



**Special Meeting Minutes
Ladd Arboretum Committee**

Monday, March 3, 2014
7:00pm

Evanston Ecology Center, 2024 McCormick Blvd.

Members Present: Virginia Beatty, Barbara DeCoster, Tracy Hubbard, Pam Johnson, Jim LaRochelle, Louise Taylor

Members Absent: Kathie Biddle

Staff Present: Paul D'Agostino, Assistant Director Parks/Forestry, Beth Cullen, Clerk III

Guests: Suzette Robinson, Director Public Works; Claire Alden, Program Coordinator, Carol Beatty

Presiding Member: Virginia Beatty

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Virginia Beatty at 7:03pm and a quorum was established.

2. Pollinator Partnership

- Claire Alden spoke first on the nationwide not-for-profit Pollinator Partnership. Materials were passed out describing the project and the signs alerting people to what specific pollinators to be aware of in that area. The goal is to educate people about threats to pollinator's spaces and find solutions, especially through plantings. This is also in cooperation with Burt's Bees, a company that markets naturally made bee-based personal care products. Burt's Bees will donate five pants for every lip balm sold at the net-zero Walgreens. The approximate amount of available plants is 5,000 and a plant list is available. Plants would be purchased locally. The Ecology staff and LAC can determine locations to create another educational experience in the Arboretum. Suggested locations for plants include: Prairie Plant area, Yellow Tractor area, Prairie at other end of Arboretum and in the parking area in the Bird and Butterfly Bridge. Questions arose about water accessibility, care and planting. Older Ecology Center campers and Schools' upper grades can plant and volunteers and Youth Employment people can water throughout the summer. Ms. Alden will investigate if localized water sources will be able to be added as part of the project. She and Mr. D'Agostino and Mr. LaRochelle will meet and discuss locations for planting.
- The gazebo benches have been improved. Roof estimates are being requested. Planting of small trees and other pants around the gazebo was discussed. The bees should be moved by a beekeeper. Mr. Jaminski will look into moving the hive.

3. Arboretum Pathway

- Ms. Beatty introduced Ms. Robinson who was here to speak about the proposed Multiuse pathway. This pathway is scheduled for design in 2014 and construction in 2015. Ms. Beatty spoke on the prosed width of the paths being 14 feet, 8 feet of path and 3 feet of clearance on each side, with concern for the trees and their roots as this is an Arboretum. There is concern for heavy construction equipment and their impact on trees. Old trees reduce carbon far more than young trees. People here in Evanston have been working for 55 years to make a desolate piece of land into this Arboretum. A blacktop path isn't very good as it collects a lot of heat and lifted and cracked by natural shifts. Ms. Beatty had maps that she showed Ms. Robinson that included existing and proposed paths. Ms. Robinson noted that potentially impacted trees were evaluated by Forestry. Ms. Beatty had five points in question where there were issues in question. The first at the Emerson end of McCormick where the path starts. She proposed the nearby bike trail connect differently the indicated, taking hardscape items into consideration, rather than connecting at the crosswalk. Additional items involved the parking lot area, The Wildflower Garden Memorial to Midge Perkins, near the

Tiny House, an area near some big trees that look like they would need to be relocated and whose size makes that almost impossible. Mr. D'Agostino has looked at this area personally and states the trees indicated to be removed are small. Ms. Beatty said the engineering part looked very good except for the type of path: granite, crushed stone or asphalt, of which asphalt is the worst. This also disintegrates over the years and the practice in Evanston is not to disturb the paths for 15-20 years. Mr. Robinson indicated that there is an existing concrete walkway that stops at some point. The original grant showed crushed stone which is what is there. After several years of applying for the grant they were successful in funding. In between this time several issues came up; the kids not being able to be seen from the street or walking in the street, the conditions of the crushed stone, flooding and holding water. The Mayor came to Ms. Robinson and asked her to fix this so the children would be seen from the street. Alderman Grover, Alderman Holmes and Mayor Tisdahl asked to create sidewalk so kids were not in the street. When the pathway material was looked at, crushed stone is not plowable. So we have a bike path that has winter use restrictions. There is also accessibility issues for those in a wheelchair or in a walker on a gravel surface. There are also liability issues for bikers and a gravel path. Permeable concrete was also looked at but the soils are not conducive to the use of this product. There was a question about Perkins Woods's use of granite composite rather than the original proposed wide asphalt path that would allow trucks access. The community dissuaded the Forest Preserve people and the granite was used instead. This is the same granite that was used here four years ago and is holding up beautifully. Mr. LaRochelle noted that there is a plowed pathway just on the other side of the channel that could be the route taken by the children. This goes from Twiggs Park to the Bridge. Ms. Robinson talked about the connection of this path to Chicago and eventually to the Green Bay Trail. Ms. Hubbard comments on the Twiggs path is more secluded and kids should have a familiar and visible pathway to and from school. Ms. Robinson referred to accessibility issues and the people living in the Over the Rainbow housing. Ms. Hubbard questioned the expense over time for granite vs. asphalt. Ms. Robinson discussed the use of permeable concrete on other projects. Mr. LaRochelle questioned whether the City was committed to asphalt. Ms. Robinson stated that not all paths would be multiuse, some would remain gravel. Ms. Beatty pointed out that the larger paths would take up a significant part of available Arboretum space. Ms. Robinson stated that the width was required by IDOT whether it is stone or asphalt. Mr. D'Agostino said that the original paths were most likely 8' wide and has been partially covered by grass at the edges other than the paths by the crabapples. Ms. Robinson said that IDOT will not typically approve a path smaller than 10 feet. They give us leeway because of the impacts on the Arboretum. Ms. Beatty observed that this is a bike path and not beautification; not a beautiful place to walk and use by people that use the Arboretum. She is concerned for the health of the trees, as well as encouraging and enhancing the Arboretum. She provided copies of the maps she brought to Ms. Robinson. Mr. LaRochelle emphasized his opinion that asphalt was not needed and there is a perfectly good path on the other side of the channel.

- There was a discussion on the parking lot which was constructed in 1974. The entrance on McCormick is being evaluated to possibly become permanent. The Bridge project should be done before Camp.
- Ms. Robinson will have response in two weeks and reminded Committee that the design process would take rest of this year with bids starting in 2015.
- The Ecology Center expansion plans will also be available in two weeks.

4. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made and seconded at 8:21pm.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Ladd Arboretum Committee will be March 17, 2014 at 7PM at the Evanston Ecology Center. Wearing of the Green is suggested!

Minutes respectfully submitted for approval by:
Beth Cullen, Clerk III Evanston Ecology Center