



## **AGENDA**

### **OXFORD CITY COUNCIL**

### **COURTHOUSE**

**TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2022**

### **WORK SESSION**

**6:30 P.M.**

---

**THE PURPOSE OF A WORKSESSION IS TO PROVIDE COUNCIL MEMBERS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS A PARTICULAR ISSUE. THE PUBLIC IS WELCOME TO OBSERVE, HOWEVER, NO ACCOMMODATION IS MADE FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**

---

1. Roll Call.

William Snavelly, Mayor

Chantel Raghu, Vice-Mayor  
Jason Bracken  
Glenn Ellerbe

Amber Franklin  
Alex French  
David Prytherch

---

2. Approval of Agenda.

3. Managed Natural Lawn Area Discussion.

4. Adjournment.

## Managed Natural Lawn Area Ordinance

### THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OXFORD, OHIO ORDAINS:

Section I. Oxford City Code, Title [Title numeral (i.e IX): General Regulations Chapter (Chapter in city code) : Management of Public and Private Property is hereby amended to read as follows:

#### 1. Intent

- a. The City Council recognizes residents' desire to use their property on residential parcels in an ecologically beneficial manner, including through the planting of vegetation in lawn areas, including native grasses and forbs, and other plants beneficial to pollinators, which may grow to a height of greater than the currently allowable ten (10) inches (see section 935.20(a.)) The Council finds these types of plantings may preserve, restore, or maintain beneficial natural functions and may utilize environmentally sound practices while upholding aesthetic properties that benefit our neighborhoods and community. As guidance towards these functional and aesthetic goals, this change in lawn use must be planned, managed, and maintained in accordance with the minimum standards described herein.

#### 2. Definitions

- a. Managed natural lawn area – A planned, intentional, and maintained planting of native plants or non-invasive plants of any origin, that is free from noxious weeds as defined by Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 901:5-37-01 and may exceed ten (10) inches in length. This may include a variety of horticultural practices including but not limited to those called natural lawns, natural landscapes, native lawns, pollinator gardens, rain gardens, meadow vegetation, native prairie, prairie gardens, monarch waystations, native plantings, native gardens, and butterfly habitat.
- b. Native plants – Plants recognized as native to the state by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, including: wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, vines, forbs, ferns, sedges, and rushes.
- c. Non-invasive plants – Domesticated and non-native plants commonly used in horticulture that do not spread beyond intentionally planted beds; that do not establish in unmaintained areas.
- d. Turf grasses – Blends of annual and perennial grasses intended to create a low-growing, homogeneous appearance commonly used in regularly cut lawns. (eg. Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, tall fescue, and fine fescue)
- e. Pesticide—pesticides are defined to include any chemical introduced into the environment for the purpose of killing arthropods. This includes topical sprays as well as systemic pesticides.

#### 3. Applicability

- a. Residential zoning districts.

#### 4. Requirements

- a. Any owner of a residential lot in the City may transition an area of lawn on the lot to a Managed Natural Lawn Area.
- b. Managed Natural Lawn Area may include vegetation more than ten (10) inches in height, and which have gone to seed, but may not include any noxious weeds, shall not impede line of sight for safe vehicular travel, nor shall impinge on public right-of-way, drainage utility easement, or neighboring properties. The Code Enforcement Officer may require mowing or other maintenance or removal for these purposes.
- c. The transition period from manicured lawn to a Managed Natural Lawn Area in a given space must be achieved in three growing seasons to ensure that a public nuisance is not created (see Oxford Landscape plan 410.B.3a.)
- d. A Managed Natural Lawn Area shall not include turfgrass lawns left unattended.
- e. When establishing a Managed Natural Lawn Area, turfgrass and/or other existing vegetation shall be eliminated, and native vegetation shall be planted through transplanting or seeding. Soil erosion shall be controlled and is the sole responsibility of the land owner.
- f. Pesticide use shall be minimized in Managed Natural Lawn Areas. The purpose of such areas is to use property in an ecologically beneficial manner. Pesticides generally disrupt ecologies. Indiscriminate or extensive spraying of pesticides is not allowed in Managed Natural Lawn Areas. Targeted application with short-lived pesticides may be justified. Similarly, the use of BT (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) for the control of larvae and grubs, including mosquito larvae, in isolated areas of the lot is allowed. Any pesticides used on the lot must not escape the lot, for example through wind or water transport. Plants that have been treated with systemic pesticides or genetic modifications that kill arthropods may not be knowingly planted and must be removed if they are discovered.
- g. Properties with a Managed Natural Lawn Area must comply with Ordinance 521.08 to ensure that the Natural Lawn area, like all other property, is free of noxious, offensive, unsightly, injurious materials or be subject to the defined penalties.
- h. At no time shall a Managed Natural Lawn Area interfere with motorists' views of the street or roadway.

#### 5. Failure to Maintain

- a. If a property owner chooses to install a Managed Natural Lawn Area, and it is determined by the Code Enforcement Officer that the area fails to meet the definition and requirements of a Managed Natural Lawn Area as defined in sections 2,3 and 4, it shall be considered prima facie evidence of the failure of the owner to comply with this section.
- b. The City may then provide written notice to the property owner advising such owner that the Managed Natural Lawn Area must be brought into conformity within (30) thirty days. If the owner fails to achieve conformity, then the City may perform the necessary work to abate non-compliance, keeping an accurate account of the cost. The cost shall be assessed to the property owner.



## **AGENDA**

### **OXFORD CITY COUNCIL**

### **COURTHOUSE**

**TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2022**

### **WORK SESSION**

**6:30 P.M.**

---

**THE PURPOSE OF A WORKSESSION IS TO PROVIDE COUNCIL MEMBERS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS A PARTICULAR ISSUE. THE PUBLIC IS WELCOME TO OBSERVE, HOWEVER, NO ACCOMMODATION IS MADE FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**

---

1. Roll Call.

William Snavelly, Mayor

Chantel Raghu, Vice-Mayor  
Jason Bracken  
Glenn Ellerbe

Amber Franklin  
Alex French  
David Prytherch

---

2. Approval of Agenda.

3. Managed Natural Lawn Area Discussion.

4. Adjournment.

## Managed Natural Lawn Area Ordinance

### THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OXFORD, OHIO ORDAINS:

Section I. Oxford City Code, Title [Title numeral (i.e IX): General Regulations Chapter (Chapter in city code) : Management of Public and Private Property is hereby amended to read as follows:

#### 1. Intent

- a. The City Council recognizes residents' desire to use their property on residential parcels in an ecologically beneficial manner, including through the planting of vegetation in lawn areas, including native grasses and forbs, and other plants beneficial to pollinators, which may grow to a height of greater than the currently allowable ten (10) inches (see section 935.20(a.)) The Council finds these types of plantings may preserve, restore, or maintain beneficial natural functions and may utilize environmentally sound practices while upholding aesthetic properties that benefit our neighborhoods and community. As guidance towards these functional and aesthetic goals, this change in lawn use must be planned, managed, and maintained in accordance with the minimum standards described herein.

#### 2. Definitions

- a. Managed natural lawn area – A planned, intentional, and maintained planting of native plants or non-invasive plants of any origin, that is free from noxious weeds as defined by Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 901:5-37-01 and may exceed ten (10) inches in length. This may include a variety of horticultural practices including but not limited to those called natural lawns, natural landscapes, native lawns, pollinator gardens, rain gardens, meadow vegetation, native prairie, prairie gardens, monarch waystations, native plantings, native gardens, and butterfly habitat.
- b. Native plants – Plants recognized as native to the state by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, including: wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, vines, forbs, ferns, sedges, and rushes.
- c. Non-invasive plants – Domesticated and non-native plants commonly used in horticulture that do not spread beyond intentionally planted beds; that do not establish in unmaintained areas.
- d. Turf grasses – Blends of annual and perennial grasses intended to create a low-growing, homogeneous appearance commonly used in regularly cut lawns. (eg. Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, tall fescue, and fine fescue)
- e. Pesticide—pesticides are defined to include any chemical introduced into the environment for the purpose of killing arthropods. This includes topical sprays as well as systemic pesticides.

#### 3. Applicability

- a. Residential zoning districts.

#### 4. Requirements

- a. Any owner of a residential lot in the City may transition an area of lawn on the lot to a Managed Natural Lawn Area.
- b. Managed Natural Lawn Area may include vegetation more than ten (10) inches in height, and which have gone to seed, but may not include any noxious weeds, shall not impede line of sight for safe vehicular travel, nor shall impinge on public right-of-way, drainage utility easement, or neighboring properties. The Code Enforcement Officer may require mowing or other maintenance or removal for these purposes.
- c. The transition period from manicured lawn to a Managed Natural Lawn Area in a given space must be achieved in three growing seasons to ensure that a public nuisance is not created (see Oxford Landscape plan 410.B.3a.)
- d. A Managed Natural Lawn Area shall not include turfgrass lawns left unattended.
- e. When establishing a Managed Natural Lawn Area, turfgrass and/or other existing vegetation shall be eliminated, and native vegetation shall be planted through transplanting or seeding. Soil erosion shall be controlled and is the sole responsibility of the land owner.
- f. Pesticide use shall be minimized in Managed Natural Lawn Areas. The purpose of such areas is to use property in an ecologically beneficial manner. Pesticides generally disrupt ecologies. Indiscriminate or extensive spraying of pesticides is not allowed in Managed Natural Lawn Areas. Targeted application with short-lived pesticides may be justified. Similarly, the use of BT (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) for the control of larvae and grubs, including mosquito larvae, in isolated areas of the lot is allowed. Any pesticides used on the lot must not escape the lot, for example through wind or water transport. Plants that have been treated with systemic pesticides or genetic modifications that kill arthropods may not be knowingly planted and must be removed if they are discovered.
- g. Properties with a Managed Natural Lawn Area must comply with Ordinance 521.08 to ensure that the Natural Lawn area, like all other property, is free of noxious, offensive, unsightly, injurious materials or be subject to the defined penalties.
- h. At no time shall a Managed Natural Lawn Area interfere with motorists' views of the street or roadway.

#### 5. Failure to Maintain

- a. If a property owner chooses to install a Managed Natural Lawn Area, and it is determined by the Code Enforcement Officer that the area fails to meet the definition and requirements of a Managed Natural Lawn Area as defined in sections 2,3 and 4, it shall be considered prima facie evidence of the failure of the owner to comply with this section.
- b. The City may then provide written notice to the property owner advising such owner that the Managed Natural Lawn Area must be brought into conformity within (30) thirty days. If the owner fails to achieve conformity, then the City may perform the necessary work to abate non-compliance, keeping an accurate account of the cost. The cost shall be assessed to the property owner.



## OXFORD CITY COUNCIL Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 17, 2022

### Roll Call TIME 00:00

|                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| William Snavelly Mayor | Chantel Raghu Vice Mayor |
| Jason Bracken          | Amber Franklin           |
| Alex French            | Glenn Ellerbe            |
| David Prytherch        |                          |

A Work Session Meeting of the Oxford City Council was called to order by Mayor William Snavelly on Tuesday, May 17, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. Members in attendance were, Amber Franklin, Glenn Ellerbe, Alex French, Jason Bracken, and David Prytherch. Chantel Raghu arrived at 6:58 p.m.

### Staff Members in Attendance

Mr. Doug Elliott, City Manager; Ms. Jessica Greene, Assistant City Manager; Mr. Sam Perry, Community Development Director; Mr. John Detherage, Fire Chief; and Ms. Heather Barbour, Clerk of Council.

## Approval of the Agenda TIME 00:00

### Motion – To Adopt

(Voice Vote) 1<sup>st</sup> Ms. Franklin 2<sup>nd</sup> Mr. Bracken

**AYE #6**

**NAY #0**

**ABS #0**

## Managed Natural Lawn Area Discussion

Mr. Elliott shared the proposed Ordinance the Environmental Commission had created. A copy can be found in the Work Session Agenda Packet. Mr. Elliott also sent the Councilors a prohibited noxious weeds list Ohio Administrative Code 901:5-37-01, a list of native plants, a selected Ohio native plants fields and prairie species list for landscape and restoration use, and a selected Ohio native plants upland woods species list for landscape and restoration use. Mr. Elliott mentioned an educational campaign hosted by the Environmental Commission. Mr. Elliott noted the current Ordinance in place regarding the height of turf grass, and a noxious weed provision.

Mr. Perry reviewed the existing property maintenance code in regards to cultivated gardens. Mr. Perry shared that one option might be to host an educational campaign a few times a year. Mr. Perry noted the City does receive a few complaints of tall grass located in the urban/rural edges where we have undeveloped land. Mowing is required a few times a year in these areas. Mr. Perry mentioned the regulatory burden on City Staff if that were to increase that would take away from other projects City Staff are working on.

Council discussed the differences between what is currently allowable in the existing code and what the Environmental Commission is proposing. A major reoccurring topic of an educational campaign that might enable residents to start a pollinator garden under existing code. Council discussed the differences between renters vs owners and HOA's and how education vs legislation and how managed natural areas might look at all levels. The Council was reminded of the Staff time commitments and discussed how this project might be regulated.

Mr. Prytherch shared copies of the project his planning students created. Mr. Prytherch noted this is a planning project of Oxford, Ohio Landscape Naturalization Master Plan 2022.

## Adjournment

**Motion to Adjourn Meeting at 7:20 p.m. TIME 00:00**

(Voice Vote) 1<sup>st</sup> Ms. Raghu 2<sup>nd</sup> Ms. Franklin

**AYE #7**

**NAY #0**

**ABS #0**

Mayor Snavelly announced a short 8 minute break before the regular City Council meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.