

Forest Preserve Advisory Board, June 21, 2012

Acting Chair Ruth Kastner called the meeting to order at 7:07. Present were Ruth, Valerie, Donna, Damien, Susan, and Robert Snyder (newly appointed). Also present were City Horticulturist Leslie Riddle and Councilman Rodney Roberts. Celia Craze was on vacation and no other staff person was available; Ruth agreed to do the minutes.

Donna requested adding to the agenda a report on the May 19 Preserve clean-up and with this addition the agenda was unanimously approved on a motion by Damien, Bob seconding.

The Board welcomed Mr. Robert (Bob) Snyder as our newest member.

Ms. Riddle presented her proposed Draft Sustainable Land Care Policy. The cornerstone of the policy is general prohibition of herbicides and pesticides (although they may be used at the City's discretion for invasive species removal). The policy expresses the City's intent to undertake sustainable land stewardship practices that are sensitive to the bio-environment. In response to a question from Susan, Leslie noted that the policy only covers City property. Damien suggested presenting the policy to Greenbelt Homeowners Associations and landowners so that they would be aware of it. Councilman Roberts noted that avoiding chemical usage would save money. The Board expressed broad support for the proposal.

It was observed that the proposal, if adopted, would apparently prohibit herbicide/pesticide use on the Greenbelt garden plots that are located inside the Preserve. Kastner noted that there has been disagreement among members of the Garden Club over whether such substances should be allowed to be used in the gardens. The topic was put on the agenda for the next meeting with the intention to publicize it and invite members of the public to attend and offer their views.

Ms. Riddle also sought the Board's support for eradicating some additional 'Tree of Heaven' specimens. Councilman Roberts expressed opposition to herbicide use and asked whether other measures were available to control the species. He suggested allowing more tree growth along the roadsides to provide more competition for the Tree of Heaven; that is, aiming toward making

the road narrower, and Leslie commented that that might be helpful. Damien mentioned some mechanical weed/tree pulling devices that can be used on very small trees. Leslie offered to try a mix of approaches so as to minimize herbicide use, and the board agreed.

Ms. Riddle also asked the Board to restate formally its support of her plan to implement low-impact erosion control measures on one of the trails in the North Preserve. The Board indicated its approval of this plan by consensus. During the discussion Buddy Attick Park came up as an example of the kind of erosion control planned for the trail, and Susan again noted her concern about the grills posing a fire danger. In particular she reported seeing people using portable grills on some of the roofed tables. Leslie said that this was prohibited and to call the City or Police department to report such activity.

In addition there was some discussion of tick control. Leslie described the very successful deer feeding stations using permethrin, but it was noted that there are not that many deer in the Preserve. Councilman Roberts pointed out that it is really mice that spread Lyme disease and perhaps we could consider applications of permethrin targeting mice. It was decided to discuss this further at the next meeting.

The Board proceeded to election of a new Chair and Vice Chair. Valerie nominated Ruth for Chair, seconded by Donna. Ruth was elected Chair by unanimous show of hands.

Donna nominated Valerie as Vice Chair, seconded by Damien. Valerie was elected Vice Chair by unanimous show of hands.

Donna reported that at the May 19 cleanup involving herself, Ruth and her husband Chuck and FPAB member Joe Murray, the cleanup team noticed that a pile of refuse had been accumulating for quite a while next to the gardens at the end of the access road. Garden Club members we spoke to seemed to be under the impression that the City would be picking it up. Ruth agreed to report this situation to City Planning Dept. head Celia Craze as soon as she returned from vacation. Ruth reported that the team collected enough trash to fill all the bags provided (at least a dozen).

The members circulated and signed a thank-you card for delivery to our departing Chair, Ginny Mudrock, in appreciation for her service.

The next meeting was set for Aug. 23. Suggested agenda items were: pesticide use in gardens, tick control, follow-up on the litter pickup at the gardens, FPAB members drafting website materials, and perhaps other action items as listed by departing Chair Mudrock.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Kastner, Chair

These minutes were approved by a vote of 8-0.