

Bedford Garden Club
Executive Committee Meeting
Home of Liza Clymer
201 Croton Lake Road
April 30, 2019
9:30 a.m.

Attendance: Liza Clymer, Robin Ashley, Ellen Conrad, Beth Crowell, Wendy Cushman, Wendy Foulke, Mary Kendrick, Nancy Kronenberg, Linda Merrill, Janet Robinson, Anita Stockbridge, Nancy Vincent, Dana Worlock

President Liza Clymer welcomed all.

A brief discussion ensued on our May general membership meetings. The first, on May 1, will be an open meeting with Rusticus at John Jay Homestead. She hopes that we will also draw from the public for a talk by author Andrea Wulf on her fascinating book ***The Invention of Nature. Alexander von Humboldt's New World.*** Liza reported that about 75 had signed up. The discussion also touched on the May 17 Plant Exchange meeting, detailed below under "Horticulture".

Civic Affairs & Conservation

Co-chair **Ellen Conrad** reported on the highly successful second annual Healthy Yards Earth Day Festival at the Bedford Hills train station on Sunday, April 22. Attendees picked up literature, plants, seeds and supplies. Branch Out! was among the organizations participating with Virginia Maybank manning our table.

Regarding our participation with the H2H Pollinator Pathway, Liza told us that lots of information was coming in from many sources but that we are setting our own direction. Ellen affirmed by saying that we are really separate with our efforts directed toward our own membership. We will join with other organizations in certain endeavors as they may complement our own. Robin said that we will educate our own members on the science along with creating a beautiful garden.

Dana announced that she will be speaking before the Bedford Audubon Society on June 9. A suggestion was made that an announcement of the talk be posted on our website as many of our membership will want to attend. Dana also told us of the ½ acre sustainable garden of all natives she is planting on her property. We will want to take a tour!

Website

Chairman **Nancy Vincent** singled out Robin and Dana as doing an absolutely fabulous job in presenting her with ready to go copy for placement on our website. She wants all

others to follow their example. Every website entry must first go to Liza for her approval before being sent to Nancy V and Debbie Gourd.

Horticulture

At the May 15 Plant Exchange at Tina Winchester's barn, Horticulture co-chairs **Robin Ashley** and **Dana Worlock** have planned an informative introduction to gardening and landscaping with native plants. Participants will be treated to a talk by expert native plant garden designer and newly elected member Betsy Mitchell.

Robin voiced her conviction that the message to our membership must emphasize the importance of planting and propagating native plants only. She wants only natives to be brought to the Plant Exchange. She stated that by including non-natives in our own gardens we are continuing to cause irretrievable harm to our pollinator population. In certain cases, she said, a look-alike non-native will prove confusing to a pollinator and cause it to lay its eggs to no avail on the wrong plant. Anyone who brings a non-native to the Exchange should, she believes, mark it such. Her comments elicited a spirited discussion, with others making the following observations:

- We don't want to make donors feel badly
- Things go in and out of favor over time and we must be careful about holding to a certain belief so stringently
- It would feel bad to remove so many of the plants, such as hydrangeas, that we love in our gardens
- Deer are perhaps our biggest problem as they are eating a lot of our natives.

Robin said she will be sending our membership tons of announcements over the following days regarding the Exchange. For a couple of days prior to the event, Tina will have her barn open to members to drop off plants. Robin will instruct all of those bringing plants to label their contributions with fully and provide instructions for care and information as to whether it is deer resistant.

Nancy V recommended that donors print out the description of each plant from the Missouri Botanical Garden website. Robin suggested that anyone who is not entirely sure of whether her plant is a native or a cultivar consult www.inaturalist.org. The site allows one to post a photo(s) and obtain opinions from experts as to what it is.

Floral Design

Liza complemented chairman **Wendy Cushman** on the fabulous workshop held on April 24 led by noted floral designer Claire Won Kang. While only nine of our members were able to attend, all were delighted with her presentation. Thought will be given to having Claire speak at one of our general membership meetings. Wendy said that she was inspired to invite her after attending one of the GCA meetings as a delegate.

Wendy is planning for another flower show at our June Annual meeting. She is contemplating having either a bench show, as we had last year for which each participant arranged flowers from her own garden, or a challenge class show. With the latter, participants would have the same flowers to work with and a GCA judge would come and comment on each of the arrangements.

Nancy V cited Beth Crowell who had just finished co-chairing the auction at the Rippowam Ciscaqua school benefit party. The table arrangements included vases filled with the most spectacularly colored double tulips all of which Beth grew specifically for the event.

Membership

Chairman **Janet Robinson** has handed over responsibility for our three new members to Seedling chair Heather Langham. Heather is arranging a luncheon with the Seedlings, certain officers and committee chairs. Janet was pleased to announce that a few other prospective members' names have surfaced subsequently.

Janet recommended that we change the timing of our new membership cycle. As it is, March is the month when all letters of support for each nominee must be submitted to meet an April 1 deadline after which the membership committee meet quickly to make their decisions. She recommended that the deadline be changed to either March 1 or May 1, with the earlier date preferable. March is our "dead" month with many membership committee members away making it a hard time to find a date for them to meet.

She also pointed out that all too frequently the committee makes decisions based solely on letters endorsing the candidates rather than actually meeting each. A cocktail party with executive committee members, sponsors and candidates as was held two years ago was a success in bringing all parties to the decision together at one time in one place. Liza will discuss with Nancy Kronenberg as in-coming President.

For next year's committee, Janet will add Liza as out-going president and drop Carol Bouyoucos who has been serving in her capacity as out-going president. New procedures will be announced in September with clear directives for the process going forward.

Anita Stockbridge recommended that each prospective member state what specialty she has a particular interest in pursuing. Janet said that the endorsement letters generally addressed candidate's interests.

Regarding the timing of the nominations, Nancy V pointed out that our by-laws are silent on the subject. The procedure implemented she said and the requirement that the nominees be voted upon by secret ballot by the executive committee should be put in writing.

President's Report

Liza announced that in her post BGC presidency she will be taking on the position of head of awards for Zone III with its 23 member clubs. She plans to place emphasis on acknowledging women who have made important contributions. She has also been asked to attend a meeting of the New York Committee of the GCA. They will be discussing the restoration of the

Olmstead Beil mansion on Staten Island.

Liza presented a request from Nadia Ghannam regarding assistance with the children's garden at the West Patent elementary school. She had mentioned a more general request from Nadia at our previous executive committee meeting. We have been asked for a contribution of \$400 to purchase a compost machine. It was noted that, as President, Liza has a discretionary fund available from which she could make a grant of this size without the approval of the committee. Dana said that she has a large such composter for her business which she would be pleased to donate. Others had objections to providing such a machine as would teach students the wrong and expensive way of creating compost. Robin pointed out that this "stuff" was not needed and that Nadia should consult "Best practices" for other ways of producing compost using easily constructed holding units. The up-shot of the discussion was that the request will be turned down, with explanation.

Internships

Liza reported that the Westmoreland Sanctuary has requested that we fund three interns this year rather than only two as we had last year. We gave \$2,000 to Westmoreland this year and would be increasing the amount to \$3,000 for 2019 - 2020. Tina has told Liza that the funds are readily available. Nancy V moved that we increase the budgeted amount for internship grants by \$1,000 for the coming year on a one time but not continuing basis. The committee voted in agreement. [Tina later, after reviewing the draft minutes, corrected them to say that the requested amount already fit within our 2019 – 2020 budget that allocated \$4,000 for internships. We are giving \$1,000 to the Audubon Society of Bedford and now, rather than \$2,000, \$3,000 to the Westmoreland Sanctuary.]

Other Issues

Wendy C recommended that we assign a member responsible to submit information on our club to the GCA website. Linda suggested that the Corresponding Secretary would be the appropriate person to provide membership information to them.

Fundraiser

Liza reported that the invitation is all set to be sent out to our membership. Holly Warshaw along with committee member Carol Rice have all the logistics set.

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