

Athens Conservation Advisory Council meeting minutes
June 20, 2024
Via Zoom

Members present: Black, Brunner, Collinson, Lipsman, Reed

Members excused: Moree

Members absent: Little, Sprague

Chairman Lipsman convened the meeting at 6:30pm.

1. Welcome and introductions – dispensed with.
2. Agenda review and approval – the agenda was approved by assent.
3. Approval of minutes of last meeting – the minutes of the meeting of May 16, 2024, were approved by assent.
4. Habitat Mapping Proposal update – members Collinson, Reed and Lipsman have started to work on the application to DEC to fund this project. They are meeting weekly and using an accessible Google doc to track their work. Any member is welcome to join the meetings and/or look at the progress document.

Mr. Black provided a comment on his investigation into whether built environment assets could or should be included in the project.

5. Drinking Water Source Protection project update – the group approved to have the DOH/DEC consultants attend next month's meeting about possible implementation of DWSP2 recommendations. Dr. Lipsman said he would also invite the Village's drinking water facility operator, Mr. Joe Myers of Northdome, to attend.

If several CAC members are away that evening, the visit with the consultants could be postponed.

6. Mayor's request –

There was general discussion about coming up with CAC recommendations to the Village Board about how to strike a balance between the desire of some residents to "wild" or "guerilla garden" their public right-of-way lawn areas, and the Village's and neighbors' interest in not having such a desire end up producing unmowed and unsightly landscaping. This is to be done in a spirit of inclusion, tolerance and diversity, and maintaining access.

Resources for this information were mentioned and Ms. Collinson and Ms. Reed agreed to investigate those and provide information to the group. Mr. Black suggested scything as an option to mowing.

7. Trees

- a. Tree City USA – Dr. Lipsman thanked Ms. Reed and her family for arranging and holding the official Village Arbor Day observance during Community Day on June 8. The application to

- the Arbor Day Foundation for our 5th year Tree City USA designation will be due later this year. A volunteer to coordinate the application will be needed.
- b. DEC Community Forest Management Plan Implementation – the application was submitted; we are pending notification that could come as late as this fall. Dr. Lipsman suggested we postpone recommendations about tree removals listed in the Inventory and maintenance policies, other than emergencies, until we have a decision on the grant either way.
 - c. Ms. Collinson mentioned further deterioration of a Japanese tree lilac at the edge of the N. Franklin municipal lot and said she would get the tree number for this.
 - d. Mr. Black noted the Village's lack of compliance with its own codified tree maintenance guidelines. He also indicated someone should reach out to Central Hudson to get them to comply with proper tree maintenance guidelines. Mr. Brunner asked for clarification as to whether routine tree maintenance is continuing, and Dr. Lipsman said it is.
 - e. Mr. Black asked for clarification about paperwork and process required for street tree planting approval for residents. Dr. Lipsman said a complaint form should be submitted that would be forwarded to the CAC for a recommendation to the Village Board.

8. Member items – covered under Trees section

9. Agenda for meeting of July 18 – via Zoom: meet with DWSP2 consultants

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Joshua Lipsman, MD