

**Bedford Garden Club
Executive Committee Meeting**

Home of Liza Clymer

201 Croton Lake Road

April 3, 2019

9:30 a.m.

Attendance: Liza Clymer, Robin Ashley, Ann Catchpole, Jayni Chase, Ellen Conrad, Joyce Corrigan, Mary Finnegan, Debbie Gourd, Mary Kendrick, Nancy Kronenberg, Heather Langham, Cynthia Mas, Linda Merrill, Carole Rice, Janet Robinson, Susan Roos, Nancy Vincent, Holly Warshaw, Tina Winchester

President Liza Clymer opened the meeting by wishing all a Happy Spring!

Civic Affairs & Conservation

Co-chair **Jayni Chase** reported on a recent meeting with Healthy Yards, which is affiliated with Bedford 2020. She and co-chair **Ellen Conrad** referred us to a website, *Pollinator-pathway.org*, with a host of information on developing a pollinator pathway in one's community with fund raising ideas, logos, home visit trips, to name a few. In our area, efforts to develop segments of such a pathway are still in their formative stage with lots of players.

Ellen wants us to start our efforts immediately in order not to miss the spring planting season. Her committee has decided that our initial stage should extend through October at which time it will be evaluated and future activities defined. For this year, the project is planned to be on a small scale. It is intended to be, as Liza pointed out, the beginnings of a five-year endeavor.

Ellen identified a few of our members with key responsibilities in carrying out the project:

- Robin Ashley: Co-chair of the Horticulture committee
- Ann Catchpole: Identification of native plants. Ann distributed a focus list with photos of "Pollen Rich Native Plants & Shrubs".
- Susan Roos: Invasive vines
- Jayni Chase: Education
- Varner Redmon: Public property plantings.
- Heather Langham and Virginia Maybank: Trees. The two will coordinate with the project in their important work through Branch Out!

Our project would entail the following:

- Coordination with other communities and organizations, such as the Westchester Land Trust. Our work would focus on Bedford, with those members living in surrounding communities encouraged to participate with their own town efforts in planting natives on their properties. Pound Ridge, for one, is well along in their planning. With so many organizations involved, rather than waiting for a leader to emerge, we will move forward with our own plans.
- Maps: Two plot maps of Bedford were displayed, one an official Bedford map which Jayni had brought and another an H2H map that Susan displayed. Ellen and Jayni will ask that our members mark their own properties on one of the maps at our next general membership meeting. We will make copies of the maps available to Rusticus and Hopp Ground.
- Agenda Roll-out. Robin said that our Plant Exchange meeting in May, would be the most appropriate meeting to lay out the program and have members identify their properties on whichever of the two maps was decided upon as most user friendly. Liza echoed her support for the May rather than the April meeting as we do not want to take much time away from our special speaker James Brayton Hall, CEO Garden Conservancy. At the May meeting, along with a focused description of our project, Ann's list of natives would be distributed along with a list to be developed of resources.
- Signage. Ellen wants standard signage to be designed for members to place at the entrance to their properties.
- Pesticides. Ann pointed out the importance of each of us taking the pledge not to use chemicals on our properties, except as absolutely essential, as they negate the effect of native plants to pollinators.

Nancy V emphasized the need to explain the program to our general membership. Although the executive committee has been kept informed, the rest of our membership has been left pretty much in the dark. Both she and Nancy K recommended that a very straight forward explanation of the project be given to the membership. Nancy V also questioned as to whom should be asked to fill in the map. She voiced concern that finding one's property on one of the maps might be too challenging and time consuming and would take away from the meeting time. Ellen said that the process would engage each member in the project and allow each to visualize how her property connected with the whole. Liza suggested that someone be posted to provide guidance, as needed.

Treasurer's Report

Tina Winchester presented the budget proposed for the 2019 - 2020 year. The big number, she said, was a \$40,000 income item representing the expected proceeds from our June benefit party. While an aggressive number, it is less than the \$53,000 raised by our exceptionally successful fundraiser in 2017.

She went on to point out a few categories with changes, as well as to address questions and comments, as follows:

- Dues. The number used accounts for 115 members, 13 of whom because of their age (75 and older) and length of time as members (15 plus) pay dues of \$60. The dues of this latter group do not quite cover the amount we pay for GCA membership of \$62 per person. The group debated without resolution whether dues for this group should be increased to at least cover GCA membership or somewhat more to cover possible increases.
- Interns. We had increased the amount allocated for 2018 - 2019 to \$4,000 from \$2,000 the preceding year. As it has turned out, we received only a request for \$3,000. The \$4,000 will once again be budgeted for the coming year.
- Branch Out! Heather noted that nothing was shown as an expense this year, although Bill Davies did perform tree work on the ones we had planted in front of Hunting Ridge Mall. Tina said that no bill had been presented, moreover, as noted by Nancy K, we have a reserve of several thousand dollars for Branch Out! that would be tapped first for related expenditures.
- Programs. The budget was increased to \$7,500 from last year's \$6,500 to continue to provide sufficient resources to attract excellent speakers.
- Website. Nancy V requested that the budget be increased by \$100 to \$250 to pay for a Constant Contact upgrade. Approval was heartily voiced.
- NAL and other meetings. A discussion revolved around which expenses are to be covered by the club and for whom. It was generally agreed that we should cover the registration fees for the President and delegate accompanying her, as well as, in many instances travel expenses. It was questioned by some as to whether travel expenses should be covered particularly where travel involved was not-too-far (undefined) such as Cooperstown or Boston and one could drive or take Amtrak. Nancy K pointed out that a delegate is taking time away from her regular activities and that it would be the right thing to cover her expenses as an inducement to attend. Lodging expense was also questioned. Nancy V questioned as to whether those who could afford to pay should not do so. Ellen recommended that we pay for the registration fee, but nothing more. She continued in saying that while the President should always attend, if we are paying some or all expenses for her delegate, we should spread that honor around rather than having the same person attending on more than one occasion at our expense. Tina pointed out that some of the funds come from our operating budget and other from the Waller trust. Concern was raised that we are depleting the trust needlessly, leaving no cushion for the future.

There was no resolution regarding guidelines for handling expenses in connection with NAL and GCA meeting attendance.

- Beaver Dam Sanctuary – Civic Contributions. Tina had left that line blank as in the current 2018 – 2019 year the envelope with our \$100 check had been returned. We will increase our contribution by \$100 to the Mianus River Gorge, keeping the total budgeted for Civic Contributions the same as was budgeted for the 2018 – 2019 year.

Motion made by Jayni Chase to approve the budget with recommended changes. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved by hand vote by those present. The approved budget will be presented to our membership at the June Annual Meeting.

Community Garden Projects

Liza told us that Nadia Ghannam had sent us a request for help with the children's garden at the West Patent Elementary School. This prompted a discussion about our involvement in the many needs of our community. Varner Redmon, who was not in attendance, was quoted as cautioning us not to spread ourselves too thin. We have also been approached about lending a hand with the garden at the Community Center in Katonah. Ellen commented that this garden is not insignificant in size. Whatever help we may provide, she suggested, should not involve continued work on our part to maintain the property.

Nancy V brought up the subject of the Sutton Clock Circle at the intersection of Succabone and Guard Hill Roads which is in need of replanting. The Club had planned the original plantings. Several other public spaces in need were also cited such as the triangle at St. Matthews. The idea would be to hand over maintenance to the Town of Bedford after we had designed and planted. Ann Catchpole, who had left the meeting by this stage of the discussion, was suggested as an ideal candidate to select plants that were low maintenance, deer resistant and road salt tolerant.

Membership

Janet Robinson announced three candidates proposed for membership:

- Caroline Black, proposed by Ginger Getz
- Nancy Durst, proposed by Beth Sachs
- Betsy Mitchell, proposed by Deirdre Glascott

Janet and Liza read the proposers' letters in support of their candidates after which the three, individually, were voted on for membership. All three were individually approved unanimously by hand vote of those present.

Janet will hand over responsibility for them to Seedling chair Heather Langham to arrange a luncheon with the Seedlings, certain officers and committee chairs.

Nancy V recommended that in the future voting be conducted by written ballot. She said that while in this case, the qualifications of all three were uncontroversial, the situation could arise

where a candidate might not present such a clearly positive choice. Rather than single out candidates in such situations it would be best to handle voting on each candidate in the same private manner. Whether ballots would be emailed or provided at a meeting was left to be decided upon.

Publicity

Joyce Corrigan reported that while the *Bedford Record Review* was enthusiastic about her doing a piece on Martha Stewart's new book and February talk to the club, she has not yet been able to speak with Martha. It may be that Martha wants to wait until spring flowers are in bloom to have photographs taken at her Katonah home. Our April speaker, James Brayton Hall, CEO Garden Conservancy, will be a "Bulletin" topic.

Fundraiser

Holly Warshaw, Co-chair and committee member **Carole Rice** provided an up-date on our June fundraiser. They had exciting news on auction items being donated. The newest one came totally unexpectedly from our caterer, Fox Catering. They volunteered as an auction item \$1,500 in catering services. As to our invitation, our talented Carol Bouyoucos is designing another beautiful one.

Liza had suggested that we include as invitees some others outside of our club membership. Robin cautioned that we should be mindful the event is at someone's house and should not be widely offered. Liza said that with Rusticus, she would restrict invitations to only five or six officers.

Minutes

The minutes of the February 6, 2019 Executive Committee meeting were approved with minor changes.

Meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Linda J. Merrill

Recording Secretary