

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

September 18, 2014

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

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. MacGregor to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2014 meeting as submitted. Mrs. Simpson seconded the motion. All were favor.

REPORTS & DISCUSSION

Chair's Report

Angle Fly Preserve Updates:

Extensive trail maintenance was done during this time. Invasive Japanese stilt grass and mile-a-minute continue to present a major maintenance problem.

The major effort during this time has been the Reynolds Pond Garden project that is part of the Mickey Oliver Native Habitat Restoration Area.

The **hardscape** was completed with the final grading of the garden area and a wood chip path was added. Lawton Adams donated 16 large boulders that were used to create steps down to the pond and accent boulders for the garden. Many hours of volunteer time were involved in this stage of the project.

The **vegetation** planting will be completed in the next week. Pat MacGregor created the native plants selection and design plan. The plants were selected considering the soil needs, sun/shade/part sun needs, plant size, spring / summer / fall bloom times, deer resistance and foliage shape and texture. 550 plants and 70 different varieties will be planted on September 20. Pat and Bob MacGregor spent a day at Earth Tones Native Plant Nursery selecting the plants

for the garden. Earth Tones is provided about 325 plants. 11 plants were obtained from Hardscrabble Farm Nursery and 3 plants were obtained from Rosedale Nursery that were not available from Earth Tones. Last fall seeds were collected from AFP and grown by Pat MacGregor and about 100 plants are being returned to AFP. An additional 100 native plants are being donated by Pat MacGregor and Gail Simpson.

Ten yards of mulch will be delivered Friday September 19 and will be spread in the garden on September 21.

Pat MacGregor was a volunteer native plant consultant at the Native Plant Center fall sale at Rosedale Nursery.

Bob MacGregor conducted a walk of the wetland areas with Kyle Turoczi from Earth Tones Nursery and wetland expert. Kyle will be conducting a Wetland Field Study course at Angle Fly Preserve for the "Go Native U" program of Westchester Community College and the Native Plant Center. The course will look at components of wetlands, including soil, plants and hydrology and will discuss human impact and invasive species and how they affect wetlands.

We have one new Scout project going. It is to add bog bridging to the orange trail.

The 2014 hunting program preparation is underway with qualifications underway and paperwork being e-mailed to hunter participants.

Bob MacGregor has met with Ground Works Hudson Valley and the Sawmill River Coalition and the AFP SWARM is scheduled for November 1, 2014. The plan is to bring in 200+ vine cutters with 100 from the Somers community. The plan is to break into teams of about 10 people with a team leader and have them cut vines that are threatening the survival of trees.

The SLT participated with a booth at the Somers Chamber of Commerce day.

Bob MacGregor participated in a Westchester land Trust property walk reviewing a potential easement for a property that abuts the AFP. The property would be used for additional trails if obtained.

Publicity flyers for the garden project, SWARM and volunteer days has been prepared.

The City of White Plains Bureau "Green Project" completed their final summer intern day at AFP.

OLD BUSINESS

Biodiversity Mapping – The last biodiversity mapping meeting was on August 29. The eastern section is done and has been sent to Gretchen Stevens of Hudsonia. She will digitize the maps. The next meeting will be on Friday, October 3 to work on the western section and thin central portion. All agreed to invite Ms. Stevens to attend that meeting. Once all of the mapping is complete, a report will be created.

NEW BUSINESS

Greenbriar-Somers Corp. – The Wetland Activity and Steep Slope Permits for Greenbriar-Somers Corp. were reviewed and discussed. The following concerns were noted: the build out of the embankment may introduce soil runoff into the wetlands; the hydrology of the wetlands may be changed by the storm water system; it is unclear that there is adequate silt fencing; and native plants that are shade tolerable should be used instead of grass seed in the restored embankment area. A memo will be sent to the Engineering Department.

Avalon Bay Communities, Inc. – The Site Plan, Steep Slope and Tree Preservation Permits were reviewed and discussed. The following notations were made: there are some sensitive wetlands; close to 600 trees are being removed and some are specimen; habitat functions will be eliminated; there is porous pavement; the curb designs don't appear to be that of the Cape Cod design, which will result in funneling amphibians into the basins and drowning them; the Committee is pleased with the low spillage lighting; stormwater is an issue as it appear to bedrawn away from existing wetland areas. Cary Institute's Best Development Practices should be incorporated; a biodiversity assessment of the wetlands should be done; although satisfied with the rain gardens, the plans are difficult to assess; the wetlands need to be protected and preserved; ten to fifteen of the specimen trees should be protected; a location of trees sheet should accompany the current plan and those to be removed should be listed; the rain gardens shown are really not traditional rain gardens, but stormwater detention ponds. Would like to see traditional rain gardens and more than one of them; and all curbing must be that of Cape Cod style. A memo will be sent to the Planning Department.

Somers Realty Planned Hamlet Master Plan – The Wetland Activity and Steep Slope Permits for the Somers Realty Planned Hamlet Master Plan were reviewed and there were no objections. A memo will be sent to the Engineering Department.

Hauser Wetland Application – The Wetland Activity Permit for the Hauser's was reviewed and there were no objections or concerns. A memo will be sent to the Engineering Department.

Fabry Wetland Application – The Wetland Activity Permit for the Fabry's was reviewed and there were no objections or concerns. A memo will be sent to the Engineering Department.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting will be on Thursday, October 16 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
Planning Board
Parks and Recreation Board