



This Special Town Council Meeting was held as an informational session for residents and the Town Council to bring together facts about Field/Meadow and the proposed restoration plan, and for the Town Council to hear public input and the restoration plan.

Call to Order: Mayor Compton called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. In attendance were Councilors Rob Gilmore, Kriss Grisham, Peter Nagrod, Eva Patrone, Barbara Raimondo, and Mary Warfield. Also in attendance were many town residents.

Approval of Agenda: Peter Nagrod moved to introduce and approve the agenda. Eva Patrone seconded the motion.

Action: Vote: 6-0, as presented.

Informational Presentations: Following each presentation, questions were accepted from the Town Council and others present.

A. Timeline of the Significant Events for the Meadow/Field – Mayor Compton (2000 – 2008, 2018 – present). There was a brief review of the historical timeline.

B. History of the Washington Grove Meadow Conservation Park, 2000–2013 – Former Mayor Georgette Cole (2011–2013). Georgette gave a history of The Meadow which included the following:

- Developer approached the Town to develop the 13 acres
- Legacy Open Space Program and Staff recommendations received favorably by Planning Board
- Testimony given to the Board
- Value of the 13-acre buffer
- The condemnation of 2005
- Attorney’s (Bill Roberts) opinion
- Management Operation plan to leave 4-5foot trees
- Initial plan not done due to understaffing
- 2014 Mowing began
- Current proposal plans to cut 74 trees to be done in two (2) phases
- The importance of long-term protection

C. Mayor’s Legacy Field Committee, 2012-2013 – Former Chair Ernie Kawasaki explained that the Town owns the land, but the parks department has an easement. Former Mayor Darrell Anderson established a committee to oversee the maintenance of the land including the following:

- Removal of invasive species

- Periodic mowing
- Clearing the paths
- Ernie also brought the Brenda Sandberg Operations and Use Plan and the 2013 presentation to everyone's attention.
- The rural open vista was noted.
- It was also noted that the plan proposed by Bruce Daggy will help move the original plan ahead.

D. Proposed Restoration of the Meadow – Meadow Committee Chair Bruce Daggy lead a discussion about the following:

- Reasons for doing the restoration plan
- Red Cedars are the main problem
- Climate action plan
- Meadow species
- A Sustainable Maryland Grant
- Splitting the plan into two phases
- Things we are losing
- Cannot remove poison ivy
- Rachel Carson Park
- Four goals; more open vistas, increased biodiversity, enhanced aesthetics, maintain park agreement

E. Presentation on the Conservation Meadow – Deb Tarasevich, Marida Hines, Barb Leng lead a discussion about the following:

- The need for a definition of a meadow
- The original Operations and Use Plan (four- and five-foot trees)
- The road noise (significant impact for Ridge Road residents)
- Tree selection (Meadow Committee heavily involved)
- Challenged the idea that the trees don't serve as a buffer
- Process problems
- Transparency, no reference to noise
- Listening to others
- Feeling dismissed
- Work being done with little input from residents
- Collaborative efforts
- Concern about pollinators, bees, and other wildlife
- Clarification about what should happen next
- Compromise
- Schedule another meeting including both groups and other residents

F. Historic Preservation and Other Comments – HPC Chair Robert Booher (2002-present) lead a discussion about the following:

- Historical significance of the land
- Heritage designation of the land
- Letter writing campaign (early on)
- History of the 13 acres

- Sound impacts – Bob thinks it is unlikely that the noise levels necessary for mitigation will be met.

G. Suggestions for an Effective Meadow Restoration Plan – Tom Land led a discussion about the following:

- Detailed plans with Parks
- Joint meetings
- Assessing the condition of the cedars
- Being open to changes when necessary
- Long term meadow maintenance/long term vision
- Herbicides; to use or not to use
- Removal of native persimmons
- Keeping Park's attention and better relationship
- Inclusion of all parties involved
- Clarifying ownership and easement

Public Appearances

Among comments expressed were the following:

- Could the tree selection be done in groups?
- How does someone join the ad hoc committee?
- Shouldn't there be public input before the cedars are cut down?
- Could there be another walk through?
- Could there be a Phase 3?
- What does restoration mean?
- Is it a field, a meadow, or both?
- Can both groups get guidance from the Council?
- Don't we need a legal opinion about types of uses?

Meeting Conclusion

The Council discussed whether they should provide the Meadow Committee with guidance to resolve the issues expressed by residents. Councilors Nagrod and Gilmore suggested that collaboration between the involved groups would be more effective than Council guidance. Peter Nagrod moved, and Eva Patrone seconded recommending a meeting be scheduled for November 20th between the Meadow Committee and concerned residents.

Action: Vote: 6-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 pm.

_____/s/_____
Kathryn L. Lehman