

Woods Committee Minutes  
Tuesday, September 4, 2018 – 7:30 PM  
McCathran Hall Council Room

Approved 10/01/2018

Attendees: Patrice Klein, Joan Mahaffey, Rob Gilmore, Georgette Cole, Jay Everhart, Tom Land, Joli McCathran, Deb Mehlferber, Meghan O'Connell, Virginia Quesada, and Greg Silber. Guest: John Hutchinson

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM

Additional Agenda Items/Agenda Approval

The agenda was approved as amended with the addition of a discussion of what should be posted on the Town Website. (Georgette 1<sup>st</sup>/Deb 2<sup>nd</sup>).

The minutes were approved as written. (Joli 1<sup>st</sup>/Georgette 2<sup>nd</sup>).

Public Appearances

None

Town Website

The Town is developing procedures to ensure consistency of postings to the Town Website. Agendas and approved minutes will be presented to Kathy, who will send them to Bill Saar for posting to the website. Marida Hines is the TC liaison to the site. She will help with any other information we would like posted.

Master Plan Updates with Lake Committee

John Hutchinson, Chairperson of the Lake Committee, initiated a discussion of Maple Spring which feeds the Lake in the West Woods. Both Committees agree on a joint effort to protect Maple Spring by fencing but further discussion is needed to jointly decide if the Lake fence should be extended to incorporate the spring or to fence it separately. Access might be via a boardwalk built over the wetland area adjacent to the Lake or by a separate path from the pumphouse or a town resident's house. The extent of restoration of both Maple Spring and Whetstone Spring will be further discussed. These might make good Eagle Scout projects. Runoff from Washington Grove Lane contributes to gully erosions and bridge culvert damage. Hutch asked the Woods Committee to include restoration of the 2 springs and plans for Washington Grove Lane runoff control in our 2019 Master Plan updates.

A motion was made for the Woods Committee to recommend to the Planning Commission (PC) that the East and West Woods zoning be amended from FR (Forest and Recreation) as listed in the 2009 Master Plan to be designated FP (Forest Preserve) (Pat 1<sup>st</sup>/Virginia 2<sup>nd</sup>) The motion passed with two abstentions from Committee members who serve on the PC. We will follow the established zoning amendment procedures to justify our intention, provide definitions of FR and FP, and present our recommendation

to the Planning Commission. This amendment intention should be included in our 2019 Master Plan updates.

The Master Plan Work Group will meet in September to further clarify these issues and present a final version of our Master Plan updates at the October 1 WC meeting. The deadline for edits has been extended until the end of October.

#### East and West Woods Updates

The WC responded to the recent discovery of several large patches of non-native invasive wavy leaf basket grass (WBG) in the West Woods. The WC led a small group of town volunteers to manually remove the WBG basket grass along the walking trail. IPC subsequently used a grass-specific herbicide, Clethodim, to treat WBG within the woods, and stilt grass along the trail. These combined activities are consistent with the WC approach to controlling non-native invasive plants in the East/West Woods.

The WC is planning a work day in early November to manually remove Japanese barberry in the West Woods. Tenley Wurglitz, director the Weed Warrior Program, has agreed to loan us a weed wrench so that we will have two tools for the event. WC Co-chair (Joan) will attend a Weed Warriors field event on September 6 for training on distinguishing native shrubs from some common non-native invasive shrubs. There was a suggestion that we buy another tool so that the Town owns two weed wrenches.

A Committee member (Virginia) agreed to lead a Trail Maintenance project in the East Woods on October 13 and will prepare a notice for the Town Bulletin. Other committee members will assist. Discussions of exclosures and East Woods trail naming were postponed.

#### Deer Management Plan

A timeline for our Deer Management Plan was discussed. An amendment to the Town Ordinance prohibiting hunting will be necessary to complete eventually. The WC plans to provide an update on the Forest Restoration Plan including invasive plant control and deer management options at the October 8 Town Council meeting. The WC intends to schedule an Informational Meeting in the Fall to provide more updates to town residents. Outside experts such as Bill Hamilton (MC) will be invited to attend. The Mayor wants to schedule a subsequent Special Town Meeting on Forest Restoration to gauge town opinion.

A Committee member (Meghan) presented a page of her draft Reforestation Report and will send the second page by email. The Reforestation Plan should focus on working from the core of the forest and maintaining the canopy that exists. The Plan should also address water management, climate change, and metrics. Meghan and Joan will walk the East Woods to mark places where holes in the canopy would benefit from replanting. The WC plans to purchase several medium sized trees using FY19 budgeted funds. Our overall plan includes three strategic components: control of non-native invasive plants, deer management, and reforestation.

#### Recap and Action Items for Next Meeting

- Organize presentation on the WC three-pronged approach to forest restoration for the October 8 Town Council meeting.
- Organize an Informational meeting in the Fall on the three-pronged approach to forest restoration and invite outside experts to speak.

- Organize and publicize a Trail Maintenance Day for the East Woods on October 13.
- Organize a work day for manual removal of non-native invasive shrubs from the West Woods in early November.
- Continue working on plan to amend the zoning of the East and West Woods from FR to FP.
- Finalize WC recommended updates for the 2019 Master Plan including runoff damage from WG Lane, restoration of Maple and Whetstone Springs, a zoning amendment from FR to FP, and the importance of a strategic plan including control of non-native invasive plants, deer management and reforestation.
- Continue to review and update our Reforestation Plan.
- Research East Woods sites for Fall planting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM (Georgette 1<sup>st</sup>/Meghan 2<sup>nd</sup>).

Next meeting – Monday, October 1, 2018, 7:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Mahaffey and Pat Klein (Woods Committee co-chairs)