

Pollinator Pathway Steering Committee Minutes

December 5, 2023

Present: Linda Azif, Linda Caldwell, Kathy Evers, Julie Larkin, Jen Nordhem, Carol Sommerfield (minutes)

Regrets: Ruchi Agarwal, Rececca Arkin, Savannah Donahue, Steve Edelstein

INTRODUCTION AND UPDATES:

Introducing Savannah Donahue!

Savannah is a senior at Ardsley High School and we are delighted to have her as part of the team. She has an interest in policy, starting a community garden and learning about and working on pollinator gardens. Welcome Savannah!

Ardsley was awarded the Leadership Circle Achievement for its 2023 efforts as part of the North American Mayors Monarch Pledge. Ardsley has pledged again for 2024.

UPDATES on OUR FOUR PILLARS:

Creating Habitat:

- Ardsley Community Garden Update: Linda
 - After meetings with the Mayor and Dave D. of the DPW a pilot site has been chosen adjacent to the skate park at Pascone Park. The next step is for the team to create a comprehensive proposal to present to the town.
- Hart's Brook new gardens and grant opportunity
 - Two new pollinator garden spaces have been bulldozed flanking the existing garden. The plan is to design and prepare the space December through March and then plant in April. In total 2,000 sq ft of space will be added to the pollinator gardens.
 - Bronx River Sound Shore Audubon has encouraged us to apply for a grant, which Carol will prepare December - January for their consideration. The majority of the funding will come from the Town of Greenburgh.
 - A water line to the garden area has been approved, though the date of installation is still TBD.
- Tree and shrub sapling give away - potential opportunity for Arbor Day
 - Carol attended a brainstorming meeting at the Greenburgh Library with Nicole Guenkel concerning a free native tree and plant giveaway event for Arbor Day 2024. Greenburgh will fund the program, buying the trees from the Saratoga Tree Nursery. Perhaps Ardsley could contribute (tbd). The Edgemont Pollinator Pathway is also interested in joining forces on the effort. Greenburgh is

impressed with our programming and asked if we could provide an educational program at the event on native trees and shrubs, as well partner in the future to deliver programs to a wider audience via the library.

- Milkweed seedling and native plant giveaway at Spring Gardening Festival
 - Carol will be cold stratifying milkweed species seeds in small pots this winter as part of a plant giveaway at the Spring Gardening Festival. Another idea is to purchase workhorse native plant plugs through Mickey to give away for free at the event as long as supplies last.
- **Action:** If anyone is interested in working on any of the above, please let Carol know.

Education/Awareness:

- New events added since the last meeting:
 - Concord Road Grow an Oak Program - Dina will be assisting with running this program for the Environmental Club at the school on 12/7.
 - The Mighty Oak, 12/28. This is another partnership with the Ardsley Library Children's Library. It will include a reading or two and lots of hands on activities for the kids.
 - **Action:** If anyone is interested in helping out at the event, please let Carol know.
 - Content for a program for the free tree/shrub giveaway event
 - A good event would be to provide highlights of the trees and shrubs available, how they help pollinators and birds, growing conditions, how to plant, etc.
 - We could also have some of us there to answer questions
 - **Action:** Linda A. to provide Carol with the name of the arborist at Greenburgh (Peter Strom?) - it would be handy to have an arborist at the event.
 - Reminder: Volunteer thank you event this Saturday, 3 - 5 at Carol's house
 - Spring Gardening Festival:
 - Help is needed to plan the event. Anyone interested?
 - The draft agenda was shared and the group felt the programming looked good.
 - Perhaps we could get someone to speak about common invasives and their management for that agenda item. Kathy and Julie would like to work on developing this agenda item.
 - Dina will help develop the kid programs, which will be focused on trees this year

- Linda A can assist with garden consults/questions on pollinator/native gardens at the consultation table
- It would be good to have another plug pre-order. Mickey was agreeable in the fall but hasn't responded to Carol's latest inquiry. Other possible vendors were discussed such as Hilltop Hanover Farm and Dropseed Nursery. Carlson's is difficult to deal with (based on experience) and so would not be a possible vendor. The group agreed that Mickey is the best solution on many levels if he is willing to do the pre-order again.
- The draft agenda was adjusted to move the marbelizing flower pots activity to the top of the agenda. This will draw people in and allow for the pots to dry while the participants are attending other programs at the spring gardening festival.
- **ACTIONS:**
 - Julie to speak to Bob DelToro to see if he would be interested in speaking at the March 10 event on invasives (identification and how to manage)
 - Carol to follow-up with Mickey about the plug pre-sale.
- Another garden visit in spring? Kathy's intimate garden visit in October was a great success. We could follow up with another one in the spring, but would need someone to take the lead on organizing it. If you are interested, let Carol know.

Partnerships - new:

- Greenburgh Public Library

Policy

- A policy team has formed (Dina, Jen, Eda Kapsis, Carol and now Savannah). Six policy areas have been worked on over the past six months and the team met with Steve Edelstein to help with the prioritization of the efforts. The following are the six areas in priority order:
 - Modifying code to allow for maintained native plant meadows on front lawns
 - Either a code or policy for:
 - Requiring at least 80% native plants in all new construction
 - Requiring native trees/shrubs and perennials on Village property where possible.
 - Modifications to Ardsley Tree Code to protect native and non-invasive trees.
 - Gas leaf blower restrictions (i.e. ban periods)

- Passing a proclamation supporting dark skies in Ardsley and support for reducing light pollution.
 - **Action:** If anyone would like to work on any of these policies let Dina or Carol know.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 2, 8:30 pm via Zoom