

AGENDA
Oak Hills Park Nature Advisory Committee (OHPNAC)
Meeting Tuesday, April 11, 2017
7:00 PM
2nd Floor Lounge, Norwalk, CT City Hall

Call to Order

Attendance

Approval of previous minutes: March 14, 2017.

Reports

- Contractor Hoffman Landscapes continuing work on the Fountain Garden and Great Lawn: lawns, meadows, and other plants. Irrigation and walkways are in. Solar-powered pump for fountain is promised.
- CT Woodlands Trails Day 2017: Sat June 3, 3-5 PM (rain date Sun June 4, same time [3-5 PM]). We will be a featured trail! We met the March 15 deadline to be included in printed booklet. The Connecticut Forest & Park Assn. is listing dozens of “Trails Day” events all over the state <https://www.ctwoodlands.org/ct-trails-weekend/events-2017>
Here is the listing for our Norwalk/Oak Hills Park event <https://www.ctwoodlands.org/ct-trails-weekend/events-2017/norwalk-nature-walk-record-3735>
- See below re: Oak Hills Park trail cleanup (Scout service project).
- Elsa walked the trail 3/25/17 with Rich Whitehead, member of Tree Advisory and Tree Alliance; and Adam Barbera, another arborist who volunteered. They want to help with Trails Day and will also help identify trees when we have \$ for identification tags. Work w/Hoffman Landscapes on 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. We will work with Oak Hills Park website “Nature” section, in conjunction with previous work by Audrey Cozzarin and possible new work by Boy Scout Sean Notley.
- 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. Results of conversations with Norwalk Tree Alliance and Tree Advisory Committee.
- 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
- Art project & event ideas with Norwalk Arts Commission, emphasis on protecting nature. We presented suggestions at the April 11 meeting of the Arts Commission for them to participate with us in the June 3 Trails Day event.

Goals of the committee

- Development of the designated Fountain Garden and Great Lawn areas for enjoyment by the general public. See Contractor report above.
- Plaques to identify trees, wildlife. See Plant Identification item above.
- More precisely defining the boundaries of the “no-build” areas to be preserved. See McNeil Design Collaborative report above.
- More securely protecting those areas as permanent open space.
- Field trips and educational opportunities for young people.
- Encouraging sustainable land use practices in Oak Hills Park Discussion of how to attain them.
- Marketing, Budget, Time Frame

Old Business

- Update: Norwalk Tree Advisory members support asking Mayor Rilling to walk Oak Hills Park trail again on one of the Saturday morning “Walk With Us” walks. Lisa and Elsa walked the trail with Theresa Argondezzi and Barbara McCabe of the “Become a NorWALKER” program in fall 2015. Encourage Health Dept. to list Oak Hills Park trail as a hiking (as opposed to walking) trail.
- Privately funded benches by arborist Larry Brown, and/or “not-so-rustic bench” idea by Ilana L. Appleby, Rustic Design Elements (tabled)
- Articles for website about nature with tips for environmentally friendly practices (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 (tabled)

New Business

Sean Notley scout service project

“bring your own rake” (& gloves & clippers) Suggestion: divide the trail into sections and have one of us in charge of each section so that way we can manage it. Also, caution people to come dressed appropriately to minimize risk of Lyme disease and also do tick checks afterwards.

Earth Day-related cleanup events: Thursday 4/20 and Saturday 4/22

For more information about the [Norwalk River Valley] trail development go to www.nrvt-trail.com or contact: Charlie Taney, NRV Executive Director, ctaney@nrvt-trail.com, 203-536-5618

For more information about the April 20 cleanup contact the City of Norwalk’s Neighborhood Improvement Coordinator, David L. Shockley at dshockley@norwalkct.org, 203-854-7810 ext 46782.

Also on Earth Day, Saturday April 22, Mayor Harry Rilling will host Norwalk’s Citywide Cleanup beginning at Lowe’s Stores, 100 Connecticut Ave. starting at 10:00 a.m. Contact dshockley@norwalkct.org for more details.

Next meeting date: Scheduled for Tuesday, May 9, 2017, 7 PM in the 2nd Floor Lounge.

Adjournment