



The City of Cortland
Environmental Advisory Committee

July 11, 2022

Wastewater Treatment Facility

The board met at 7:00 PM on Monday 11 July 2022 at the Wastewater Treatment Facility conference room. In attendance were board members John Busch, Steven Broyles and Diane Chu. Also attending were advisors Annika Huber and Szilvia Kadas as well as Mayor Scott Steve and staff liaison Bruce Adams.

New Business

There were not enough members for a quorum, so no officers were chosen. Scott brought up the four community gardens in the city and expanding the community gardens to grow street trees for city use.

Diane suggested involving students and getting trees from the Department of Environmental Conservation (NYDEC) through the “Trees for Tribs”/ “Buffer in a Bag” program¹ and/or the Soil and Water Conservation’s spring tree sale². NYDEC also sponsors the “School Seedling Program” to promote environmental awareness.³ Grant applications for the student tree planting initiative are open to any school in New York State.

John then raised the issue of solar panels on the Pendleton Street Rosen superfund site. Scott said the city was trying to be environmentally responsible. The panels will not require the removal of trees from slope leading up to the school district’s Kaufman Center and bus garage. Pollinator-friendly plants will be planted beneath and between the panels.

Vermicomposting (composting with worms) was discussed. It was originally intended for sewage sludge but the project was shelved due to opposition over fears of odors and disease. Vermicomposting would also be effective for food waste. Along with changes to the “blue bag” system, the city considers separate food waste collections.

¹ <https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/77710.html>

² <https://cortlandswcd.org/sales/annual-tree-shrub-sale/>

³ <https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9393.html>

Scott would like to market the community gardens to build enthusiasm. Cortland community gardens are hardly used while those in Homer are oversubscribed. The marketing effort would also promote composting and recycling. Pests like the emerald ash borer and Japanese beetle were also discussed. There are many dead/dying/diseased trees in parks and throughout the city that need removal, however, funds are still required to tackle the massive project.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Action Items – Elect officers at next meeting.