

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

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**Town of Somers**  
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y.

SOMERS TOWN HOUSE  
335 ROUTE 202  
SOMERS, NY 10589

MICHAEL BARNHART  
CHAIRMAN



## MEETING MINUTES

July 17, 2014

The meeting was called to order. The following members were in attendance: Michael Barnhart, Jeanette Gerfin, Laretta Jones, Bob MacGregor, Gail Simpson and Rosey VanWart.

### **MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. MacGregor to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2014 meeting as submitted. Mrs. Simpson seconded the motion. All were favor.

### **REPORTS & DISCUSSION**

#### **Chair's Report**

#### **Angle Fly Preserve Updates:**

Mr. and Mrs. MacGregor attended the May 30 Westchester County and Native Plant Center spring landscape conference. The focus of the conference was "Environmentally Sound Landscapes". The key speakers were Larry Weaner on "Self Perpetuation Gardens", Sven Hoeger on "Non- Traditional Landscapes" and Kurt Morell on "Sustainable Landscape Practices at the New York Botanical Garden".

Mr. and Mrs. MacGregor inspected and tagged the native plants around the pond. The removal of the invasive plants on the Reynolds Run side of the pond is underway. The spring rain has caused significant growth of invasive plants.

The focus of the May 31 work day was on invasive plant clearing around pond. On June 8, trail maintenance on the pink and white trails was done. This is the area were we had significant blow down from past storms. The trail is now open again. Trail maintenance on the red and red /white trail) was done on June 29.

Mr. MacGregor attended two Eagle Scout ceremonies (Dan Carlton – Beaver Dam trail and Zbynek Gold – deer enclosure).

Mr. MacGregor attended the Walkable Westchester presentation by the NY/NJ Trail Conference at the Somers Library (AFP is included as a major trail network – 10 miles of trails or more).

The Somers Land Trust booth at the Somers Independence Day Celebration was successful.

On June 27, the Somers Land Trust held an IBM volunteer day at Angle Fly from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The focus was to clear the invasive plants that were overgrowing the road from the turn around on Reynolds Run to the parking lot.

Mrs. MacGregor propagated and transplanted to larger pots about 150 plants from seeds collected at Angle Fly last fall. These plants will be returned to Angle Fly in the Native Habitat Restoration Area this fall.

The City of White Plains Youth Bureau “Green Project” summer interns (12 interns) have completed two mid-week Somers Land Trust supported volunteer days at Angle Fly. A third volunteer day is scheduled for the end of the month. The first day was dedicated to invasive plant removal along the yellow trail. The second day was dedicated to invasive plant removal by the pond.

Mr. MacGregor met with the architect at the Reynolds House to discuss projects. Plans are being completed and should be ready by August 1.

Mr. MacGregor participated in the Westchester Land Trust easement walk-through for both the Windsor Farm areas and Manor Ridge development, along with Town Principal Engineering Technician, Steve Woelfle, and Tate Bushell, Westchester Land Trust’s Land Steward.

Fifteen new trees were planted in the Trees for Trib restoration area along Route 139.

The Town Highway Department used their new mower to cut half of the Reynolds Farm area meadow. This mowing cut the invasive plants allowing the native plants to grow up.

Clearing the wisteria from the show garden by the Tatham House is underway.

Last fall Mrs. MacGregor collected butterfly weed seeds and spread them in the meadows. This spring we are seeing a significant increase in the number of butterfly weed plants. They are easy to spot this time of year because they are bright orange.

The beaver dam water level has been lowered by about 18 inches. The beaver trapping was successful with no new dam repair. With the lowering of the water we are seeing an increase in the invasive plant growth.

The Somers Land Trust and the Angle Fly Preserve have been selected by Ground Works for a vine cutting “swarm” this fall. Mr. MacGregor will be

attending the meeting to go over the procedures. There will be significant publicity and the hope is to get over 100 vine cutters to cut vines in the AFP.

The pond aeration system and organic bacteria is working. As of this point, there are no algae in the pond. The turtle population in the pond has grown along with the number of frogs.

Mr. MacGregor has been working with two developers in town to secure two truck load of rock donated to the Angle Fly Preserve that will be used for sitting rocks and pond bank stabilization.

Mr. MacGregor has spoken with both Joe Barbagallo of Woodard and Curran and Jim Papa, Parks and Recreation Board Chairman regarding plans to build fields on the land behind the Reis Park tennis courts once the conservation easement swap is completed. Paul Elconin is still working on having DEC draft up language that the Town Board can adopt.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Biodiversity Mapping** – One large map is now finished with one large and one small map to be completed. The Committee met on June 1 and July 11. When the maps are completed, Hudsonia's Gretchen Stevens will be asked to review them.

**Hidden Meadows** – A layout and landscape plan was received from Insite Engineering. It was reviewed and the following comments were made: a strip of existing native forest trees should remain along the property boundary adjacent to the town houses; the focus should be not only on native plants, but those that are deer resistant as well; and the preference is to eliminate the spur leading to the Town property. A letter stating such will be sent to Richard Williams, Senior Project Engineer of Insite Engineering as well as the Planning Board.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Meichner Steep Slope and Tree Removal Application Pipeline Proposal** – The application was reviewed and there are no comments or concerns.

**Fabry Wetland Application** – The application was reviewed and there are no comments or concerns.

**Somers Planned Hamlet/Avalon Bay Communities** – The information provided will be reviewed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m. The next meeting will be on Thursday, August 21 at 7:30 p.m. in the Map Room at the Town House.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary  
Somers Open Space Committee

cc: Open Space Committee  
Town Board  
Town Clerk  
Town Planner  
Parks and Recreation Board