plastic is usually contaminated with food when my students bring it in, so really striking out there, unfortunately, but if there is something like a press note that I could share with the district about this, at least we could get that information out to, you know, several thousand families in the district by a media blast of some kind.

- And I would like to say, I'd probably add, you know, Kaurie and I just basically had a correspondence stay just in terms of setting up logistics, which we haven't put into place yet. So we want to make sure we've got everything in place before we start taking everything, because otherwise I think the city's drop sites, the initial rush is going to overwhelm them and I don't have a place yet to put them in my facility, well I have places, but I want to make sure that it's clean and dry and out of the way so that we're not storing a lot outside. So give me a week to get things organized, and then we'll be fully ready to go on our end as well, and the logistics will be in place to get things taken care of. Yeah, the school district, not a great option for plastic collection, so.

- [Kaurie] Yeah, and I think with that too, just to note, which I think I've talked about previously too, is that the parks department does want to work on really promoting this and, you know, through social media and that type of thing. So, you know, maybe touching base with you to see the best way of taking our information to get it into the school district, then they're, you know, passing it along might be useful. So yes, we're definitely interested in spreading the word, so.

- And we're interested in expanding it, like I said earlier to the county as a whole at some point in the future, you know, working since De Pere already has a program in, and from Scott Doris and their public work I&Structor basically said there, as soon as they get their bench, or enough for their first bench, they can re-enroll in the program, get another one, they're on their third, working towards the third bench already, and that was news to us that the program allowed for an ongoing effort like that. But from the county standpoint, I talked to our county exec and he's like, he's on board. So we should be able to go with something countywide at some point in the future.

- Drawings in the bag?

- You snuck one in there at the end there Randy, good for you.

- I also wanted to let you know, I appreciate you bringing your item forward, but I tell you that subject of a flood plain rumination, I find it all wet.

- All right, are we moving to adjourn now? Is that what-

- I mean, I don't know how we can top that, we'll entertain the motion to adjourn.

- [Randy] Well, move to adjourn.

- Aye Alder Randy, second by Mark. All those in favor, say aye.

- Aye.

- [Seth] Those opposed? Adjourned. All right, have a good night, everybody.

- Thanks everybody.

- [Randy] Good night.