

Town of Porter
Environmental Sustainability Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2025
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, David Phillips, Devin Throw, Isabel Durkin, Jennifer Dimitroff, and Mitch Reynolds.

Absent: Allison Hultman

Also present: Tammie Sufana, Recording Secretary

D. Consideration of Minutes-January 21, 2025

Dave Phillips made a motion to approve the minutes of January 21, 2025 with the corrections of Weed Wrangle being moved to Rogers Lakewood in Valpo and Plant Symposium date to March 27, Jennifer Dimitroff made second. Motion passed 6-0.

E. Audience Participation-NONE

F. Old Business

Review Town Landscaping Code/Recommendations-Tara Duffie mentions Allison could not be here there are 4 things she thinks we need to add to native planting ordinance.

Sustainable and native plants, manage natural landscape-these are meadow landscape and manage natural growth, also not in street or right of way. Do we want definitions in ordinance, all commissioners agree on definitions. New construction only, if you cut down a tree you should replace it elsewhere or you can donate a tree to the park department.

Devin Throw and Mitch Reynolds motion to table until next meeting. Motion passed 6-0.

G. NEW BUSINESS

Earth Day Event-Garlic Mustard Pull-PLANT group has changed to location to Rogers Lakewood Park in Valpo. NPS emailed building commissioner and said they are doing the pulling themselves. Jennifer Dimitroff suggests cleaning ditches along Waverly to Porter Beach. Tara Duffie will ask if we need an assemblage permit. If we can do Waverly safely from Rt 12 to Beach (if we have time) will be April 26 from 9-11 am contingent if we don't need a permit. Devin Throw will make flyers and see about getting some helpers from the school.

Mitch Reynolds mentions the Duneland Dems will be doing Hawthorne Park, if they change locations he will let us know and maybe we could coordinate.

Town Hall Native Gardens-Scott Palla, 1016 S 16th Chesterton, he owns a not for profit organization called Urban Pollinator Project dedicated to planting pollinators in urban areas for the community's enjoyment. His organization can get plants or seeds for projects by going right to the source for better prices. He mentions he can put all plans together at no cost. He handed the commission a pamphlet of United States Department of Agriculture and Indiana Specification Sheets of legal and prohibited plants and what he can get. Tara Duffie explains the location for the native gardens at Town Hall, the two areas with the Fence, take down tree by window of meeting rooms add native plants, area along drive of parking lot, corner piece by garage in back, and rain garden along Lincoln St. Sherrill Newman, who owns house next door, mentions she does not want it to look weedy. She would also like to have final approval being she is putting it up for sale. And the area along drive and fence line she doesn't want anything there as it will run downhill on her property. Jennifer Dimitroff mentions she will defer to what Mr. Sass thinks. Tara Duffie explains the timeline for projects Townhall will be in Spring and Hawthorne War memorial will be early fall. The park department will take out plants and tree. The planting will start end of May with us doing the planting not hiring outside contractors. Not sure about Hawthorne need to get with Park Department. Tara Duffie also mentions we will use straight species not seed at town hall. Jennifer Klug, 200 Franklin St, ask if RDC money must be used in the TIF area or benefiting TIF Area. Tara Duffie mentions she will ask. Tara Duffie ask if everyone looked over the quotes she sent out, so they can review. Ecometrid quote is the one the agreed upon and they thought was more reasonable. Jennifer Dimitroff made a motion to approve Ecometrid quote for the town hall landscape project, Dave Phillips seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Budget-Tara Duffie mentions we will have to ask RDC to approve the contract with Ecometrid or do we want to wait until we cost of plants.

Table Events-Isabel Durkin mentions Izaak Walton is a traveling family night and she will speak with Annette Hanson this Sunday about some events.

I. Board Comments

Mitch Reynolds mentions that in the near future he will be turning in his resignation being he will be moving to Chesterton and he is putting his application in for the Chesterton ESC.

Jennifer Dimitroff mentions the meeting she has been to building relationships with for Environmental Sustainability.

Tara Duffie thanked Nathaniel Pilla for the neighborhood walk it was a great community event. She also mentions we received a letter of support from Dunes Audubon.

Adjournment- 8:06 pm

Tara Duffie, Chair-Person

Devin Throw, Secretary

Jennifer Dimitroff

Mitch Reynolds

Tammie Sufana, Recording Secretary