

AGENDA

Oak Hills Park Nature Advisory Committee (OHPNAC)

Meeting Tuesday, September 11, 2018

7:30 PM

2nd Floor Lounge, Norwalk, CT City Hall

Call to Order

Attendance

Approval of previous minutes: August 14, 2018.

Goals of the committee: Review of accomplishments & future priorities

- More precisely defining the boundaries of the “no-build” areas to be preserved; more securely protecting those areas as permanent open space. *Elsa and Larry to do.*
- Find funding or partners to implement the planting plans for the Fountain Garden and Great Lawn areas, especially increasing native plants, pollinators, wildlife habitat. *In addition to 501(c)3, Lisa has made contact with Pollinator Pathway and Norwalk River Watershed Assn. Lisa and Elsa met with OHP horticulturist Anthony Hylton to discuss planting plans for Fountain Garden and Great Lawn.*
- Maintain the trails and continue improving them (accessibility, control of invasives). *Elsa has discussed with Anthony Carrano (Eagle Scout project 2018-19). Photos of trail stairs on steep areas.*
- Kiosk, trail map, interpretive signs, plaques to identify trees, wildlife.
- Educational opportunities, especially for young people. *Nature photos/artwork in restaurant entry space OK by restaurant mgr. Joe Montalto and OHPA Chair Bill Waters. Audrey working with photos and a sketch or mockup.*

Birdwatching walk led by Charlie Taney scheduled for Saturday, September 22, 8 - 9:30 AM.

On various dates in September CT Forest & Parks has walks focusing on nocturnal animals, apiary, mushroom identification, ponds, invasive plants, *shinrin* (“forest bathing”), songbirds, and hemlocks & beeches. We might approach them to get an expert on a given topic.

- Marketing, Budget, Time Frame: *separate email list for nature & restaurant*
- Encouraging sustainable land use practices in Oak Hills Park. *Horticulturist Anthony Hylton is aware of this goal.*

Reports

- Supporters of Oak Hills Park 501(c)3 is alive and well. *Elsa and Mark opened interest-bearing checking account at Norwalk Bank & Trust (Connecticut Community Bank) <https://www.ccbankonline.com/>. Suggestions to revisit possibilities for grant funding.*
- Events: *Discuss plans for possible fall and winter events.* See other organizations, e.g. Norwalk Land Trust, CT Forest & Park Assn., Norwalk River Valley Watershed Assn.
- Fountain Garden and Great Lawn status: *Bulbs to plant, list from Anthony Hylton and funds from 501(c)3 up to \$500 authorized. Jim Schell is aware of need for a trash receptacle.*
- Design and placement of identification plaques, ground-mounted interpretive signs.
- Oak Hills Park Authority members said they personally would donate toward cost of a

kiosk. Here is the one at Farm Creek as an example:



- Trail map updated by Audrey Cozzarin.
- We need to update Oak Hills Park website updated description of nature trail and garden areas. See <http://www.oakhillsgc.com/rest/nature-advisory-committee> and <http://www.oakhillsgc.com/rest/oak-hills-park-walking-trail-map>
- Plant Identification tags/signs and raising money for them. *Pine Island Cemetery has informative signs of the type we might want.*
- McNeil Design Collaborative annotated map and survey need review (help from Alexis Cherichetti?) to provide exact coordinates of boundaries between nature areas & golf areas.
- Educational outreach, emphasis on appreciating and protecting nature.

Old Business

- *On 8/9/18 Elsa walked with Kaitlyn Latham and Barbara McCabe from the Health Dept. to list the Oak Hills Park Great Lawn as a good place to walk. Status of the woodlands trail for hiking (as opposed to walking) with Health Dept. pending.*
- *Articles for website about nature with tips for environmentally friendly practices.*
- Privately funded benches by arborist Larry Brown, and/or “not-so-rustic bench” idea by Ilana L. Appleby, Rustic Design Elements (tabled)
- Letter of intent to mayor and Common Council committee chair re “old leaf dump” and “niblick” parcels, approved unanimously as “park land” by full Common Council Oct 13, 2015 (tabled)

New Business

Grant possibilities.

Next meeting date: Tuesday, October 9, 7 PM in the 2nd Floor Lounge.

Adjournment