

AGENDA

Oak Hills Park Nature Advisory Committee (OHPNAC)

Meeting Tuesday, January 8, 2019, 7:00 PM

2nd Floor Lounge, Norwalk, CT City Hall

Call to Order

Attendance

Approval of previous minutes: December 11, 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 & Larry have coordinates.*
- Find funding or partners to implement the planting plans for the Fountain Garden and Great Lawn areas, especially increasing native plants, pollinators, wildlife habitat. *Supporters of Oak Hills Park 501(c) funded nearly \$500 worth of bulbs, ordered 9/29. We thank Ernie DesRochers for his substantial contribution!*
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. *See The Hour article about Eagle Scout project in Wilton: building benches from fallen trees. Elsa, Lisa, and Larry attending Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Sean Notley on January 6.*
- 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. We met Thursday 11/15 at 12 noon.*
- Marketing, Budget, Time Frame: *separate email list for nature & restaurant.*
- Encouraging sustainable land use practices in Oak Hills Park. *OHPNAC thanks Jim Schell and Anthony Hylton for installing protective tree guards.*

Reports

- Supporters of Oak Hills Park 501(c)3 is alive and well. *Thanks to Audrey, Lisa, Marie, and Larry & Sharyn for their contributions. We have an interest-bearing checking account at Norwalk Bank & Trust (Connecticut Community Bank) <https://www.ccbankonline.com/>. Suggestions to revisit possibilities for grant funding.*
- Events:
 - Winter Trail Walk with Rich Whitehead scheduled for Saturday, February 23 (the Saturday after Presidents’ Day) with Saturday, March 2 as the snow date.
 - CT Forest & Parks Assn. registration for Trails Day 2019 (Sat-Sun June 1-2) <https://www.ctwoodlands.org/ct-trails-weekend>
 - For more ideas, see other organizations, e.g. Norwalk Land Trust, Norwalk River Valley Trail Assn., Norwalk River Watershed Assn., including:

- Pollinator Pathway discussion Wednesday, January 9, 1:30 – 2:30 PM at Norwalk Senior Center (Norwalk Garden Club’s monthly meeting).
- Norwalk River Valley Trail Walk and Talk, Sunday, January 13, 3:00 PM (location TBA) with Charlie Taney and the Blue Zone team 203-563-0180 info@nrvt-trail.com
- Fountain Garden and Great Lawn status: *See above, list from Anthony Hylton and funds from 501(c)3 for bulbs. 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-committe> 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

- *Audrey and Elsa have met with Kaitlyn Latham from the Health Dept. to list the Oak Hills Park Great Lawn as a good place to walk. Status of brochure & map are in progress.* <https://www.norwalkct.org/1640/Walking-Maps>
- *Articles for website about nature with tips for environmentally friendly practices.*
- Aquarion’s request to divert water from a Cannondale well.
- 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 (*pending room reservation*): Tuesday, January 8, 7 PM in the 2nd Floor Lounge.

Adjournment