

BOYNE CITY

Shoreline gardens coming to Sunset Park

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This area of Boyne City's Sunset Park along Lake Charlevoix between the mouth of the Boyne River and the end of Water Street will soon be home to a shoreline demonstration garden project.

strip of land along the Lake Charlevoix shoreline. The garden will be located between the sidewalk and shoreline rocks situated between the mouth of the Boyne River and the end of Water Street.

The plan calls for the garden to be divided into nine 15-foot-by-24-foot segments, which will be offered to area landscapers to create a garden.

“Participants would then design and install their own interpretations of attractive, lakehealthy waterfront.

BOYNE CITY — Boyne City's Sunset Park will soon be growing — not in size, but in the types of plants that take root near its border with Lake Charlevoix.

At its regular semimonthly meeting Tuesday, the Boyne City City Commission voted 4-0 in favor of a proposal from the Lake Charlevoix Association to establish a multi-plot demonstration garden on the west end of the park. Commissioner Dean Solomon was absent from the meeting.

Under the plan, the garden will occupy a 220-foot-by-15-foot

The purpose of the proposed garden is to demonstrate alternate (approaches) to shoreline landscaping that are visually appealing, promote a healthy shoreline and are in compliance with Lake Charlevoix Area zoning regulations,” association officials wrote in a letter describing the project.

Speaking at Tuesday’s meeting, association president Dan Mishler further explained the purpose for the gardens.

“We want to show people that lake-friendly waterfronts can be both lake-friendly and attractive,” he said.

Joel VanRoekel, first vice president of the lake association, noted that the proposal grew out of a conference that several of the group’s members attended.

He said the gardens, along with the right kind of landscaping, can provide a buffer zone between the water and the land and serve to restrict the runoff of both sediment and nutrients into the lake.

“Protection (of the lake’s water quality) is much better than restoration. Sediment infiltration and nutrient runoff are among the two biggest concerns,” VanRoekel said. “Lake Charlevoix has very high water quality and our concern is to keep it that way.”

He said the association has already contacted 17 landscapers to offer them an opportunity to participate and five have already signed on.

Under the program, landscapers would agree to at least a three-year commitment. They will be required to use native species that won’t become invasive. To keep from obstructing views of the lake, plantings generally are not to exceed 3 feet in height.

The garden will include signs that identify the participating landscaper, along with information on the plantings used and where they are available.

Responding to an audience member’s question about access to the water’s edge for anglers, association officials said pathways will be created between each plot allowing access through the water’s edge.

Responding to a question from commissioner Hugh Conklin, association officials said if a participating landscaper was to stop participating or fail to properly maintain his or her plot, the association would assume responsibility for that plot.

Association officials are expecting installation of the garden to begin in fall 2018, with a grand opening anticipated in June 2019.

The city’s parks and recreation board passed a motion recommending approval of the proposal earlier in February.