

**VILLAGE OF HARTLAND
ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDOR AND OPEN SPACE
TASK FORCE MINUTES
THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2017
7:00 PM
BOARD ROOM
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 210 COTTONWOOD AVE.**

Present: Michelle Bonness, David deCourcy-Bower, Mike Einweck, Tim Hallquist, Courtney Marschalek, David Pride and Carol Zahorik.

Roll Call – 7:00 PM

1. Consideration of approval of minutes of the March 2, 2017 Meeting

Motion (Zahorik/Pride) to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2017 Meeting. Carried (5-0-2). Hallquist and Marschalek abstained.

2. Discussion of Private Environmental Corridors

David deCourcy-Bower asked the task force to discuss ideas they have for assisting private property owners with environmental corridors to recognize what is there and also how to best manage those environmental corridors. He handed out five maps. Environmental corridor Map No. 1 shows the Village of Hartland and Town of Delafield boundaries. Map No. 2 shows the Hartridge Subdivision and River Reserve. The task force previously discussed the Penbrook Park area at length. Map No. 3 shows the environmental corridor to the south of E. Capitol Drive. The County has said that this area was environmental corridor but the Village said it was not an environmental corridor and did not designate it as such. This area is now developed into The Sanctuary Subdivision.

There was discussion about who designates an environmental corridor. David deCourcy-Bower explained that environmental corridors are recognized by the Wisconsin DNR as being areas of steep slopes and they need to be a certain size (at least 400 acres in size) two miles long and two hundred feet wide. The area behind E. Capitol Drive was originally farmland and then it was planted as woodlands. Ms. Zahorik thought she saw field tile when she walked there 30 years ago. SEWRPC delineates the environmental corridors. Those corridors are shown on the sanitary sewer service plans. These documents and plans show where sewer utilities are installed.

Map No. 4 shows the narrow strip of land along the Bark River, which the task force previously discussed. There are isolated natural resource areas between Campus Drive and Willow Drive.

Map No. 5 shows the County owned area adjacent to Mary Hill Subdivision and the isolated natural resource area in the northeast side of the map. Technically right now it is outside of the Village limits, but it is anticipated that this property could come into the Village at some point.

The definition of an isolated natural source area has certain characteristics that are valuable, but it is not a large enough area to be called an environmental corridor.

The environmental corridor on Carol Zahorik's property is on Map No. 3 at the end of Glen Owen Drive.

Michelle Bonness asked the task force if they are familiar with the Waukesha County Zoning environmental corridor section. It tells how to build on an environmental corridor, but then it goes on to tell you what you can and cannot do to that environmental property -- specifically regarding cutting down trees -- a person must obtain a permit unless it's invasive species.

Ms. Zahorik stated that the Village does have restrictions. When she wanted to build a deck in 1999, she was restricted. That's how she found out that her property was an environmental corridor.

Building Inspector Scott Hussinger enforces the environmental corridors. When someone comes in for a building permit and he sees what is proposed, he checks with the zoning code and finds what can and cannot be done.

What are some of the things that could support the private property owners that have existing buildings on them? What would help them understand what those corridors are? Should they be mowing lawn, cutting down trees or planting trees in the environmental area? And if they are doing that, who is going to stop them? Perhaps it's a matter of education. People don't know what they are supposed to do or not supposed to do. The question is, how would we do that? Perhaps mailers and the local TV station would get information to owners. Ms. Zahorik feels the owners should have environmental corridors designated on their plat when they buy the house. However, there are people who may disregard the information they receive about how to handle an environmental corridor. Another issue is lighting. A neighbor several doors down from Ms. Zahorik has lights shining into the corridor every night.

Kinds of information the task force feels would be useful:

A letter could be sent to owners that states that the land they own is part of a primary environmental corridor that is at least four miles long and 200 feet wide. To protect that, here is a list of guidelines (i.e. do not to shine bright lights into

the corridor, do not cut down trees that are over a certain size unless they are diseased, do not mow the lawn, etc.)

It was brought up that Waukesha County Zoning does not apply to the Village. Village ordinances supersede County ordinances.

Courtney Marschalek suggested finding out how many parcels are involved. She felt that personalizing the notification (a copy of the plat of a person's property) would have more of an impact, rather than a general notification. Putting a positive spin on the notification was another idea.

All the Village rules seem to be for what happens during development. Information on maintaining an environmental corridor was not found. There is a tree preservation ordinance, but it is not unique to environmental corridors.

The question still remains, do rules for an Environmental Corridor exist and what are the consequences if someone doesn't follow them? The building inspector follows up on complaints, but he does not have time to "police" on a regular basis.

It was suggested that the Village adopt Waukesha County's rules for their own. No one on the task force has found any other written rules on maintaining environmental corridors.

David deCourcy-Bower stated that the Village does have the Comprehensive Development Plan that has detailed discussion on Environmental Corridors. A lot of information could be pulled from that into a letter or communication along with the best practices for maintaining the corridor.

Courtney Marschalek suggested having a neighborhood meeting at someone's house so that the affected neighbors could get together to learn more.

Information could be included on tools for how to get rid of buckthorn – not just cutting it down. A reminder for being cautious with the herbicide and not getting it on other plants should be included. Complete information could be added to the Village website, with a link to the website added to the letter.

Mike Einweck mentioned that a Noxious Weed Notice will be published in the Lake Country Reporter on April 18 and 20. Information is also on the Village website.

Areas to be included in a mailing/outreach notification of Environmental Corridor/Isolated Natural Resource Area:

- River Reserve
- Oak Ridge Condos

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- North of Hartridge Subdivision
- Tenny Avenue
- Rustic Lane
- Hickory Court (Lake Country Lutheran owns the land immediately west of Chestnut Ridge Subdivision.
- River Meadow Subdivision adjacent to the Bark River
- Blue Ridge Court (backs up to the property off of E. Capitol Drive where the Habitat for Humanity proposal was). There is a pond and an environmental corridor.
- Foxwood (off of W. North Shore Drive) was added to this list with a question mark. The Ice Age Trail goes through the Foxwood land. Some buckthorn has been cleared in the area. The Foxwood land is in the Village of Hartland but is owned by the Foxwood Homeowners Association.

It was also observed and discussed:

Should the wooded areas that are left in the Sanctuary Subdivision remain as environmental corridor? Mike Einweck said that the left over area south of the Sanctuary may develop at a later time.

The outlots will not be developed, but the question is should those surrounding property owners be held to the same restrictions for maintaining an environmental corridor as everyone else? Should the outlots be environmental corridor or not? No opinions on these questions were discussed.

The property south of Willow Drive might be DOT right of way.

The sliver next to Campus Drive is owned by Arrowhead (in the Town of Merton).

The section immediately west of Campus Drive is a pond owned by the Village.

The area between Gail Lane and Evelyn Lane is in the Town of Merton and we don't know who owns that. The land immediately west of Arrowhead is in the Town of Merton.

Regarding the Four Winds Subdivision (County land in the Village limits with the County owning the outlot), we wouldn't send a letter to County, but would a letter to the adjacent homeowners be beneficial in maintaining that corridor? It was decided not to contact the County or Four Winds residents.

The Village Ordinance does have information on how to develop in an environmental corridor. It allows for one unit per five acres. The challenge is

there are different views and opinions on how that gets interpreted. The challenge is the need for development versus the need for preserving the environmental corridor.

Several task force members thought that there should be no development allowed in the Village in environmental corridors. However, Mike Einweck pointed out that property owners have rights that cannot be taken away.

There are controls through zoning and the Comprehensive Development Plan. However, the Planned Unit Development process can erode what the Comprehensive Development Plan says -- and our zoning and Comprehensive Plan don't align. The isolated resource area can be preserved while clustering the development nearby with a higher density.

There was discussion about man-made retention ponds being considered as part of an environmental corridor. It was thought that they could be if they are done right. Another question was, should there be language that requires maintaining those areas? No opinion on that question was discussed.

David deCourcy-Bower will work on a written summary of the task force's discussions that took place over the past months.

Courtney Marschalek volunteered to draft a letter to Environmental Corridor owners.

The assignment for the next meeting will be for the task force members to come up with three to five places/initiatives to focus on.

Carol Zahorik will be excused from the May 4 meeting.

3. Adjourn

Motion (Bonness/Marschalek) to adjourn. Carried (7-0). Meeting adjourned at 8:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted by
Recording Secretary,

Lynn Meyer
Deputy Clerk