



**Woods Committee Minutes  
Monday, March 1, 2021 - 7:30 PM  
ZOOM Meeting**

**Approved: April 5, 2021**

Attendance: Pat Klein, Joan Mahaffey, Dave Cosson, Joli McCathran, Deb Mehlferber, Virginia Quesada, Krista Zanetti

The March 2021 Woods Committee meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM. A quorum was present.

Approval of Agenda

The March WC Agenda was unanimously approved (Virginia 1<sup>st</sup>/Deb 2<sup>nd</sup>).

Approval of Minutes

The February 1, 2021 WC were unanimously approved (Joli 1<sup>st</sup>/Deb 2<sup>nd</sup>).

Public Appearances

There were no public appearances.

Deer Bow Hunt Debrief

Scott from the Bow Hunter Fire Fighters of Maryland attended via phone to assess the 20/21 Managed Deer Hunt in the East and West Woods. The number of deer sightings this year was down compared to last year. Consequently, the harvest numbers were reduced. The increase in the number of people walking in the woods might have contributed, as well. The hunters observed a ten-fold increase in pedestrians over the previous season. Many areas of the East Woods are too open for a tree stand. However, there was discussion of moving the site to the large patch of green briar northeast of the Cherry/Franklin trails. Access could be by a discrete trail into the green briar. There was also discussion of harvesting deer in the WG Conservation Meadow Park, where Montgomery County Parks and Planning controls the easement. Scott will discuss the matter with Dave Peterson, Head of Deer Management for Montgomery County. Joli will also talk to the senior forester for Montgomery County Parks and Planning. The tree line between the two fields could provide a good site for the tree stand. Washington Grove owns the upper meadow and halfway into the woods line. In the West Woods, underbrush is thicker, and it is easier to locate sites.

Some changes for next year include investigating new sites for the tree stands, placing trail cameras higher and secured to avoid vandalism and theft, and placing feeders in more secluded areas. Scott requested that WC members keep him posted on the prevalence of deer in specific areas.

The Committee approved a draft letter of appreciation for the Mayor to send in recognition of BHFFMD's efforts over the last two seasons.

#### Woods Preserve and Other Town Land Resolution (2021-xx) Update

The Committee approved for introduction a draft Resolution establishing the fees applicable for permits by Ordinance 2021 xx Under Article 1 Section 15 Code of Ordinances for archeological or fossil exploration. The draft Resolution also would revise the title of Article I to remove the word "morals." The Resolution was approved by the Town Council at their February 8 meeting. A fee of \$100 was proposed for permission to hunt for archaeological or fossil artifacts. However, if costs to the Town run higher, especially for fossils, the Town could raise the fee. Fees could also be waived, if applicable, at the Mayor's discretion. The Resolution also needs to include a time frame for permit approval. Other permits have a six-month time frame. Dave will investigate further.

#### East/West Woods Trail Maintenance Priority Projects Updates

##### **Signage**

The WC discussed specifics of signage at entrances to the Woods and on interior trails. Trail signs would be on 4"x 4" pressure treated wood posts, possibly capped with metal at the bottom. Trail names and arrows would be at the top with icons or words positioned vertically down the post. Icons would include "dogs on leash" and "no bikes". "Stay on trail" would be listed with words, not represented by an icon. Cost for interior signs would be \$450 each installed in a mixture of soil with gravel. Entrance signs would be more elaborate and more expensive, \$550 each. Signs with information would be mounted on posts with screws. If the WC chooses to install kiosks at entrances, it was suggested that we work with a company that manufactures them. Cost would be approximately \$250 each with \$150 for installation.

It was suggested that we talk to Steve to see how much he could help us to reduce costs. Krista will prepare a spreadsheet with options and costs. The WC decided to focus on post signage first and postpone work on kiosks.

##### **Timber Turnpikes for Wet Trail Areas**

Experimental "Timber Turnpikes" have been installed in the East Woods on Franklin, Cherry, and McCauley trails using natural tree limbs for side braces with fill dirt and wood chips. Drainage pipe and rocks have been placed under the trails to assist with water run-off. The Committee will evaluate whether the mix of soil and wood chips is adequate or if more soil layers are needed in the future. Brown gravel was placed along the Maple Ave extended trail between Center St and Franklin trail.

## **West Woods Spring Clean-Up Tasks, Kelley Park Drainage, and Camp Fire Threats**

Joan agreed to organize volunteer clean up projects in the West Woods by individual volunteers or by families. The WC notice in the Town Bulletin for April will solicit volunteers. There will be no large group effort due to COVID-19 concerns. Volunteers will be assigned specific areas, provided with heavy duty trash bags, and instructed on precautions for dealing with broken glass.

### Border Committee Identity Fencing Proposal

Joan reported that the Border Committee is proposing signage and intermittent identity fencing along the West Woods boundary Washington Grove Lane. A 4'x6' "Welcome to Washington Grove" sign is proposed for the corner of Day Lily Lane and Washington Grove Lane. The sign would be set at least 8 feet back into the woods so as not to obscure the vision of vehicles turning onto Washington Grove Lane. It would include cottage artwork. A large tree recently fell in this area so there is room to accommodate the sign without existing tree damage. The WC could landscape the area around the sign with native vegetation. Two types of identity fencing were proposed. The WC decided that the split rail fence would be more appropriate. A group of WC, Border Committee, and Historic Preservation Committee members should tour the West Woods border and decide on appropriate locations for small sections of identity fencing, where there is sufficient grade and no large trees would be harmed.

### Final Updates, Comments, and Action Items for March 1, 2021 Meeting

- Submit letter of appreciation to BHFFMD for Mayor's signature.
- Investigate further the possibility of extending BHFFMD deer management into the Conservation Meadow.
- Continue working with the Town Council to settle a permit fee and time frame for Woods Preserve and Other Town Land Resolution (2021-03)
- Continue investigation into Woods signage.
- Monitor effectiveness of pilot timber turnpikes in the East Woods.
- Plan socially distanced clean-up in the West Woods and solicit volunteers in the Town Bulletin.
- Form a group of members from various committee to select sites for intermittent identity fencing along WG Lane.

### Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM (Joli 1<sup>st</sup>/Krista 2<sup>nd</sup>).

Next meeting: April 5, 2021.

Respectfully submitted: Pat Klein and Joan Mahaffey, Co-chairs