



**Minutes**  
**Green Committee**  
**Wednesday, 5/22/19, 5:00 PM**  
**City Hall Conference Rm.**

**Attendees:** Larry Campbell, Ken Camera, Jim Norwalk, Sara Britting,

**Invited/welcomeed Guests:**

---

## **1. Housekeeping**

### **1. Memos?? On all key issues.**

We discussed the fact that given the *GGC's* mission is to advise and advocate we should be producing analysis and conclusions that are presented in *Memos* so there are leave behinds for our work. We have done this in the past, but it is a lot of hard work.

### **2. Review of City Website**

Ken wanted the attendees to briefly review the City's website to see where *GGC* and environmental information was housed so we took a look at it. It is findable several ways, including minutes of past meetings and also other items related to environmental issues. There is a need however to better focus what is presented and perhaps emphasize one link that gets a user to these materials. It would be great if someone on the *GGC* would volunteer to take a look at this and work with Rhonda (who posts this info) to make it happen.

### **3. Mission Statement**

As a new member of the *GGC*, Sara Britting wanted to know if we had a mission statement published. Ken/Larry recall that we discussed and finalized one about 8 years ago about the same time that we recommended that the City sign the Conference of Mayor Climate Agreement??

#### **4. Status - Climate Smart**

A brief discussion ensued about the NYS DEC Climate Smart Program and the level that the City has achieved so far. Larry reported that we are Bronze level and in the neighborhood of 120 points or so. We are not sure if this includes the points we should be getting for the City's Municipal lighting replacement project. Sara mentioned that Ithaca is the State leader in environmental leadership and at the Silver level. Larry recommended that we all familiarize ourselves better with the Climate Smart list in the DEC website.

#### **5. Division of Labor and Assignments**

Ken felt that there was a need for GGC members to each take on specific assignments so that we can move forward on several fronts rather than one issue at a time. For example:

Dan Belliveau - Dan seems to be advocating with Staff to contact Finger Lakes RR and make some progress on the Pre-Emption St. Right of Way.

Adam Blowers - Composting and the City's vermi-culture project.

Jacob Fox - Vermi-culture project science, construction and operations.

Anne Hoyt - Zoning and zoning code with regard to the zoning rewrite currently underway. See below.

**Everyone!** - Read all the information and report that you have.

#### **6. Membership on the GGC**

While the GGC is open to participation by the public, Ken suggested that both Sara Britting and Tricia Meaney formerly apply via the City's website. Here is the link where you can post your application.

<http://cityofgenevany.com/civic-engagement/>

## 2. Glyphosate Discussion

In advance of the meeting Ken made a separate document for the research, notes and comments that Tricia Johnson emailed everyone regarding Roundup and glyphosate impacts on the environment. Thank you Tricia.

Ken took the liberty to put Tricia's information into Memo form that we could all review and research and add/adjust/refashion to express the combined wisdom of the entire GGC. This would be homework for everyone on the Cmte. to do so that we can better inform the City (institutions, staff, and residents) about the options/alternatives to the application of Roundup/Glyphosate. It may even suggest a ban, but that would require the entire Cmte. to do the work and then defend the recommendation.

Tricia's memo is sent separately.

In addition to glyphosate, Jim Norwalk thought that the GGC should be addressing household chemicals and their impacts on health.

As a starting point, why not review the info in this brief summary. It is a link from the National Pesticide Information Center at Oregon State that we can all easily read to catch up. Tricia's research is more in depth and is also worth the read.

<http://npic.orst.edu/factsheets/glyphogen.html>

## 3. Zoning Rewrite

Ken briefly reported on his emails and a recent conversation with Sage Gerling (City Manager) regarding the Zone rewrite project the City is undertaking with the assistance of Barton & Loguidice (B&L) due to be completed at the end of the year. (Prior to the GGC meeting, Sara had asked why the City's zoning rewrite committee did not have a member of the GGC on it). During Ken's discussion with

Sage she indicated that she was open to adding a member from the *GGC* to the group.

Given the *GGC*'s interest in "environmentalizing" the new code, Sage also took the time to clarify for Ken (and the *GGC*) that there is a distinction between sections of the City code that the rewrite currently addresses. The B&L project is focused on **Chapter 350 - Zoning** and deals with land use and occupancy. The other section (among others) that may be of interest to the *GGC* is **Chapter 100 - Brush, Grass and Weeds** which would pertain to our discussions about the application of pesticides and other household chemicals.

Sage advised that environmental review of other sections of the code related to environmental issues such as the application of pesticides, etc... will have to be reconciled with the update to Chapter 350, but otherwise the *GGC* should feel free to research and propose environmental recommendations for the code as well as Staff operations and does not have to wait for the zoning project to be completed.

## **Example of Chapter 350 Issues**

Anne had provided in an email prior to the meeting the following information which will be forwarded to Sage.

"The city is rewriting its zoning code and holding information meetings as well as giving the public an opportunity to contribute. This is an important opportunity for the city's Green Committee to weigh in on this most important issue. I am just beginning the process of looking into how Geneva might want to move forward with its zoning, but here is a link to a 2014 article, published in a peer-reviewed journal, that surveys measures cities have taken to promote sustainability through zoning."

We should be assembling some recommendations.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01944363.2014.981200?scroll=top&needAccess=true>

Based on Anne's interest and initiative she may be a great candidate for sitting on the City's zoning rewrite committee.

## **Example of Chapter 100 Issues.**

In an email sent before the meeting, Jim Norwalk had presented a case for the need to rewrite part of our Chapter 100 related to foliage (see below).

“Here is a problematic code in my opinion...I know it is generally worded to prevent excuses for not mowing or maintaining a yard but the language is pretty adverse to, archaic, and arbitrary regarding native/wildlife friendly landscaping initiative. I think Geneva needs to go in the other direction and promote healthy native, pollinator friendly landscaping....Geneva as it is, is a pollinator/backyard wildlife DESERT.”

[§ 100-1 Control of growth; harmful vegetation.](#)

[A.](#)

It shall be unlawful for any owner, or occupant or person having control of any lot or land in the city to cultivate more than 10% of said lot or land or 1/10 of an acre, whichever is less, for the purpose of establishing a natural area of wildflowers and shrubs. The area must be clearly defined by the utilization of fencing, mulching or other form of delineation and shall be located not nearer than 25 feet to any public highway, street or right-of-way. The remainder of said property, lot or land, to include the area between the property line and the curb or for 10 feet outside the property line if there is no curb, shall be maintained to ensure that no growth of weeds or grass shall exceed six inches on average or to allow any accumulation of dead weeds, grass or brush.

[Amended 7-7-1993 by Ord. No. 93-7]

[B.](#)

It shall also be unlawful for any such person to cause, suffer or allow poison ivy, ragweed or other poisonous plants or plants detrimental to health to grow on any such lot or land in such manner that any part of such ivy, ragweed or other poisonous weed shall extend upon, overhang or border any public place or allow seeds, pollen or other poisonous particles or emanations therefrom to be carried through the air into any public place.

[C.](#)

It is prohibited to allow hedges, shrubs or trees to encroach onto public sidewalks and lines of sight of public roadways.

[Added 9-7-1988 by Ord. No. 88-7]

Jim certainly would be another candidate for participation on the Zoning Rewrite Cmte. but is too busy to attend additional meetings at this time. Ne

## **4. Homework for Members**

Ken asked a couple of members of the Cmte. to assist with some items:

1. Preparation of a membership list of the *GGC* members and their education and latest job status and/or affiliations. Michael was kind enough to volunteer and get this started and sent us all a link to the document. Please people, add your names to the list.
2. Anne Hoyt sent us a link to a body of research on zoning for sustainability and Jim Norwalk has agreed to provide some verbage for us to forward with the link to the City's zoning rewrite committee. Please Jim, can you do this soon.
3. Larry Campbell said that he would review the Glyphsate information that Tricia sent out as well as other sources and provide his assessment for us sometime before the next meeting. Did I get that right Larry?

---

The meeting was adjourned at around 7:00 PM. The next meeting of the *GGC* will be back at our regular time, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed, June 19, @ 5:30PM. Please put this date on your calendar and let us know.