

# **CONSERVANCY & SCENIC CORRIDOR COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING VILLAGE HALL March 4, 2015**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting called to order at 7:13 p.m.

Members present: Kelley Smith Chairman, Bob Borg, Warren Schmitt, Kathy Wiberg and Helen Wilson.

Members absent; None

Also present: Jim Hogue, Village Planner, Angie Underwood, Village President, Jane & Ken Wittig Long Grove Park District, Keith Grey and Sarah Surroz of Conserve Lake County.

### **MEETING MINUTES**

Commissioner Borg made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Wiberg, to accept the October 1, 2014 meeting minutes as presented. On a voice vote all aye.

### **VISITOR BUSINESS**

Request for a letter of support for a grant application for maintenance and restoration of wetland within a low land conservancy area within the Indian Creek Estates subdivision submitted by Ms. Nancy Schumm on behalf of the Lakeridge H.O.A.

Planner Hogue reviewed the request noting the petitioner seeks a letter of support from the CSCC to be included in a grant application for funding of this wetland restoration project. No formal CSCC application has been filed at this point but is anticipated should the grant application be successful. He also noted the CSCC had approved a similar restoration project for the HOA several years ago.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wiberg, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, to direct staff to prepare a letter of support in favor of the grant request for the signature of the CSCC chair.

**APPLICATIONS: None**

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

1) Introduction of Commissioner Helen Wilson –

Chairman Smith introduced and welcomed Ms. Helen Wilson as the newest member of the CSCC. Ms. Wilson then gave a bit of background about herself and her interest in serving on the Commission.

2) Presentation by Mr. Keith Gray regarding the “Conserve at Home” program through “Conserve Lake County”.

Mr. Keith Gray, Interim President, Conserve Lake County (CLC), introduced himself and briefly explained the mission of “Conserve Lake County” which is a land conservancy organization now in its 20<sup>th</sup> year. One of the goals of the organization is to team up with villages to preserve and maintain open space within the

county. He then introduced Ms. Sarah Surroz, Senior Staff Member and Conservation Outreach Director with CLC.

Ms. Surroz, explained the history of development in Lake County and noted that Long Grove had been recognized as a “mecca” with regard to natural resource protection in the county. She noted CLC has visited and worked with many property owners in the Village.

She explained “Conserve Lake County” is a 501(C) (3) not-for-profit organization. They presently maintain a staff of 6 and help property owners in Lake County determine the needs and management of their property from a conservation perspective. This program, known as “Conserve at Home” is growing and has interest from volunteers in other counties. There is a \$50.00 assessment fee associated with the program and staff member visit properties with the owner to determine (among others);

- Any ecological “treasures” on the property – and how to protect them
- Ways to improve the aesthetics of the property through adding native trees, flowers or other plants to the landscape while supporting the “natural features of the property.
- How to identify and control any invasive species or other challenges on the property.
- Advise on Eco-friendly lawn care
- Promote water protection and conservation techniques

Properties which meet the minimum qualifications for “eco-friendly practices” are certified and receive a plaque recognizing their efforts. She noted that in Long Grove 15 properties have been visited and half are certified.

She noted the “conservancy and scenic corridor” easements unique to the village and inquired as to exactly how these worked and what these meant to landowners.

Chairman Smith and Village Planner Hogue explained that both types of easements are platted on property at the time the property is subdivided. Property remains private (as with other easements), but the easement prohibits “man-made structures” within the easement. Conservancy easements are based soil types and the lowland conservancy district, typically wet & wetland areas, is the most restrictive of the conservancy easements. Conservancy easements were established for a variety of reasons including groundwater recharge, plant and animal habitat and contribute to the aesthetics of the village. Scenic corridors are similar to conservancy easements but generally a bit less restrictive. Scenic corridors are established to provide a buffer between residences and major road ways in the community. They also contribute to the character of the community and provide plant and animal habitat.

Maintenance of such areas is encouraged (such as burning) and invasive species may removed from such areas without the review and approval of the CSCC but replanting or restoration of such areas requires review and approval of the CSCC (and ultimately the Village Board). Species for restoration must come from the approve species list for the Village.

The CSCC and “Conserve Lake County” then discussed issues and ways to partner in a cooperative manner to further the mutual goals of each. Two topics were discussed;

- Assistance in the control of invasive species, specifically buckthorn & teasel;
- Disseminating Stewardship and other Educational materials to residents;

Ms. Surroz indicated Conserve Lake County may be able to assist in the procurement of grants for teasel removal.

The CSCC noted they would be discussing these issues in greater detail at upcoming meetings and be in touch with Conserve Lake County once a plan of action had been determined.

Chairman Smith thanked Mr. Gray and Ms Surroz for their time and the information they provided to the CSCC.

**ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

Commissioner Schmitt moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Borg. On a voice vote, all aye. Meeting adjourned at 8:37 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

*James M. Hogue*

James M. Hogue  
Village Planner