



Parks and Greenways Board Site Meeting

June 27, 2024

Rhododendron Lake Nature Park

Members Present

Gary Anderson

Judy Lyons

Terry Pierce

Joe Robustelli

John McGregor

Other Present

None

Gary Anderson called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM.

The purpose of the meeting was for Board Members to look at the damaged wetlands and assess their possible restoration as requested by Councilman Paul Hansen.

There was some discussion on the algae situation on the lake. Noted that little to no algae was visible and we wondered if the flow of water has been increased. Significant improvement of the water quality.

Gary questioned where the Town property lines were located adjoining the foundation wall of the apartment building. It was also asked where the boundaries lie for the wetland area. It appears someone did a little clearing through the area.

Opening this part of the park would expose a wall of healthy rhododendrons. It would add bird habitats. Everyone strongly agrees that the restoration of the wetlands would be an attractive and desirable feature to the park. Discussion about where the water enters and exits the wetlands.

While many of the trees appear diseased, there are a few nice large shrubs that should remain. Illicium and Viburnums noted. Alder trees, a River Birch and poor looking willows surround the area. The low ground is densely covered with Jewel Weed. There is a partially buried tree root near the path that is a serious trip hazard. Members recommend that it be minimized or removed.

Heavy equipment would be needed to dig out the low area filled in by sawdust and tree debris dumped by the owner of the adjoining property. Discussion on if the Town had enough expert information on how to restore a wetland without violating state and federal guidelines/statutes. Are wetlands legally protected? Is there financial assistance available from local entities? Does the Army Corps of Engineers need to be involved? Could OKA help in clearing the canopy of vines and

tree branches? Members present feel this project requires knowledge outside the Board's capabilities.

The Board feels that early winter is the best time to begin this project due to plants dying off for the winter. Volunteers could be asked to help clear brush.

Gary would like the Board to discuss our 2024 – 2025 goals at the July meeting. Gary will invite Paul Hansen to the July meeting and ask Paul to share the history of and past activities surrounding the wetlands. Was this a natural or created wetlands? Who planted the specimen trees and shrubs?

The P & G Board will discuss reallocating funds if it is agreed upon that this project takes priority for 2024-2025.

John spoke about new members joining the Invasive Team. Knox believes he may have a fiberglass art bear that could be loaned to the Town for the Town Centennial Celebration.

Terry motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:48 PM. Judy seconded.



Gary Anderson, Chairman

ATTEST:



Terry Pierce
Secretary



Date