

City seeks to protect lakeshore vegetation

Ordinance proposed which would help preserve plants that prevent nutrients from entering water

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WINTER PARK—A proposed ordinance to protect lakeshore vegetation was discussed by the city commission Tuesday and will be advertised for public hearing at a future commission meeting.

Patterned after regulations already in effect in other local governments in the area, the ordinance would enable the city to more effectively control removal of lakeshore vegetation which is beneficial to maintaining the lakes' water quality.

After meeting Monday to discuss the new regulations, the city's lakes and waterways advisory board recommended that the city approve the ordinance.

Commissioner Peter Gottfried, an environmental analyst by profession, told the commission Tuesday that he believes the new ordinance would be a step in the right direction for the city. Orange County has been going by similar regulations since 1980, said Gottfried, and its lakes are in better condition than Winter Park's.

Shoreline and waterfront vegetation act as nutrient uptake from the water, feeding on nutrients going into the lake. Without natural shoreline vegetation, nutrients get into the lakes and spark the growth of undesirable vegetation such as algae blooms.

If the ordinance passes as proposed, anyone wishing to clear or alter more than 30 feet of the lake frontage will be required to obtain a permit from the city. Applicants for shoreline alterations would have to submit site plans, photographs, and information about the type of shoreline vegetation to be removed, proposed changes to the shoreline contour and an explanation as to why the applicant feels the permit is warranted, as well as a \$50 application fee.

Gottfried also suggested that penalties be established for violations of the ordinance if it passes.

In other news:

- The location, or perhaps relocation, of the Chamber of Commerce building is still a topic of discussion between city officials and the Chamber. According to Gottfried, who met recently with City Manager David Harden, city attorney Brent McCaghren and two representatives from the

Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber will agree to vacate its existing offices and break its long-term lease with the city if the city determines such action would be in the public's and the city's best interest. The city is considering using the Chamber building's space to create additional parking for the downtown area. The Chamber leases the property for \$10 a year. Dr. James Madison, president of the Chamber, had said before that the Chamber would not be willing to move before its lease expires in 1993.

The Chamber and city have since discussed the issue at length and agreed to work together toward finding a solution to both the downtown parking problem and the Chamber's lease with the city.

The question of when and where the Chamber will go still remains.

"The Chamber is prepared to do what's necessary for the public good," said Gottfried, "but they're concerned with a timetable."

The city has not set a time limit for the Chamber, but Gottfried said he believes one is needed.

"They are pursuing other avenues, and that takes time, but the commission needs a timetable," said Gottfried. He suggested that a two-phased timetable could be established to allow the Chamber to: (1) come up with a plan, and (2) implement it.

Possible options being considered for the Chamber include adding a wing on to the new civic center and leasing the space to the Chamber, and building a new Chamber building at the northwest corner of Lake Island Estates.

Meanwhile, the commission approved a proposal from the firm Pierce Dorsey & Rhordanz for completing the engineering and construction documents for renovation of the city parking lot at the southeast corner of Morse Blvd. and New York Ave. City Manager David Harden recommended that the city approve PDR's proposal rather than trying to do the work inhouse, which he said would delay many other projects the city is trying to get under way this year such as street resurfacing and solving drainage programs.

Outlook 5-28-87