


MEMORANDUM

TO: Trustee Bob Bachner, Chairperson
Public Works & Environmental Concerns Committee

FROM: William J. Heniff, AICP, Director of Community Development 

MEETING DATE: December 12, 2023

SUBJECT: **Text Amendments to Chapter 92.30 et. seq. of the Village Code
– Weeds & Vegetation (No Mow Provisions)**

As the Public Works & Environmental Concerns Committee (PWECC) members are aware, the Village established a “No Mow ‘til Mother’s Day” Pilot Program. As stated in Village communications, the Village sought to raise awareness throughout the community of opportunities to support our environment and local habitats for wildlife. The “No Mow ‘til Mother’s Day” program invited detached single-family residents/property owners to avoid mowing their lawn, or a portion of the lawn, through Mother’s Day (May 14, 2023) to help support the local ecology, the habitats of pollinators and other wildlife.

The Pilot Program was fully implemented in 2023 and consisted of a property owner sign-up requirement and the Village preparing, distributing, and collecting “No Mow” advocacy signs at participating sites to raise awareness and encouraging participation.

After conclusion of the event, the Village has received follow up inquiries as to whether the Pilot Program will be occurring for the 2024 Spring Season. Based upon general public interest, staff is introducing an amendment to the Weeds & Vegetation section of the Village Code to codify the Program components. This action would have the following benefits:

1. It would memorialize the Program as it existed in 2023 and it would not be subject to annual review.
2. For ease of following, the text amendment would automatically exempt all occupied detached single-family residential properties from the lawn cutting code requirements during the “No Mow” defined period. Or in other words, an owner

does not need Village approval to participate in the Program.

3. The text amendments also reduce the need for direct program advertising. This would have an environmental benefit as the Village or residents do not have to drop-off or pick-up signs and plastic informational signs and their metal supports do not need to be manufactured and distributed. This also provides a secondary finance benefit for the Public Works budget. Staff also notes that individuals can still promote the benefits on their own accord.
4. All other provisions of the existing Pilot Program would be incorporated into code, such as the start date, end date and an exemption provision for those properties which have a high grass/weeds code enforcement case already in place on April 1 for a given year.
5. For those individuals that are not supportive of the program and have contacted Code Enforcement staff expressing concerns, it offers clarity of the Village's intent to encourage the Program's existence.

For reference purposes, staff is provide the PWECC members with the cover memoranda from the 2023 efforts, the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet stating the program parameters and a draft Ordinance amendment the relevant code provisions to provide for the program.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is forwarding the proposed regulations to Public Works and Environmental Concerns Committee for consideration and a recommendation to the Village Board for approval of the proposed amendments to Section 92.30 et. seq. of the Village Code pertaining to the No Mow 'til Mother's Day and exception provisions relative to grass and weed cutting activity for detached single-family residences.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Scott Niehaus, Village Manager

FROM: Carl Goldsmith, Director of Public Works *C Set by DRK*

SUBJECT: "No Mow 'til Mother's Day" Program – Proposed Board of Trustees Policy

DATE: August 10, 2022

Staff is forwarding the attached draft policy from the Public Works & Environmental Concerns Committee for the Board of Trustees' consideration. The Committee voted to recommend a one-year pilot, and to advocate The Conservation Foundation's popular Conservation@Home program as well as the possible assistance of other knowledgeable groups such as the Lombard Garden Club.

Background:

The DuPage Monarch Project has asked the Village to participate in the No Mow May Program. As the name suggests, residents are encouraged to delay their first mowing until after May. The purpose is to better accommodate the springtime propagation of flowering plants (e.g., clover and dandelions) and also insects that serve as food for birds and pollinators for plants. Other "Bee City USA" communities participating include Westmont, Glenview, Port Barrington, Barrington Hills, and Hawthorn Woods. The program website is at <https://beecityusa.org/>. Westmont has rebranded their program as "No Mow 'til Mother's Day", and their fact sheet is attached for reference.

Article IV of the Lombard Municipal Code restricts the height of weeds and grasses to eight inches, and compliance following a letter is required within seven days. In 2021, there had been 6 violations in April, 85 in May, and 22 in June. In 2022, there have been 92 violations from April 1st through May 13th, and a further 108 violations from May 14th through May 31st. As such, the Committee and Staff concurred to propose an end date of Mother's Day (i.e., the second Sunday in May).

Under the program, the Village would purchase yard signs to provide upon request to owners of single family detached residential lots. The annual cost for the signs is estimated at \$400, which may be absorbed by the Community Recycling Fund. There would be no cost to property owners. The purposes of the signs are to (1) explain the reason for not mowing, (2) encourage others to participate, and (3) allow Code Enforcement to not cite violations related to weed and grasses over eight inches.

Should this Policy be enacted on a trial basis during 2023, Village employees will inform interested parties about the program based upon the Policy parameters. Also, during the trial period, any individuals reporting high grass to Code Enforcement will be informed of the nature of the program, its intended benefit, and that the Board or Trustees' Policy dictates a delay of any enforcement until after the Mother's Day date.

Village Staff will provide the Committee and Village Board with a summation report stating the level of direct participation as well as any other responses received regarding the program effort, all in an order to determine if the program should become a permanent policy or program.

Recommendation:

The Committee and Staff recommend that the Board of Trustees approve the attached draft policy memo to establish a “No Mow ‘til Mother’s Day” pilot program in 2023.

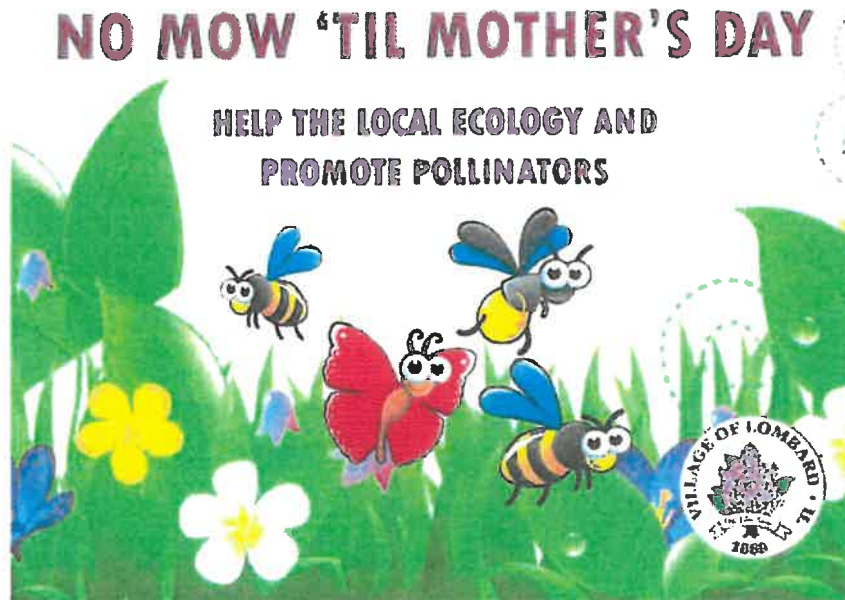
CG/DG:dg H:\P\W\Environmental\No Mow til Mothers Day\No Mow til Mother's Day Memo - Pilot Program BOT 8-10-22.docx

attachments: Westmont’s Information & Fact Sheet, Draft BoT Policy Memo

cc: William Heniff, Director of Community Development

Michelle Stefans, Code Enforcement Coordinator

Eric Hendrickson, Forestry & Urban Landscaping Supervisor



220223



MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Works & Environmental Concerns Committee

FROM: Carl Goldsmith, Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: "No Mow 'til Mother's Day" Program

DATE: June 2, 2022

The DuPage Monarch Project has asked the Village to participate in the No Mow May Program. As the name suggests, residents are encouraged to delay their first mowing until after May. The purpose is to better accommodate the springtime propagation of flowering plants (e.g., clover and dandelions) and also insects that serve as food for birds and pollinators for plants. Other "Bee City USA" communities participating include Westmont, Glenview, Port Barrington, Barrington Hills, and Hawthorn Woods. The program website is at <https://beecityusa.org/>. Note that Westmont has rebranded the program as "No Mow 'til Mother's Day", and their fact sheet is attached for reference.

Article IV of the Village Code restricts the height of weeds and grasses to eight inches, and compliance following a letter is required within seven days. In 2021, there had been 6 violations in April, 85 in May, and 22 in June. In 2022, there have been 92 violations from April 1st through May 13th, and a further 108 violations from May 14th through May 31st. As such, Staff believes that not mowing for the entire month of May would be particularly problematic, and therefore suggests the end time of any potential program be set no later than Mother's Day, consistent with Westmont's program.

Under the program, the Village would purchase yard signs to provide upon request to residents. The annual cost for the signs is estimated at \$400, which may be absorbed by the Community Recycling Fund. There would be no cost to residents. The purposes of the signs are to (1) explain the reason for not mowing, (2) encourage others to participate, and (3) allow Code Enforcement to not cite violations related to weed and grasses over eight inches.

Recommendation:

Staff requests that the Committee provide a recommendation to the Board of Trustees regarding endorsing a "No Mow 'til Mother's Day" program starting in 2023.

CG/DG:dg H:\PW\Environmental\No Mow til Mothers Day\PECC Memo R1.doc
 attachment: Westmont's Information & Fact Sheet
 cc: Bill Heniff, Director of Community Development
 Michelle Stefans, Code Enforcement Coordinator
 Eric Hendrickson, Forestry & Urban Landscaping Supervisor



No Mow 'til Mother's Day

Frequently Asked Questions

Overview

What is the "No Mow 'til Mother's Day" campaign and why is Lombard supporting the effort?

The Village and the Public Works and Environmental Concerns Committee want to raise awareness throughout the community of opportunities to support our environment and local habitats for wildlife. No Mow 'til Mother's Day invites residents to avoid mowing their lawn, or a portion of their lawn, through Mother's Day on May 14, 2023 to help support the local ecology, the habitats of pollinators and other wildlife.

How the Program Works

How do residents get involved?

Lombard residents in single family homes who wish to participate in the program can sign up via this [online form](#) until April 1, 2023. Once registered, residents will receive a lawn sign and be exempt from lawn mowing code enforcement through Mother's Day on Sunday, May 14, 2023.

Where do I get my sign?

Once a resident's participation in the program is approved by the Village, the Public Works Department will deliver and install the yard sign. The sign will be placed on private property and oriented towards the roadway. Residents must maintain and display the sign for the duration of the program.

What should I do with my sign when the program ends?

The Village will collect the yard signs the week following Mother's Day.

Lawn Maintenance

Do I have to let my entire lawn grow?

No. You can choose to let the grass grow on your entire lawn, including the parkway, or just a small section of it. If you feel your lawn is too long, you may cut it at any time. This initiative is about supporting habitats for pollinators, but also about raising awareness of the small things we can do as a community to create a better environment for pollinators.

What can I do if dandelions go to seed in my yard?

If a yellow dandelion goes from a flower to a seed, it is no longer a benefit to pollinators, so please feel free to cut off the seed head so the seeds don't have a chance to spread. There are usually younger dandelions beginning to flower below the seeding plants, so try to cut the seeding dandelions individually or set your mower deck on a higher level to avoid cutting the new yellow dandelion flowers.

Code Enforcement

What if a neighbor complains about my grass getting too long?

Those who are registered for the program and have a "No Mow 'til Mother's Day" lawn sign visible will not be subject to lawn mowing code enforcement. We understand that not everyone may be in favor of this initiative, but the program is temporary and will end on May 14, 2023. We ask for your patience during this program as it aims to benefit our local ecology. If you have further questions or concerns, please contact the Village at (630) 620-5740.

Do I have to cut my grass on Mother's Day?

Participating properties are expected to be mowed no later than Saturday, May 20, 2023.

More information

What else can I do to help pollinators?

Want a more sustainable solution to No Mow May? How about planting native gardens as a lawn alternative? It's a great long-term solution to enhancing our bee population, as well as other beloved pollinators. Maybe you can reduce the size of your lawn to accommodate a small native garden, filled with easy to maintain perennials that will thrive in our area and help our pollinators populate.

Here are some other helpful tips:

- Avoid using pesticides
- Plant colorful native wildflowers
- Grow flowers in clusters
- Plant a wide variety of flowering plants that bloom during different times throughout the year
- Plant trees, herbs, flowering fruits, and vegetables
- Leave some areas, even small areas, undisturbed
- Create a nesting shelter

Additional resources on pollinators and conservation efforts may be found at:

- Lombard Garden Club – <http://lombardgardenclub.org/>
- The Morton Arboretum - <https://mortonarb.org/plant-and-protect/>
- University of Illinois Extension - <https://extension.illinois.edu/mg>
- The Conservation Foundation Conservation @Home Program - <https://www.theconservationfoundation.org/conservation-home/>
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service - <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/plantsanimals/pollinate/gardener/s/>

For more information about this program, contact the Public Works Department at publicworks@villageoflombard.org

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**AN ORDINANCE GRANTING APPROVAL OF TEXT AMENDMENTS
TO TITLE IX, CHAPTER 92 OF THE LOMBARD VILLAGE CODE**

(Article IV: Weeds and Vegetation (No Mow Provisions))

WHEREAS, the Village of Lombard established Weeds and Vegetation Code provisions which is found in Title IX, Chapter 92.30 et. seq. of the Lombard Code of Ordinances; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees deem it reasonable to periodically review said Code and make necessary changes; and,

WHEREAS, in order to provide the opportunity for single-family residential property owners the opportunity to promote environmental stewardship to better accommodate Springtime pollination and growth of plants, which in turn supports habitat and food sources for monarchs, bees, and birds, the Public Works & Environmental Concerns Committee (PWECC) supported and the Village Board of Trustees approved a “No Mow ‘Til Mother’s Day” Pilot Program for the 2023 Spring season, and encouraged selected properties to participate in the Program; and

WHEREAS, the Village Board of Trustees finds that the Pilot Program was well received and helped promulgate sustainable environmental practices with minimal negative impacts upon the Village as a whole; and

WHEREAS, with the success of the Pilot Program, the Village Board of Trustees finds that amending the mowing provisions set forth within Chapter 92.30 et. seq. of Village Code, in a manner consistent within the established parameters of the Pilot Program, would further advance such desired environmental practices; and

WHEREAS, a review of the applicable Code provisions was conducted by the PWECC on December 12, 2023; and,

WHEREAS, the PWECC filed its recommendations with the President and Board of Trustees recommending approval of the text amendments described herein and set forth within Section 1 and made a part hereof.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF LOMBARD, DU PAGE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, as follows:

SECTION 1: That Title IX, Chapter 92, Section 92.30 et. seq. of the Lombard Village Code shall be amended to read in part as follows, with additions highlighted and in underscore.

ARTICLE IV. - WEEDS AND VEGETATION

§ 92.30 - Definitions.

For the purpose of §§ 92.30 through 92.34 of this Code, the following definitions shall apply unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning.

Weeds/grasses. Canada thistles (*Cirsium arvense*) and all of its varieties, perennial sow thistles (*Soncus arvensis*), European bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) leafy spurge (*Tithymalus osula*), Russian Knapweed (*Centaurea repens*), Hoarycress (*Lepidium draba*), ragweed (*Ambrosia*) and all weeds due to pollination, milkweeds, dandelion, Jimson weed, burdock, cockleburs and the like weeds, as well as all grasses, excepting thereform trees, shrubs or plant materials permitted by § 92.33 of this Village Code.

Weed/grass areas. Any lot or parcel of property, or portion of any lot or parcel of property containing in its make up weeds/grasses as defined above.

Wild/uncultivated. Weeds/weed or grass areas with a height in excess of eight inches above the ground.

('70 Code, § 6.20.010) (Ord. 1304, passed 8-21-67; Am. Ord. 2356, passed 1-3-80, Ord. 3617, passed 11/5/92; Ord. 5860, passed 5/18/06; Ord. 6352, passed 6/18/09)

§ 92.31 - Remediation of noxious vegetation.

- a. It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation owning or controlling any lot or parcel of property to permit the growth of weeds/grasses or weed/grass areas in a wild/uncultivated state. All such weeds/grasses or weed/grass areas shall be cut, pulled, or destroyed by the owner or person in control of said lot or parcel of property so as not to constitute weeds/grasses in a wild/uncultivated state.
- b. **The provisions set forth in Subsection 92.31(a) above shall not apply starting from April 1 and concluding on the second Sunday in May in a given calendar year, in the following limited instances:**
 1. **The property is improved with a single-family detached residence;**
 2. **The single-family detached residence is inhabited; and**
 3. **As of April 1 of the given calendar year, the subject property does not have an open code violation case of the provisions set forth within Subsection 92.31(a).**
- c. **Any property meeting the criteria of Subsection 92.31(b)(1) and (2) above, shall be subject to the provisions of Subsection 92.31(a) beginning on the Saturday following the second Sunday in May in the same calendar year.**

('70 Code, § 6.20.020) (Ord. 1304, passed 8-21-67; Am. Ord. 2356, passed 1-3-80, Ord. 3716, passed 11/5/92; Ord. 5860, passed 5/18/06; Ord. 6352, passed 6-18-09)

Cross reference— Penalty, see [§ 92.99](#)

§ 92.32 - Expense of remediation.

When the person, firm, or corporation owning or controlling any lot or parcel of property fails to maintain the weeds/grasses or weed/grass areas growing thereon, so as to prevent said weeds/grasses or weed/grass areas from existing in a wild/uncultivated state, the Village Manager shall cause the weeds/grasses or weed/grass areas to be brought into compliance with this Code, and the reasonable expense incurred by the village and/or individuals or organizations directed by the village in doing so shall be charged against the owner, and may be recovered in an appropriate action at law.

('70 Code, § 6.20.030) (Ord. 1304, passed 8-21-67; Am. Ord. 2356, passed 1-3-80, Ord. 3617, passed 11/5/92; Ord. 5860, passed 5/18/06; Ord. 6352, passed 6-18-09; Ord. 6438, passed 2/4/10)

Cross reference— Penalty, see [§ 92.99](#)

§ 92.33 - Xeriscaping.

In cases where the person, firm, or corporation owning or controlling any lot or parcel of property, landscapes said lot or parcel of property either with vegetation native to the region, so as to reduce or eliminate required maintenance, or a vegetable/flower garden that does not extend into the front, side or corner side yard setbacks, said person, firm or corporation shall provide upon request of the Director of Community Development a landscape plan, including plan box detailing the species of vegetation planted, or other documentation required by the Director to show compliance with [§ 92.31](#) of this Code.

('70 Code, § 6.20.035) (Ord. 2356, passed 1-3-80, Ord. 3617, passed 11/5/92; Ord. 6738, passed 6/21/12)

Cross reference— Penalty, see [§ 92.99](#)

§ 92.34 - Lien.

(A) In addition to all other remedies provided by law, the village may record a lien on the real estate on which the weeds/grasses or weed/grass areas are growing, for the reasonable costs incurred by the village and/or its agents for the cutting, removal, or destruction of such weeds/grasses or weed/grass areas, pursuant to 65 ILCS 5/11-20-7, if said weeds/grasses or weed/grass areas are maintained in a wild/uncultivated state.

(B) Upon a finding of guilty, such owner shall be fined a minimum of \$50.00 with a maximum penalty of \$750.00 per day per violation. A payment in full or such lien by the

owner shall constitute a defense to the prosecution hereby commenced. In addition to the amount due, pursuant to the ordinances of the Village of Lombard, legal fees in the amount of \$200.00, relative to the preparation and recording of this lien claim, as well as actual costs incurred for the recording of this lien, must be paid prior to the issuance of any release of lien.

('70 Code, § 6.20.040) (Ord. 1304, passed 8-21-67; Am. Ord. 1408, passed 7-1-68; Am. Ord. 2356, passed 1/3/80; Ord. 5860, passed 5/18/06; Ord. 6352, passed 6-18-09; Ord. 6438, passed 2/4/10)

SECTION 2: That this ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its passage, approval and publication in pamphlet form as provided by law.

Passed on first reading this ____ day of _____, 2024.

First reading waived by action of the Board of Trustees this ____ day of _____, 2024.

Passed on second reading this ____ day of _____, 2024.

Ayes: _____

Nays: _____

Absent: _____

Approved this ____ day of _____, 2024.

Keith T. Giagnorio, Village President

ATTEST:

Elizabeth Brezinski, Village Clerk

Published in pamphlet from this ____ day _____, 2024.

Elizabeth Brezinski, Village Clerk