

**Town of Porter
Environmental Sustainability Commission
Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2024
Porter Town Hall**

A. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Tara Duffie, Chair-Person

B. Pledge of Allegiance

C. Roll Call

Present: Tara Duffie, Jennifer Dimitroff, David Phillips, Allison Hultman, Devin Throw, Mitch Reynolds, and Isabel Durkin. Also present: Tammie Sufana, Recording Secretary

D. Consideration of Minutes-October 14, 2024

Dave Phillips motioned to approve the minutes of October 15, 2024, Allison Hultman seconded. Motion passed 7-0.

E. Audience Participation-NONE

F. Old Business

Review Town Landscaping Code- Tara Duffie commented that she had met with Mr. Barry and said they were still working on it. She would like to get this done next month. She also mentions that the Plan Commission will review the comprehensive plan being it can be reviewed in the odd years. She would like us to review the environmental section and give input.

G. NEW BUSINESS

Hawthorne Park Tree Inventory-Jenny Dimitroff mentioned that she, Tara Duffie, David Phillips, and Kimberly Ehn inventoried some of the trees at Hawthorne Park. They took a stab at it because the weather was nice, and some leaves were still on the trees. Tara Duffie comments she knows an arborist who will help identify some of the trees. The point of doing this is that Park Director Brian Bugajski would like to know what kind of trees there are, how many, and their condition. Essentially what he wants is a spreadsheet of what he has. Jenny Dimitroff mentions Native Oak, Native Cherry, and Native Willow are the most beneficial trees for diversity.

Sustainable Building Recommendations for RDC Façade Grant-Allison Hultman comments she appreciates all the ideas we came up with for the façade grant. Allison Hultman mentions the RDC budget for 2025 and that \$10,000 has been allocated for ESC, the RDC will be voting on it at their meeting on Thursday. She asks

what we would like those funds to be used for. We could also look at tying it into the exterior façade grant to give a little extra grant money if they want to implement sustainable ideas for facades or do we just keep them separate? She also states facade grant is for business in the TIF District. Tara Duffie mentions she thinks the façade grant has to be for the façade. Pollinator gardens and bike racks are not facades, but energy-efficient windows, doors, and awnings are part of a building's facade. Isabel Durkin mentions that green screening or living walls are part of a façade and could be added to the façade grant. After much discussion, Allison Hultman mentions maybe we just work on sustainability in the grant application and use ESC money elsewhere. The facade grant maintains the small-town appeal and beautifies the town. Mitch Reynolds mentions a bike rack and investing in infrastructure so people have an alternative to driving a car. Devin Throw mentions that he likes the idea of education because you change your behavior when you learn something new. Allison Hultman comments she will bring the ESC comments to the EDC.

H. Board Comments

EPA class/network- Tara Duffie informs the commission that she has applied for the class and will find out in mid-December if we are accepted. She also mentions that we used Jenny Dimitroff's Native Garden as the project needed to attend the class. We are partnering with the Dunes-Calumet Audubon Society for this project.

Jenny Dimitroff mentions recycling old Christmas tree lights and maybe do a box at the Townhall. Tara Duffie mentions she would look into it. Devin Throw asked about all the lights at the Town Hall and thought about solar panels for the lights. Tammie Sufana mentions new lights are coming from NIPSCO for energy efficiency.

Adjournment- 7:45 pm

Tara Duffie, Chair-Person

Devin Throw, Secretary

Jennifer Dimitroff

Isabel Durkin

David Phillips

Mitch Reynolds

Tammie Sufana, Recording Secretary