

## MIDDLETOWN SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 22, 2021

Present: Cindy Unangst, Erin Carney, Jessica Elder, Kevin Stottlemeyer, Agnesanne Danehey, Mark Carney, Ann Payne

March Minutes were approved as submitted.

**LIBRARY VIDEO:** Jessica hopes to complete the Library video by the end of next week. She needs replacement and/or additional photos in high resolution where needed. Please look over what we have so far and help her as you can. She will add credits for the music as well as for the bee puppets.

**POLLINATOR GARDEN:** Middletown allocated \$2000k funding, which we can spend on a 500 sq. ft. pollinator garden. We need to order plants. Funding availability is not clear. It was asked whether "Sustainability" is a consideration in all town budget decisions, in the way that "Safety" is a constant consideration.

Kaia Wynne, a Girl Scout Gold Star applicant, hopes to help with the pollinator garden project. She will present her proposal to the town board no later than early May. She offers to collect donations for plants, mulch, etc. She offers to create a brochure and a blog about the garden. She will recruit others to help with the planting. Erin provided The Monarch Alliance plant recommendations to Mark for 500 sq. foot garden. Quinn and Erin are working on drawings.

Town Board needs to review the garden proposal and location. (The garden must not be near the posts around the baseball diamond in Memorial Park.) Mark is researching sources for the plants, including Sunny Meadows or Izel. Watering the plants will be included in the usual town watering truck route.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** Ann and Agnesanne are meeting with the Foxfield Village Landscape Committee about landscaping several common areas owned by the community. Gene has no additional remarks about the (beautiful!) web site at this time.

Mark will post the film "Kiss the Ground" on Basecamp and ask if Gene can put it on our webpage.

**TREES:** The next Tree Planting is taking place Friday, April 30, at 11 am at Cone Branch Pocket Park. Ms. Steger will be bringing her high school students. Cindy will be providing info sheets. These trees will vary in size.

FredCo park workers ripped out a row of established trees (Blue Spruce) in the construction process. There was no effort to save the trees.

We are invited to participate in another tree planting off Hollow Road as part of a stream restoration. An interested party has received a number of trees to restore the riparian area.

A new Memorial Tree has been requested. We received a new PLANT 'badge.' Becky Wilson, our regional DNR rep, will try to be with us on Arbor Day.

At a future date, we can discuss ways we might protect existing trees. Education of homeowners is needed to install trees away from power lines. The more we can protect our elder trees, the more of the town's elegance we have along Main Street.

**OPEN SPACE FUNDING:** Monday night Chris Goodman will discuss funding requests for next year. He will hold a meeting Wednesday night to discuss the appropriateness of a Pickle Ball court proposed for Wiles Branch Park. There was a discussion of park visions - create a woodland park, a game park, or a mix. The addition of workout stations was questioned as well: who uses them and how often. They often don't wear well. A fitness alternative could be a mandala/pollinator garden walk. Kevin will carry our concerns to the Parks & Rec Committee.

It was recommended we work with Parks and Rec to develop a clear mission for our parks, including strategic goals on what reflects our naturalistic environment and at the same time leads others to appreciate it. Some hope for 80% native plantings. Different kinds of planting should be considered, in order to demonstrate a variety of ways to 'go native.'

**SUSTAINABILITY CHAPTER:** The Sustainability Chapter has been viewed by the town. Mark's rooftop solar map update will be added to the chapter. Other additions will include light pollution (perhaps already included); clearly stated mowing height; a requirement (rather than recommendation) that native plants be installed; statement that pesticides harmful to pollinators, (including glyphosate, an herbicide thought to be killing insects), may not be used. Town workers will need to be educated about safe weed removal and about leaving stalks up in the fall.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Payne