



Invasive & Native Plant Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, March 9, 2022

Time: 7:00 PM, Location: REMOTE

1. Attendees: E. Boeing, P. Rice, A. Cate, M. Basti, D. Fountain. Guest: Elisea Gutierrez
Absent: J. Molina
2. Welcomed new member, Marc Basti to the Committee. Marc is a DCR employee and will bring new skills, lot of energy and expertise to the group.
3. Meeting Minutes Review - Feb 23, 2022 - approved unanimously
4. Action Item review (below)
 - Deb - draft letter for landscapers - still pending completion of other priority projects
5. Girl Scout Silver Award Project - Elisea Gutierrez
 - Deb met with Elisea last week. Elisea is 13 years old, and an 8th grader in the Nissitissit Middle School. She is interested in learning more about native and invasive plants. She has helped out in the family garden, so she knows a lot of gardening basics. They discussed several options that Elisea may want to consider in selecting a project.
 - Projects discussed were: 1- assist with Keyes-Parker invasive plant pull and restoration plantings. And, 2- Design and plant a native plant garden at the Nissitissit Middle School in the outdoor classroom area.
 - Elisea was introduced to the Committee and asked if she would like to talk more about the project. Elisea explained that she would like to become involved with the Keyes Parker project. She remained present at the meeting throughout the discussion on that topic as well as the Earth Day Event, as her troop plans to participate. Deb will work with Elisea as needed throughout her participation with the Committee.
6. Keyes-Parker Event and Restoration Planning
 - Deb met with Paula Terrasi to review the restoration site plan, the native plant and supply order, which was distributed to the committee in advance of this meeting.
 - Funding must be obligated by end of June, so ordering will be done soon.
 - Town approval, (Determination of Applicability) will be effective by March 15
 - Ordering Plants: Paula will order the plants and seeds from NE Wetland plants, and some white oak trees from the Native Plant Trust soon. Deliveries will be in April and June, depending on vendor availability.
 - Plant Holding area: Paula said the Highway Dept has an area near the Quonset hut that has a water source. Deb mentioned the pile of material nearby that has invasives in it. Deb offered to take care of the plants at her home, where she can water them more easily and we can draw from the supply as we need to over the course of the summer. No firm decision made at this point.
 - Planting: We estimate that we could begin planting in mid-May, probably starting with the plants that will be part of the culvert restoration project. It is understood that the planting may occur on various dates throughout the growing season. Committee members are not required to help with this, but help is appreciated. Paula also will have volunteers from

Trout Unlimited group. Marc brought up discussion about a culvert near the fence gate, that appears to be in need of cleaning out. He also mentioned an area near the stream bed that is very wet throughout the season. Pat warned that we need to be mindful about not disturbing the wetland areas. We will be careful about this area and reassess plans while on site.

- Ordering Supplies: Watering devices and caging for the plants will not be ordered until we have more info on the sizes and numbers of the plants.
- Information Board: Paula will prepare the text for an info board based on "Nature-based solutions". The board will be professionally designed and similar to those interpretative signs seen in state or national parks. It will focus on the culvert replacement and dam removal, discussion on invasive plants and restoration plantings. The text will need to be approved by the organizations that provide the grant. Deb will research sign sources, style options and pricing and coordinate with Paula.

7. Wild & Scenic Stewardship Committee Grant Award

- Committee received notice last week that we were awarded \$3,625 (full amount requested) for its " Mapping Invasive Plants Near Stream Culverts" project.
- Deb met with Paula Terrasi to discuss which culverts in town have streams that feed into the Nashua or Nissitissit Rivers. There are 20 culverts, and a list will be provided in the job description when the position is advertised.
- Tom Mirable, who did similar work for the Committee last year, is interested in doing the work . Deb asked the Town Administrator if we need to advertise the job. His reply was that " In this case, I think it is reasonable to offer the job to Tom again. He is a known entity, trained, etc. Unless something in the grant award requires otherwise (state grants have prevailing wage for construction, for example) there is little reason to force a job search on this. However, Emily suggested that we should consider that Tom is moving out of state, and it might be advantageous to advertise it at least for a short time, to see if there are any other individuals interested in this type of work. The Committee agreed, and Deb will edit the shared job description that was approved at this meeting, and have it posted on several university job search sites as well as on the town website.

8. Invasive Plant Management Plan - Select Board briefing, March 21

- Reviewed the draft Briefing paper sent to committee in advance; Committee approved with one minor edit, being that the Committee will perform self-evaluations on the efficacy of the Management Plan at least every 5 years, as the plan needs to be adaptive.

9. Earth Day Event - April 23rd

- So far, the Committee plans on the following events at the library: native seed plant giveaways and native plant gardening advice, nature walks (focus on natives and invasives) - one for adults/families (Pat Rice to lead) and one for children (Annette Cate to lead), as well as some craft projects. We will also be handing out Monarch Waystation signs/certificates to the library, the Fitz, Nashoba Conservation Trust and the Pepperell Garden Club for their pollinator gardens. There may be more to come in the weeks ahead as we finalize our plans.
- Deb received permission from Deb Spratt, Library Director, to host an event on the Lawrence Library grounds from 10 AM-2 PM. Deb contacted following organizations to see if they might be interested in joining us in the Earth Day Celebration. They were all asked to reply early in March so we can plan advertising.

- o Girl Scouts - there is possibly one Brownie Troop and once Girl Scout Troop that will participate. Details forthcoming
- o Boy Scouts - Deb sent emails to both Troop Leaders in town; no reply to date.
- o Ken Hartlage, Climate Change Committee; will participate; details to follow
- o Sherril Rosoff, Agricultural Committee; will participate; details to follow
- o Deb Spratt - gave permission to invite other groups, and to set up book display in the library.
- o Diane Temple, Friends of the Lawrence Library Gardeners - will plant a white oak on the library grounds

10. Mixed-Use Overlay District public meeting - 3/11 & 3/12 @ 6:30 @ Fitz

sign up at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4caeab2ba7ffcf8-public> .

The Committee was notified of the opportunity to participate.

11. Garden Club Plant Sale support- jumping worm issue discussion.

- Last year, the Committee was present at the Pepperell Garden Club's annual plant sale and managed the Native Plant sales section, helping to sell the natives, and providing advice to shoppers. In view of the Asian Jumping Worm infestation now being widely spread across the country, the Committee decided that we would not participate in supporting the sale this year as there is too much risk involved of exacerbating the problem by sharing plants from gardens.

12. Matters That May be Raised That Were Not Reasonably Anticipated

- Climate Change Committee Meeting, March 10, a7 PM - presentation on Tree City USA program by DCR employee Matt Cahill
- Committee Facebook page - Committee discussed advantages and disadvantages of creating a group page. Our focus would be on providing educational material (memes, videos, articles, personal yards/projects, advertising events) related to our mission, and to allow local residents to post photos of their (native) plant gardens, or to ask questions. Three of us will administer the group (Deb, Annette and Emily) and plan to have at least a couple of posts each week. We need to write up group rules, and get some info from Martin Cadek about security, etc., but we do have approval from the town to do this.

We feel that this will be another means of communication to reach out to the younger generations in particular, many of whom do not have the patience to go to a website, but might spend a little time on FB more frequently.

The committee also discussed inviting the Climate Change and Agricultural Committees to post on the group with any material that is relevant to their missions. The Committee agreed to move forward with establishing a group, and allowing the other committees to participate. A Group name was also discussed. Some felt that the word "plant" should be in the title, but that would not allow for the other committee's content. The consensus was that using the word "sustainable" in the title isn't really much of a hook for most folks, although it would cover all three groups. We will revisit this as we move forward with planning.

13. Set next meeting date - March 23, 2022, 7 PM.

14. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM