

AGENDA

Oak Hills Park Nature Advisory Committee (OHPNAC)

Meeting Thursday, April 11, 2019, 7:00 PM

Oak Hills Park old administration building, 165 Fillow St., Norwalk, CT 06850

Call to Order

Attendance

Approval of previous minutes: March 12, 2018.

Goals of the committee: Review of accomplishments & future priorities

- More precisely defining the boundaries of the “no-build” areas to be preserved; more securely protecting those areas as permanent open space. *Elsa & Larry have coordinates.*
- Find funding or partners to implement the planting plans for the Fountain Garden and Great Lawn areas, especially increasing native plants, pollinators, wildlife habitat. *Supporters of Oak Hills Park 501(c)3 update.*
- Maintain the trails and continue improving them (accessibility, control of invasives). *Elsa has discussed with Anthony Carrano (Eagle Scout project 2018-19). Photos of trail stairs on steep areas.*
- Kiosk, trail map, interpretive signs, plaques to identify trees, wildlife. *See The Hour article about Eagle Scout project in Wilton: building benches from fallen trees.*
- Educational opportunities, especially for young people. *Oak Hills Park golf course opening day Saturday, April 13, tour of Fountain Garden & Great Lawn. Earth Day essay topic. Earth Day event at Norwalk Public Library. Nature photos/artwork in restaurant entry space OK by restaurant mgr. Joe Montalto, OHPA Chair Bill Waters, and OHPA vote (2/19 meeting). Audrey working with fabricator.*
- Marketing, Budget, Time Frame: *separate email list for nature & restaurant. Elsa has reached out to Boy Scout and Girl Scout contacts through Sheila Notley.*
- Encouraging sustainable land use practices in Oak Hills Park. *OHPNAC thanks Jim Schell and Anthony Hylton for installing protective tree guards.*

Reports

- Supporters of Oak Hills Park 501(c)3 is alive and well. *Thanks to Audrey, Lisa, Marie, and Larry & Sharyn for their contributions. We have an interest-bearing checking account at Norwalk Bank & Trust (Connecticut Community Bank) <https://www.ccbankonline.com/>. Suggestions to revisit possibilities for grant funding.*

Accounting: General, Nature Center, Golf Course categories.

- Events:
 - Birdwatching walk led by Chris Bosak planned for Saturday, May 4, 8 AM. Rain date May 11. Publicity needs to go out soon.
 - CT Forest & Parks Assn. registration for Trails Day 2019 (weekend of June 1-2) <https://www.ctwoodlands.org/ct-trails-weekend> Thanks to Lisa for submitting content for the print booklet. Audrey suggests inviting a Norwalk Land Trust board member to give a talk. OHPA voted (2/19 meeting) to approve our event 3-5 PM Saturday, June 1 with Sunday, June 2 as the rain date (same time: 3-5 PM).

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- For more ideas, see other organizations, e.g. Norwalk Land Trust, Norwalk River Valley Trail Assn., Norwalk River Watershed Assn., Pollinator Pathway.
- Fountain Garden and Great Lawn status: *Lisa and Elsa met with Jim Schell and we agreed on a Fountain Garden Pollinator Pathway test area in the east side bed next to the fountain. Elsa is trying to buy Avenger organic weed killer for the gravel path.*
- Design and placement of identification plaques, ground-mounted interpretive signs.
- Kiosk: Here is the one at Farm Creek as an example:



- Trail map updated by Audrey Cozzarin.
- We need to keep Oak Hills Park website updated. 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. *Pine Island Cemetery has informative signs of the type we might want.*
- 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.

Old Business

- *Health Dept. brochure & map in progress. Kaitlin Latham is leaving so the contact will be Theresa Argondezzi. <https://www.norwalkct.org/1640/Walking-Maps>*
- *Articles for website about nature with tips for environmentally friendly practices.*
- Aquarion's request to divert water from a Cannondale well was withdrawn.
- Privately funded benches by arborist Larry Brown, and/or "not-so-rustic bench" idea by Ilana L. Appleby, Rustic Design Elements (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, 2015 (tabled)

New Business

Grant possibilities.

Next meeting date: Tuesday, May 14, 7 PM in the 2nd Floor Lounge.

Adjournment