

Buffalo Grove Environmental Action Committee

Meeting minutes, October 15, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 7PM. Present were

Ron Nosko	Jeff Spitz
Matt Pomilia	Linda Spitz
Nadine Pomilia	Sarah Schultz
Joan Karnauskas	Steve White
Mary White	Susan Levy
Jeff Weiss	

We welcomed three new members, Nadine and Matt Pomilia, and Ron Nosko. Jeff Weiss reported that several additional new members want to become involved but were unable to attend the meeting or only want to attend events. Our email list now totals over 40 members.

Recap of Buffalo Grove Days

We had excellent participation in our BG Days booth. We took over 50 surveys, signed up 20 potential new members and raised the visibility of our team in the community. For next year, suggestions included:

1. Start planning earlier
2. Get representation on or work with the committee to make BG Days “greener”
3. Lead efforts to recycle aluminum cans or reduce/recycle disposable water bottles

Public opinion survey

Our survey of proposed activities was received positively. 54 surveys were completed at BG Days. A recap of the responses and comments is an exhibit at the end of this document. Every activity received a positive response and all rounded to a score of 4 on a scale of 1 “unimportant” to 5 “critical.” The most controversial idea was a BG farmers market, which received a few negative and some very enthusiastic responses. Unfortunately, because the ratings were bunched so closely together, it is difficult to use the survey as a criterion to decide on which future activities to pursue.

Disposal of expired prescription meds

The idea was to set up a program with local pharmacists to take back unused meds and dispose of them in a way that would keep them from polluting the water supply. Joan reported out on this subject, which is complex.

1. Some of the chemicals in prescription drugs are persistent and find their way into ground water and the water supply, which is cause for concern. However, none of these chemicals are currently anywhere close to levels considered dangerous to health by the EPA or CDC.
2. The Federal government recently published guidelines recommending disposal by flushing down the toilet for many drugs. While this releases them into the environment, there is a trade-off between the risks of release and accidental poisoning or drugs falling into the wrong hands.
3. Disposal of unused meds is the second leading cause for release of these chemicals, trailing excretion by users after ingestion. No solution for that source!
4. Turning in to the police is not an ideal solution. The BG Police will accept individual turn-ins but does not want to establish a program.

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5. Local pharmacists may be willing to take back and dispose of unused meds. The question for our team is whether to set up and publicize a program. Further discussion was deferred until prioritization voting for future activities.

Energy efficiency

Steve White, a LEED certified builder, reported on his work with the BG Park District. He completed a review of lighting and availability of grant funding for investments in energy efficiency at the Alcott Center. There are significant opportunities! Steve will turn his findings over to the firm conducting a SEDAC review for the Park District. He is pleased that the Park District is addressing this issue, and recognizes opportunities for similar savings in buildings owned by the Village.

Future activities

We used the survey as a tool to define and vote on future activities for the team. A leader was appointed for each.

The leading vote getters were bunched up around six projects.

1. **Water quality**, leaders Joan Karnauskas and Jeff Weiss. Buffalo Creek, which drains most of the Village has “poor” quality water, the lowest rated stream on the Des Plaines River watershed. Doing something about it raises several opportunities, including participating in a RiverWatch monitoring program. More information to follow.
2. **Recycling** (tie), leader Debi Moritz. We had a successful recycling event in spring, but will want to look at opportunities to increase community participation (versus drop of and run) and conduct due diligence to assure that collected items are in fact recycled.
2. **Adopt-a-Highway** (tie), leader Debi Moritz. Road segments in Cook and Lake County are available and the Team will need to decide which to adopt.
2. **Habitat restoration** (tie), leaders Sarah Schultz and Jeff Weiss. Preferred sites are the Buffalo Grove Nature Center at Checker and Arlington Hts. Road or Busch Grove Park.
2. **Wind/solar demo** (tie), leader Steve White. The idea is to arrange collaboration between the Village and Park District to build and operate solar and wind demonstration projects in the Village.
2. **“Greener” BG Days** (tie), leader TBD. The Team would facilitate recycling and other activities at the next Village festival.
7. **Phosphorus-free Fertilizer**, leader Ron Nosko
8. **Bike trails**, leaders Joan Karnauskas and Jeff Weiss.

The leaders will prepare reports and we will develop these ideas at our next meeting was scheduled for 7 PM November 19. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Exhibit Buffalo Grove Environmental Action Team Survey Results

Activity	Rating 60089	Rating non-60089
1. Conduct additional recycling events	4.3	4.4
2. Promote reduction in the use of plastic bottles and containers at community events	4.3	4.3
3. Start a Buffalo Grove Farmers Market	3.9	4.5
4. Promote “green” building	4.4	4.3
5. Initiate water and energy conservation measures	4.3	4.7
6. Work to restore local prairies and native habitat	4.1	4.5
7. Plant trees and bio-swales	4.1	4.0
8. Control over-population of invasive plants and animals	4.0	3.9
9. Encourage landowners to use phosphorus-free lawn fertilizer	3.9	4.2
10. Sponsor litter reduction and proper disposal of pet waste	4.4	4.0
11. Promote the use of transportation alternatives, such as bike trails	4.3	4.3

Comments:

- “solar and wind for home use?”
- “is there a 6?” (notation for activity 10)
- “electronic drop-offs (computers/printers”(sic)
- “keep doing what your (sic) doing”
- “cleaning litter along roads”
- “look at Deerfields provide entertainment, better location than past” (notation for activity 3)
- “bike resale event, free walking clubs, add Styrofoam and pizza boxes to recycle”
- “& mass transit” (notation on activity 11)
- “promote the use of rain barrels to recycle sump pump and rain water”
- “workshops on composting-have one-didn’t work right”
- “any,either, or-
- “keeping a public involved (small projects)”
- “be green!”
- “cooking responsibly &conservation”
- “Additional sidewalk and bridge development to facilitate bike transportation”
- “clean up around Buffalo Grove”