

Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Meeting Minutes 2024-04-02

Present:, Linda Caldwell, Steve Edelstein, Kathy Evers, Julie Larkin, Carol Sommerfield (minutes)

Regrets: Ruchi Agarwal, Rececca Arkin, Savannah Donahue, Jen Nordhem, Dina Patterson

Creating Habitat:

- Invasive Vine Removal at South County Trailway, Saturday, March 16 - Julie and Carol
 - The event was very successful and we had a good turnout. More work is needed on the SCT and we plan to return in the fall.
- Highlight from the Invasive Plant seminar: Julie and Linda
 - Basically what was presented is what we already know. The issue is how to get people and landscapers engaged to address the maintenance and containment of yards.
- Ardsley Community Garden Update: Linda and Carol
 - The survey is now complete (ended March 31). Thirty three people responded and the majority of those were interested or somewhat interested in the concept. We consider the results mixed. There are 1,500 households in Ardsley and so this is a low response rate (and a large number of the responses were completed at the Spring Gardening Festival where people were recruited to participate). Lack of engagement with the survey is probably a 'not interested' response since this was heavily advertised. Nevertheless, there were several people who were very interested and engaged with the concept. Steve said a potential community garden was part of the Ardsley Parks Survey - it did not receive a great deal of interest.
 - **Actions:**
 - Steve to share the Ardsley Parks Survey and the community garden interest/feedback as an important data point in our process.
 - Linda, Ruchi, and Carol meet to analyze the survey results and decide next steps.
- Hart's Brook new pollinator gardens update: Carol
 - The main new garden (1,500 sq ft) has been sheet mulched and the smaller garden (500 sq ft) will be sheet mulched next. According to a planting spacing chart we will need 700 plants for the 2,000 sq ft space - and we only have a budget for 25% of that. Hopefully we can get some plant donations.

- A big planting party is planned for the weekend of May 4 - 5 - registration is open on www.ardsleypollinatorpathway.org.
- Greenburgh Library tree and shrub sapling giveaway - update: Carol & Kathy
 - All on schedule for the tree/shrub presentation on the 24th and the plant giveaway on the 28th.
- Update on 2024 native plug pre-orders: Carol
 - The plant pre-order is open until April 10. We've had a good response.
- Potential pollinator garden at Macy Park: Steve and Carol
 - We are looking at a fall planting. We still have unresolved issues about challenges at the site (e.g. watering of the plants, DPW help). There should be no issue with DPW picking up the plants.
 - **Action:** Steve will follow-up with Westchester Parks to meet and review the site and planting plan.
- Highlights from The New Green Yard (Native Plant Center Conference) and the Westchester County/Cornell Lake Management Conference: Carol
 - A summary of the key take-aways was provided.

Education/Awareness

- Social Media postings needed:
 - Keystone species webinar
 - **Action:** Carol to send jpg flyer to the team to post on social media
- Spring Gardening Festival - review of event/feedback/ideas for 2025
 - The team discussed their views on the event. Overall it was fine, but less turnout than the previous year. The most attendance tends to be at the beginning. Fewer speakers would be more effective since many people left later in the day. Bottom line: For the amount of work that it takes to produce this event it did not provide an equitable return for investment.
 - For next year: reduce the hours to noon - 3 pm. Hold the event later in April as an Arbor Day/Earth Day event. Provide a free native shrub/tree and plant giveaway with an education program on selecting the best trees/shrubs and their care. Provide native plant, tree, and shrub consultations.

Partnerships - new:

- No update

Policy

- The draft tree code, leaf blower code and native plant planting code for new and extensive construction was provided to Nancy, Steve and Joe for review. Steve said that the Board will review at a work session in April. He will keep us posted.

Other topics/updates

- We discussed that we may have reached a plateau in the APP - people who are interested in native plants, pollinators, birds and supporting the ecosystem are on board already and it is hard to reach the remaining 60%. Steve suggested branching out to the businesses in Ardsley. Carol pointed out that most do not have real estate/planting areas and the impact would be negligible (unlike homeowners). Steve offered that he meets with Ardsley businesses quarterly and that may be an opportunity for Carol to come speak to them about incorporating native plants if they can.
 - **Action:** Steve to coordinate with Carol concerning presenting to the business group about native plant opportunities.
- Carol will have a solo art show at the end of the month at Ardsley Village Hall. Twenty five percent of her proceeds will go to BRSS and the Westchester Parks Foundation. BRSS has already said whatever money is gifted to them they will return to us in grants for pollinator gardens.
- The members present asked for a review of the start time of the meeting since it is quite late - we will discuss the time and potential changes during our plans for 2024/2025.

Next meeting, Tuesday, May 7 at 8:30 pm via Zoom