

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, April 20 – 5:00 PM

City Council Conference Room

City Hall, 220 E. Deerpath

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND OLL CALL**
- II. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS (:05 – :15 per item)**
 - a. REVIEW OF EARTH MONTH ACTIVITIES – Mike Strong, Assistant City Manager**
 - b. UPDATE ON RAVINE MAINTENANCE/EDUCATION CAMPAIGN – Mike Strong, Assistant City Manager**
- III. ACTION ITEMS (:10 - :15 per item)**
 - a. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 19, 2022 MEETING MINUTES**
 - b. DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION ON NEW SOLAR GENERATION FACILITIES PROJECT – Mike Strong, Assistant City Manager**
- IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS (:15 - :20 per item)**
 - a. UPDATE ON FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES & PRIORITIES – Mike Strong, Assistant City Manager**
- V. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- VI. NEXT MEETING DATE(S) – Wednesday, May 18, 2022**
- VII. ADJOURNMENT**

INFORMATIONAL ITEM:

**RAVINE PROPERTY OUTREACH
CAMPAIGN**

DRAFT LETTER/BROCHURE



April 22, 2022

Re: Important Information Regarding Ravines in Lake Forest

Dear Resident,

Did you know that Lake Forest is home to 15 ravines that provide unique habitats and natural waterways that offer many environmental and public health benefits? Ravines aren't just beautiful landscape features. When they are healthy, they help preserve our property values by draining water away from homes and basements, protect our drinking water, reduce erosion, provide recreational opportunities, and support habitats for native plants and migratory birds. Healthy ravines work hard and well, but when they become unhealthy, ravines can cause problems, like increasing Lake Michigan pollution, eroding property, and increased local flooding.

The City, along with local agencies and partners, takes an active role in preserving and restoring these important natural resources to ensure they stay healthy. However, you may not know that many of the ravine properties in Lake Forest are privately owned. Whether your home is next to a ravine, or your property extends all the way down into a ravine, there are important actions you can take to ensure your property is protected and our ravines stay healthy and beautiful.

One of the best ways to protect the ravine's natural landscape is to plant diverse native plants that can withstand weather-related stressors. If you're looking to add more native plants to your ravine, the City of Lake Forest and Lake Forest Open Lands Association (LFOLA) are hosting the *Go Native! Plant & Tree Sale* on Saturday, May 21 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Mellody Farm Nature Preserve. Garden kits, trees, shrubs, and plants are available for pre-order through Friday, May 13. For details and to place a pre-order, visit lfola.org/GoNative.

If you aren't sure where to start with native plants, LFOLA is offering free property consultations for a limited time during the *Go Native! Plant & Tree Pre-Sale*. One of LFOLA's ecologists will meet with you at your property to help you select the appropriate ravine plant species and discuss how to best manage your yard for stormwater issues, increased habitat, and low-maintenance solutions. Space is limited and appointments are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please email GoNative@lfola.org to schedule a property consultation today.

Interested in learning more about how you can help? Please take a look at our *Steep Slopes, Long Legacy* brochure that contains important information for your landscaping, stormwater runoff, pesticides, and more.

Sincerely,

The City of Lake Forest

STEEP SLOPES, LONG LEGACY

Lake Forest is home to 15 ancient and incredibly unique landscape features called ravines. These tree-covered slopes are part of a dynamic landscape that defines Lake Forest as more than just a city—it is a family-friendly *community*, blessed with green lands and blue waters.

Lake Forest has grown into today's vibrant community because generations of residents have embraced our natural surroundings. The flow of our landscape, the natural highs and lows of our lands, is reflected in the curve of our streets and the architecture of our built surroundings.

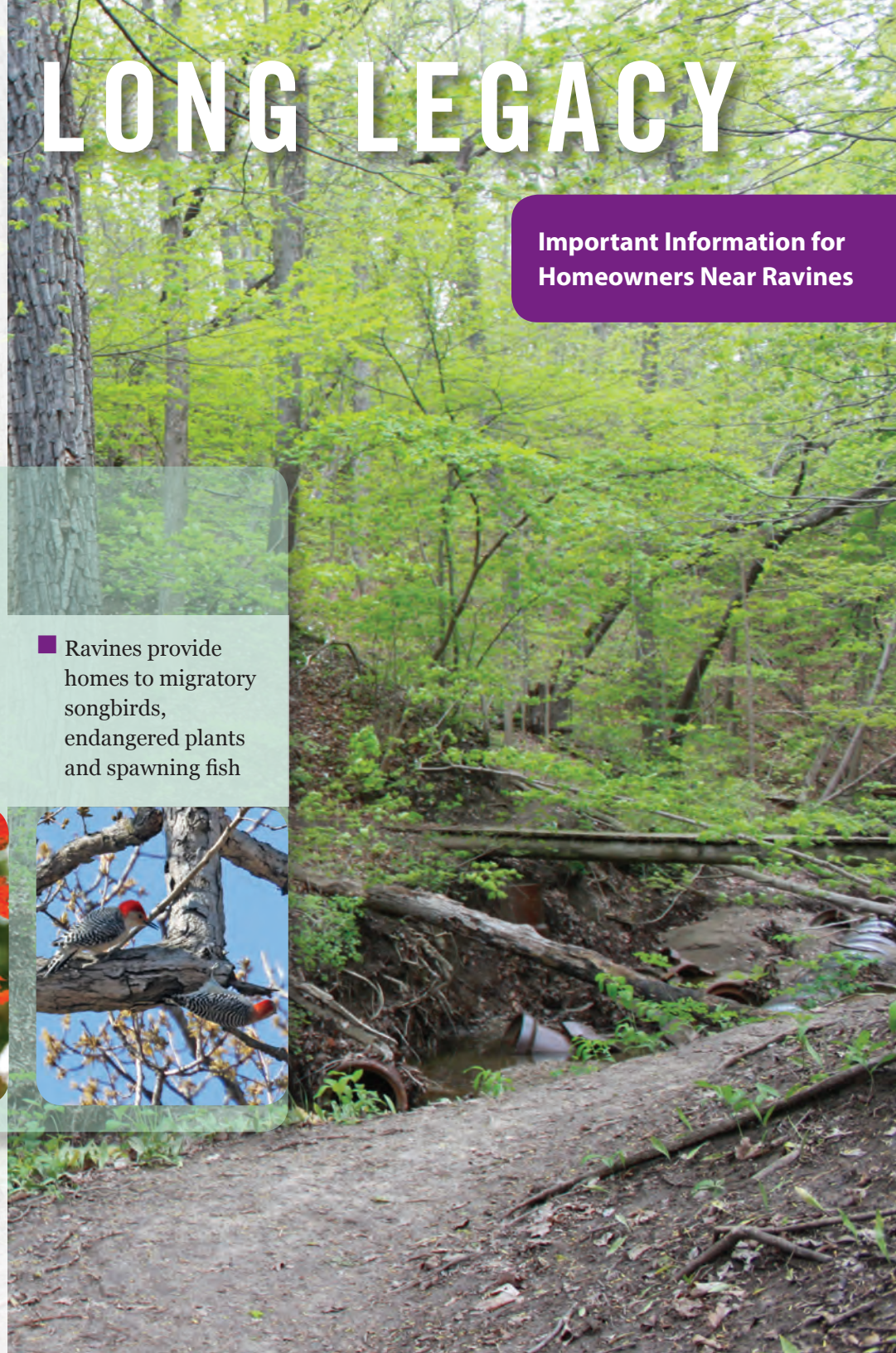
Ravines aren't just beautiful landscape features. Ravines *work*. When they are healthy, ravines provide valuable and irreplaceable services for our community:

- Ravines drain rain water away from homes and basements, reducing flooding
- Ravines protect our drinking water source—Lake Michigan—from pollutants
- Healthy ravines with native trees and plants reduce erosion, keeping our land where it belongs
- Ravines provide homes to migratory songbirds, endangered plants and spawning fish



Healthy ravines work hard and well. But damaged, unhealthy ravines, can actually cause problems, like increasing Lake Michigan pollution, eroding property and increasing flooding.

**Important Information for
Homeowners Near Ravines**



RAVINES ARE OUR LEGACY



Since the time of the glaciers, rain water and snow melt have sculpted Lake Forest's ravines. However, as we developed Lake Forest into the community we now know and love, our actions have inadvertently accelerated that natural erosion process to unnatural levels.

Over the years, the volume of stormwater runoff—rain, hose water and snow melt—has increased as homes, patios and roads replaced prairies and wooded areas. Now, more water rushes through the ravines, speeding up the erosion process and carrying pollutants.

In addition, invasive or non-native plants have replaced hearty native plants in many areas. The invasive plants have flimsy root systems, which means they don't hold the soil as well as native plants do.



Left unchecked, ravine and bluff erosion can cause significant damage: polluting our drinking water and swimming beaches; undermining buildings, roads, and bridges; breaking sewer lines; and decreasing property values as land literally washes away.

Without thoughtful actions, our unique landscape features could become dangerous and unsightly ditches that make properties smaller, instead of adding value to our community.



The Lake Forest Collaborative for Environmental Leadership (LFCEL) is a partnership of The City of Lake Forest, Lake Forest Elementary School District #67, Lake Forest High School District #115, Lake Forest Open Lands Association and Lake Forest College. The Collaborative formed to bring together the community to educate and engage in environmental action and to promote sustainable practices within Lake Forest. LFCEL received a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Coastal Management Program to implement an education and engagement program to increase awareness of our ravines' environmental value, while engaging the community in actions to protect and restore them.

OUR ACTIONS MATTER

When restored and healthy, our ravines are beautiful assets, an integral part of our community's character and part of what sets Lake Forest apart.

While the City and nonprofit groups are actively restoring ravines, like Seminary Ravine, which is adjacent to Forest Park, **homeowners own most of our ravines**. Whether your home is next to a ravine or your property extends all the way down into a ravine, there are important actions you can take to keep Lake Forest's ravines healthy and beautiful.



- Never dump yard waste like leaves, branches, grass clipping or mulch into ravines. This can accelerate erosion, damage native plants and ruin beautiful vistas. Instruct lawn care companies to keep your yard waste out of the ravines, too.

- Add a buffer of native plants along your property adjacent to the ravine. Keep turf grass, play sets and pools at least 10 feet from the top edge of a ravine to prevent erosion. (For sample landscape plans and lists of native trees, grasses, shrubs and flowering plants, visit: www.CityofLakeForest.com/environmental-initiatives.)

- Reduce stormwater running off your property into the ravine by planting rain gardens and using rain barrels. Minimize water use and irrigation sprinklers, especially near the top edge of a ravine.



- Limit paved areas along ravines. Use porous paving wherever possible.

- Use fertilizers and pesticides sparingly and only when necessary. If you must fertilize, only use fertilizers that are phosphorous-free.

- Keep fences out of the ravines; they not only ruin the beautiful vistas that ravines provide, but also increase erosion and limit natural animal migrations.



NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM:

**APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 9, 2021 MEETING
MINUTES**

1 **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING**
2 **Wednesday, January 19, 2022 – 5:15 P.M.**
3 **REMOTE ACCESS MEETING**
4

5 **ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER**
6

7 Chairman Melanie Rummel called the meeting to order at 5:15 P.M. Aldermen
8 Jim Preschlack and Eileen Weber were present.
9

10 Staff in attendance included Mike Strong, Assistant City Manager; Cathy
11 Czerniak, Director of Community Development; Dan Martin, Superintendent of
12 Public Works; Chuck Myers, Superintendent of Parks and Forestry; and Layla
13 Werner, Management Analyst
14

15 There were approximately 2 members of the public that attended the meeting
16 remotely.
17

18 Chairman Rummel made the following statement as required by the Open
19 Meetings Act. In accordance with state statute, Chairman Rummel has made a
20 determination that it was not practical or prudent to schedule an in-person
21 Committee meeting because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is why this
22 January 19, 2022, Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting is being held
23 remotely.
24

25 **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**
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27 **I. UPDATE ON GRANT OPPORTUNITY FOR LAKE FRONT AT FOREST PARK BEACH**
28 – Mike Strong, Assistant City Manager
29

30 Assistant City Manager, Mike Strong, provided a brief update regarding
31 the grant opportunity at Forest Park Beach. He explained that the State
32 Department of Natural Resources contacted the City encouraging staff
33 submit an application for a lakefront trash skimmer. Mr. Strong explained
34 the benefits to having the trash skimmer including collecting plastic in the
35 water and skimming oil sheen produced by boat activity.
36

37 Chairman Rummel asked if there were any additional comments or
38 questions from the Committee.
39

40 The Committee thanked staff for working on this initiative.
41

42 Chairman Rummel asked if there were any additional questions or
43 comments from members of the public.
44

45 Seeing none, she moved to the next agenda item.
46
47
48

II. UPDATE ON NEW SOLAR GENERATION FACILITIES PROJECT – Mike Strong,
Assistant City Manager

Assistant City Manager, Mike Strong, provided a quick information update to the committee regarding the RFP for the installation of solar panels on City facilities. Mr. Strong explained the process including the site visits and how to move forward with the bidding process. He stated that the final bid will be due Wednesday, February 2nd, and that internal staff would review the results and present them to the Committee.

The Committee asked clarifying questions regarding grant funding for the project and other funds to offset the cost of the project.

Chairman Rummel asked if there were any comments or questions or comments from the Committee.

Seeing none, Chairman Rummel asked if there were any questions or comments from members of the public.

Seeing none, she moved to the next agenda item.

ACTION ITEMS

I. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 9, 2021, MEETING MINUTES

Alderman Weber moved to approve the December 9, 2021, Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting minutes subject to changes discussed by the Committee. Alderman Preschlack seconded the motion. The following voted "Aye": Chairman Rummel, Aldermen Preschlack and Weber. The following voted "Nay": None. 3-Ayes, 0 Nays, motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

I. DISCUSSION ON FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES & PRIORITIES –

Alderman Rummel, Chairman

Alderman Rummel provided background regarding the process to identify the various sustainable initiatives and priorities. She further explained the specific way the items were categorized.

Assistant City Manager, Mike Strong, provided further detail including the summary survey data conducted last spring, the reorganization of the priorities and initiatives, and the use of incentives and engagement versus utilizing bans. Mr. Strong further explained various initiatives that have been endorsed by the full City Council that are in process, and the strong alignment between the City Council and staff on the initiatives presented.

The Committee had lengthy discussion, focusing on the initiatives recommended to be brought forward by City staff. Items discussed included the Greenhouse Gas Emissions project and composting. Each Committee member provided their thoughts on the initiatives presented. Additionally, the Committee had discussion regarding top initiatives identified to move forward with discussion.

Assistant City Manager, Mike Strong provided additional background regarding projects and initiatives and the reasoning behind how they were ranked. He provided further clarification to the Committee stating that items could be moved around on the list if the Committee felt it was necessary.

The Committee had lengthy discussion, prioritizing the various staff recommendations in each sustainability category, and the tiered structure from the survey.

Chairman Rummel asked if there were any questions or comments from the Committee.

Seeing none, Chairman Rummel asked if there were any questions or comments from members of the public.

Seeing none, she moved to the next agenda item.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Rummel asked if there were any public comments on any non-agenda items.

Seeing none, Chairman Rummel moved to the next agenda item.

NEXT MEETING DATE(S)

Assistant City Manager, Mike Strong stated that the next meeting would be scheduled for February 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Preschlack moved to adjourn the meeting of the Environmental Sustainability Committee at 6:32 P.M. seconded by Weber. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Layla Werner
Management Analyst

Environmental Sustainability Committee Minutes
Tuesday, January 19, 2022

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Reviewed by,

Mike Strong
Assistant City Manager

DISCUSSION ITEM:

**UPDATE ON FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY
INITIATIVES & PRIORITIES**

Environmental Sustainability Committee
Current/Future Sustainability initiatives & Priorities
Updated April 2022

Project/Initiative	2022				2023	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Solar Facilities on City Facilities						
Greenhouse Gas Inventory						
Composting Services						
"Green Infrastructure" Incentives						
Single-Use Plastics Discussion						
Vehicle Idling Options		LFCEL?	LFCEL?			
Other???						

	Planning/Research
	Presentation/Recommendation

Current Projects/Status:

1. Investigation of Solar Facilities on City Facilities

- Status: Solicitation/Vendor Selection Phase
- On Deck: Prepare Vendor recommendation to ESC, and City Council
 - Discussion on building priorities/phases
 - Determination of what to do with City ComEd/Constellation Accounts
- Target ESC Meeting for Recommendation and Direction: 4/20/2022
- City Council Meeting: TBD: 5/2/2022 or 5/16/2022

2. Greenhouse Gas Inventory

- Status: Collecting inventory data from various sources (CMAP, Waste haulers, utilities)
- On Deck: Prepare initial report with ICLEI (Target is June 2022)
 - Target ESC Meeting in June to review report and discuss emission reduction targets (Based on ICLEI recommendations)
 - Develop list of recommendations/actions for ESC (July-Aug 2022)
- Target June/July ESC and/or City Council meeting for presentation (No formal action needed – report will inform future priorities/opportunities)

Future Projects/Initiatives (As supported by City Council in February)

3. Provide greater access to composting programs or services for residents and businesses

- Proposed Scope: Explore partnership opportunities with third-party vendors to provide subscription services to residents (RFQ/RFP process)
- Marketing/promotion of Earth Machines, including educational workshops or programs
- Target Timeline: Research services/options in May-June 2022, with recommendation to ESC in Summer
- Solicitation to follow in fall for winter launch (composting offerings in winter)

4. Promote the use of permeable pavers, rain gardens or other “green infrastructure” implements throughout the community

- Proposed Scope: Marketing/communications on City projects utilizing infrastructure
- Develop “green infrastructure” permit or reduced permit fees
- Explore cost-share opportunities or grant program for residents to offset infrastructure investment through (e.g. Overhead sewer cost-share program)
- Target Timeline: Research opportunities between July-September
- Potential recommendations to ESC in October; followed by Finance Committee (Capital workshop) in November

5. Develop strategies to further reduce the City’s use and collection of single-use plastics

- Proposed Scope: Explore opportunities to reduce the City’s use of single-use plastics (e.g. City facilities, meetings/events, etc.)
 - Can we eliminate use of single-use plastics at our community events?
 - Can we promote/incentivize special event permit holders to not sell bottled water? What alternatives might exist?
 - May need to discuss with the City Council further – how far do they want to go with banning/incentivizing these products
- Target Timeline: First quarter of 2023 for research/further policy decisions

Additional initiatives that were discussed at the last meeting:

- Discouraging vehicle idling on City Properties
- Coal tar sealants
- Community Gardening Initiative
- Conversion of Mowed Areas to Natural Areas
- Landscape Equipment recommendations (Leaf Blowers)