

**LAW AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**June 16, 2020**

**Attendance:** **Tom Henning, Chair**  
**Chris Hilberg, Vice Mayor**  
**Brian Mueller, City Council**  
**Tom Moeller, City Manager**  
**Lori Thompson, Assist. City Manager**  
**Anne Horne, Park Board**

*The meeting was held via Zoom Teleconference in accordance with the laws and regulations of the City of Madeira.*

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM.

Mr. Henning introduced the purpose of the meeting. City Council referred Ordinance No. 20-07 to the committee for further review as it relates to property maintenance and noxious weeds. City Council held first reading of the ordinance on June 8, 2020.

Mr. Henning invited Anne Horne to review the issue with the committee. Ms. Horne works at the Cincinnati Nature Center and has information about native plants and the maintenance of “native meadows” in residential areas. The committee discussed deleting “milkweed” from the current list of defined “noxious weeds” in Madeira Code Section 92.45 as it has been brought to the City’s attention that milkweed is a habitat for species of butterflies in the region. It was agreed to recommend to City Council deleting this from the code.

There was also discussion regarding the maintenance of native meadows and, in particular, certain properties where the owners have committed almost the entire residential property to an unmown “native meadow” with various wildflowers and plants. Mr. Moeller noted the language in the current code which defines any “rank vegetation”, other than trees, shrubs and garden variety flowers must be maintained to a height of no more than 8 inches. Ms. Horne noted that there may be a balance that can be achieved by allowing a specified amount of the property to be maintained by native meadow plantings. She stated in her discussions with other Cincinnati Nature Center employees that 100 square feet would seem to be a reasonable size for a standard residential lot. Mr. Hilberg noted that the code should have restrictions to prevent the property from becoming too much overgrown. Ms. Horne also stated that one of the standards for maintaining a native meadow is to mow or burn it at least once per year. She also discussed the difference between native, non-native and “invasive” plants relative to maintaining them. Mr. Mueller stated in his research of the matter, there should be some guiding principles for regulating these situations. He noted that some communities create “citizen landscape boards” and establish a reference manual for residents to use when establishing a native meadow. He asked if there is any service which might provide consultation services so that the City Administration is not burdened with administering such a program, or could the Cincinnati Nature Center be compensated to perform this function. Mr. Hilberg also noted that with some properties larger than others, perhaps a larger area for the native meadow could be approved for

larger lots. Mr. Henning stated it appeared from the discussion that the committee appeared to be open to considering revising the code in the future to address this. He also noted that the Johnson Street property would be in violation regardless of the potential proposed amendments as the vegetation covers well more than 50% of the property.

Mr. Moeller stated he would discuss the matter of the right-of-way vegetation with the Law Director before contacting the property owner.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.

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Tom Henning, Chair