



TO: Appleton City Council
FROM: REALTORS® Association of Northeast Wisconsin
DATE: February 20, 2020
RE: RESOLUTION #2-R-20 Designating May as No Mow May

The REALTORS® Association of Northeast Wisconsin (RANW) appreciates the opportunity to review and provide input regarding the proposal to suspend the enforcement of requirements related to weeds and wild growth and lawn-care and litter removal practices during the month of May and two weeks into the month of June.

Our Association commends the City of Appleton and the Pollenables-Fox Cities for their efforts to protect pollinator-friendly habitat and maintain Appleton's prestigious designation as a BEE City USA affiliate and host of a BEE CITY CAMPUS. However, based on our initial review, we would like to highlight some concerns related to the impact of this proposal on property owners, especially those that are in the process of trying to sell their homes.

Spring is a critical time in the real estate market as many homeowners begin to get their properties ready for sale and marketing. Given that the ideal selling season is shorter in the Midwest, this process usually starts in April and is in full swing by May. The value behind the idiom "curb appeal" cannot be overemphasized in the importance of selling a home in a timely manner and for a fair market price. Buyers understand that they are not just buying a home, they are buying into a neighborhood. The level of home and lawn care taken by neighboring property owners can lead to either a positive or negative overall impression of the culture and experience of a neighborhood. Therefore, we believe that overgrown, unattended lawns would negatively impact the desirability of prospective homes for sale.

Additionally, we have concerns regarding the length of time it may take the City Appleton to achieve compliance with requirements of the municipal code after the designated time period. Compliance is often complaint-based and requires a certain amount of time for notification and enforcement. Neighbors could find themselves surrounded by unsightly lawns well into July before the city is able to require remedy.

We hope that the City reconsiders the overall implications this proposal will have not only on the real estate selling season, but on the peace and harmony of Appleton neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let us know if you have any questions.

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Comments/Questions:
Dandelions offer no nutritional value to honey bees. In fact, when feeding on dandelions alone honey bees will produce no offspring.

Keep cutting the grass and eliminate voles and field mice.

Thank you,
Appleton, WI

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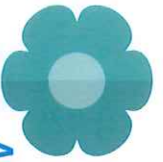
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Comments/Questions:

Regarding your no mow may. How stupid. You people build apartment buildings all along the river destroying their habitat along with butterfly habitat. Now you want to try and fix what you helped to screw up. Unreal. If you go ahead with this you can come by in June and mow my lawn for free. It's hard on lawnmowers. I have a heart condition and cancer. I don't need to be out there struggling to mow the lawn- it's going to be hard enough for me as it is. What's the purpose? Save em in May so you can run them over in June? When can the public voice their opinion on this matter- or don't we get to?. Watching the news it sounds like you've already made up your minds and you're going to ram it through without any public input. I expect a response to my concerns and expect to hear from you.

Thank you,
Appleton, WI

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NOMowMay A sustainability effort in our BeeCity



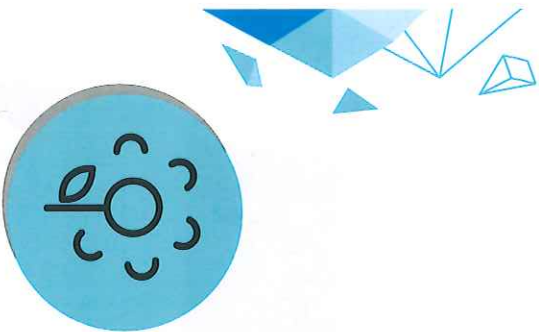
A summary explaining why mowing reduction benefits our local pollinators and makes Appleton more sustainable.



Biodiversity in our backyard!

Greenspaces and Biodiversity

- Increasing connectivity between urban greenspaces promotes a sustainability culture in protecting our biodiversity
- Moving away from monocultures (e.g. single species lawns) to more diverse habitats (e.g. urban meadows) results in increased forage resources and ultimately restores lost biodiversity (Lepczyk et al. 2017)
- Agrochemicals that negatively affect our pollinators are highest in the spring and early summer (Botas et al. 2017), we should instill a culture that reduces agrochemical overuse.



What NOMow means for you

The gist of it.

No Mow May is a sustainability initiative that promotes a culture of reducing lawn mowing intensity and the transformation of laws into urban meadows and prairies. The ultimate goal of this month is to produce early season forage for our native pollinators while educating our community about the value of pollination.

What NoMow does for you!



Mowing less frequently is practical, economical and timesaving alternative to lawn replacement

Reduction of mowing intensity

resulted in 50% increase in wild bee diversity and 30% increase in abundance of bees in Tuebingen Germany (Wastian et al. 2016)

Lawns mowed every three

weeks rather than weekly have 2.5 times more flower resources for bees (Lerman et al. 2018).

Species often considered

'weeds' are important forage resources for wild and honey bees (Ramer et al. 2019)

Reduced mowing intensity lawns

will naturally transform to more abundant wild native prairie species (Sehr et al. 2019) enhancing native plant biodiversity

Any Downsides?

The short answer is No! Most unmowed lawns in the month of May are not likely to exceed 8 inches in height before mid June. Disease vector abundances and allergy frequencies are not increased

Contrary to popular belief, lawn mowing reduction has no significant effect on disease vectors like deer ticks (Lerman and D'Arrico 2019) or Mosquito species (Yang et al. 2019)

Reduced mowing will result in increased spring emergence of dozens of species of beneficial insects

Most spring allergies result from mold and tree pollen and will not be increased by NoMow



What to plant this spring!

Consider adding these plants to your yard and reduce the amount of lawn you have to care for



SOURCES

Bellis, C. A. David, E. M. Hill, and D. Goulson. 2017. Quantifying exposure of wild bumblebees to mixtures of agrochemicals in agricultural and urban landscapes. *Environmental Pollution*.

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Lemman, S. B., A. R. Contosta, J. Nilam, and C. Bang. 2018. To mow or to not mow (yet): Lawn mowing frequency affects bee abundance and diversity in suburban yards. *Biological Conservation*.

Lemman, S. B., and V. Danico. 2019. Lawn mowing frequency in suburban areas has no detectable effect on *Borealis* spp. *Vector Borne Zoonotic* (Acari): *Jordilidag*. PLOS ONE.

Ramer, H., K. C. Nelson, M. Spivak, E. Walbran, J. Wolfin, and M. L. Putscher. 2019. Exploring park visitor perceptions of 'flowering bee lawns' in neighborhood parks in Minneapolis, MN, US. *Landscape and Urban Planning*.

Sant, M., O. Bessdorf, M. Freitag, and A. Bucharova. 2019. Less is more! Rapid increase in plant species richness after reduced mowing in urban grasslands. *Basic and Applied Ecology*.

Wastan, L., P. A. Unterwiesing, and O. Betz. 2016. Influence of urban lawn mowing on wild bee diversity (Hymenoptera, Apoidea). *Journal of Hymenoptera Research*.

Yang, L., K. J. Turn, C. B. Kling, E. A. Inceoglu, J. Tran, N. C. Hoedeker, P. M. Pimentelli, and M. M. Gardner. 2019. Can urban greening increase vector abundance in cities? The impact of mowing, local vegetation, and landscape composition on adult mosquito populations. *Urban Ecosystems*.