

WG Meadows Committee Meeting Aug. 21, 2024

In attendance: Georgette Cole, Bruce Daggy, Kriss Grisham, Joan Mahaffey, Audrey Maskery, Donna Shriner, Anne Vincent; and from Montgomery Parks, Ryan Colliton

The meeting was called to order at 7:30. The agenda was approved by consensus. Minutes from the July 2024 meeting were approved by consensus. There were no public appearances.

Tree Reduction Proposal: Following a discussion the committee voted 7-0 in favor of proceeding with Phase 1 of the tree reduction plan. An additional committee member unable to attend, David Stopak, emailed his support for the proposal.

There are a few details of the execution of the plan that need to be resolved. We should know in September if the Sustainable Maryland grant is funded. If it is, Ryan will clarify what approval is needed from Parks for a contractor to be selected by the Town to execute Phase 1. In the past, external funds to support a Parks project have been donated to a Parks foundation, but this situation involving a grant (for which the Town is the grantee and has fiscal responsibility) is novel. The use of the cedar chips also needs to be resolved, hopefully avoiding any disposal costs. We discussed their use on paths (note: cedar rust does not spread from chips) or spreading them over cardboard in a wooded area covered with stiltgrass, to prepare the site for later understory planting with plants provided by Pope Farm. Ryan will look at the potential sites for spreading the wood chips. Ryan will coordinate with Ryan Butler to avoid any conflicts between the tree removal and the bow hunters (Sept. 9-Jan 31). And finally, we discussed seeding the spots opened by tree removal; Ryan will propose an appropriate mix.

Action: Inform Town Council of our recommendation and request that a vote to approve Phase 1 be taken at the September Town Council meeting.

Site visit: The demonstration gardens at North Creek Nurseries: Anne gave a presentation on a visit to North Creek Nurseries in Landenberg, PA. Bruce and Anne had a guided tour of trial plots and demonstration gardens, which included two high meadows and stormwater management gardens, among others. The company is both a potential technical resource for the Town and a source of plants at wholesale prices. Anne has their contact information, catalogue, and more.

Outreach to Shady Grove Crossing: Bruce has contacted Rob Gilmore, the Town Council liaison to Shady Grove Crossing, to inquire about a means to share information with that community about the meadow restoration effort and to invite residents to participate in weed warrior events, etc. Georgette will also explore her contacts.

Request to remove poison ivy: Bruce was contacted by resident Deb Tarasevich about a fallen tree across a path and poison ivy growing into the paths. Bruce submitted a work request to Parks and the tree was quickly removed. Bruce confirmed that poison ivy is a native plant useful to many species and is not a priority for Parks, but that they sometimes will remove it if it is in a location where human contact is likely. Bruce told Deb that the committee will observe the paths once the plant growth has bounced back from a recent mowing to decide if a work request is warranted.

Upcoming meetings: Due to schedule conflicts, moved to Sept. 19 and Oct. 24 at 7:30 pm via Zoom.

AOB: None. Committee adjourned 8:16 pm.