

Woods Committee Minutes
Monday, February 4, 2019 – 7:30 PM
McCathran Hall Council Room

Approved March 4, 2019

Attendees: Patrice Klein, Joan Mahaffey, Charlie Challstrom, Georgette Cole, Jay Everhart, Rob Gilmore, Tom Land, Deb Mehlferber, Meghan O’Connell, Virginia Quesada

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM.

Additional Agenda Items/Agenda Approval

The Agenda was approved as presented (Georgette 1st/Virginia 2nd).

Approval of Minutes

The minutes were approved with the addition of the word “Trail” in the last sentence under Informational Meeting and Town Survey Results to read “However, the Woods Committee wants to abandon the section of Dorsey Trail between Maple and Cherry.” (Virginia 1st/Georgette 2nd).

Public Appearances

Charlie addressed the issue of fire lanes in the East Woods for potential fire control. Montgomery County is in the process of revising its Fire Mitigation Plan. When the Town Council is aware of new language, the Plan will be forwarded to the appropriate committees. The Fire Mitigation Plan may be included in the 2019 Master Plan.

Virginia stressed the need for separating recyclables from trash for woods clean up events and other Town events. There is a recycle bin in the Hall kitchen for use during Hall events. We will mention this concern to the Lake Committee and to the Woman’s Club. Charlie has pointed out that worldwide recycling is changing because of China’s prohibition on importing low quality recyclables.

Proposed Fiscal Year 2020 Budget

Invasive Plant Control	\$15,000
West Woods Invasive Control	5,000
Tree Safety	5,000
Tree Planting	5,000
Community Outreach	1,000
Whetstone Spring Restoration	1,000
Deer Management	<u>\$15,000</u>
Total	\$47,000

Deer Management includes supplies and enclosures for monitoring progress, since there will be no charge for cooperator’s services. Community Outreach will include supplies for volunteer work projects as well as some materials for protection from deer over browsing. Maple Spring is its own separate budget item. John Compton and Doug Lowmeier are working on a storm water/stream restoration project which will affect both the East and West Woods, but which will, also, have its own budget item.

Deer Population Management Plan

The Woods Committee's November/December "Washington Grove Forest Health Restoration Plan – Questionnaire" showed overwhelming support for the WC's integrated, three-pronged approach to forest health.

The WC continued planning for a Deer Management Program in cooperation with Montgomery County Deer Management and its archery cooperators. Montgomery County operates under the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Montgomery County initiated its archery program in 2015 and has strict requirements for archers. Ryan Butler, with Montgomery County Parks Planning and Stewardship, has identified sites in both the East and West Woods which would be suitable stand sites. However, since safety zones were updated pertaining to archery in 2017, more sites may be available.

Pat has extended an invitation to two of the MC cooperators to meet with WC members. They are Mark Eakin and his archery team and Doug Burke and his firefighters archery group. The Woods Committee had several questions to ask: How is liability clarified among the parties: DNR, Washington Grove, and the archery group? Will field dressing occur? How will disposal be handled? Who will incur the cost for disposal? Should we plan for exclosures? If so, where and when should they be constructed? How would exclosures affect the harvesting process? Is it possible to partner with Montgomery County Parks for deer management in the Conservation Meadow?

Charlie is crafting a Town Ordinance from DNR guidelines in order to move ahead with archery hunting. This ordinance will meet County Co-law requirements and determine which Chapters of County Code need to apply. It was suggested that we have Bill Hamilton of Montgomery County Deer Management and Ryan Butler review the Ordinance before it is presented to the Town Council.

Meghan and her Exclosure Work Group, including Greg, Joli, and Jay, are working on plans for an exclosure to monitor effects of deer management. They are considering a 50' by 50' exclosure with an 8' fence perhaps in the northeast corner of the East Woods.

Tom is working on a timeline to include: Ordinance preparation, meeting with cooperators, messaging opportunities, informational meeting (before Town Meeting on May 11), public hearing on ordinance, and Town Council approval. Any projected costs will be included in the WC 2020 budget proposal.

Thank you to Charlie, Meghan, Tom and Pat for their present and future work.

Action Items for Next Meeting

- Submit 2020 Woods Committee Budget to Mary Challstrom, Town Treasurer by February 28
- Meet with archer cooperators
- Finalize Ordinance language
- Next meeting – Monday, March 4, 2019 7:30 PM

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 (Tom 1st/Charlie 2nd)

Respectfully submitted: Patrice Klein and Joan Mahaffey, Woods Committee Co-chairs