

**Bedford Garden Club
Executive Committee Meeting
201 Croton Lake Road, Katonah
May 2, 2018
9:30 a.m.**

Attendance: Liza Clymer, Carol Bouyoucos, Jayni Chase, Ellen Conrad, Joyce Corrigan, Wendy Foulke, Deirdre Glascott, Mary Kendrick, Heather Langham, Diane Lewis, Linda Merrill, Varner Redmon, Janet Robinson, Wendy Ross, Anita Stockbridge, Nancy Vincent, Tina Winchester

Minutes of the February 2, 2018 and April 4, 2018 Executive Committee Meetings

After a motion was made and seconded, the minutes of both meetings were unanimously approved.

Treasurer's report

Tina Winchester reported that she along with Liza and Debbie Gourd had met recently to make a few changes in the 2018-2019 Proposed Budget Worksheet that had been distributed at the April 4 meeting. The net effect was to add to budgeted expenses by \$1,500 with an increase in allocations for travel expenses for attending GCA and Zone III meetings, line items that have not been raised in many years and deemed inadequate.

The budget will be presented to the entire membership and voted on at the June Annual Meeting.

GCA Annual Meeting

Liza reported that she and Wendy Cushman had just returned from an invigorating and moving meeting in San Francisco. She was most impressed by speaker Thomas Woltz, renowned landscape architect, who gave an "amazing" talk to the group. She would love to engage him to speak to us. Liza also mentioned that Dede Petri, President, Executive Board of the GCA, spoke about the importance of bringing more garden clubs under the GCA umbrella by expediting the new membership process.

Nominating Committee

A representative from the Nominating Committee was not present. Liza announced a few of the nominees for various positions. As a reminder, Nancy Vincent pointed out that a nominating committee of five (two from the Executive Committee and three from the membership at-large) is required under our By-Laws. She continued by saying that the list of candidates is to be mailed by the Corresponding Secretary to the membership at least 10 days prior to the Annual Meeting at which time they will be voted upon by the full membership. In view of the late timing this year, Nancy recommended that the list be emailed. Next year, Kim Morris will chair the Nominating Committee.

Adopt-a-Road

Kim Morris, who has taken on the role of "Captain", announced that she was organizing a group to pick up debris along Route 22 from the Shell Station to Clinton Road May 5, 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. The service is being provided after a two-year hiatus. Kim said that this is an obligation of the Club; it is a commitment that we had entered into many years ago and one that provides a much-needed service to the Community. Safety of our workers is a concern particularly in the area between the Shell station and the market. The time of day, rush hour, also was mentioned.

Our Civic Affairs & Conservation Committee, of which Adopt-a-Road is a sub-committee, may investigate ways to communicate with school children to take up the challenge of keeping our roads tidy. After discussion of ways to get the word out to the community and other ways to help, Nancy V recommended the Conservation Committee develop a plan to present to the Executive Committee. Varner said that, next year, they might consider forming a sub-committee to place in charge.

Horticulture

Liza reported in the absence of **Robin Ashley** and **Dana Worlock**. Our annual Plant Exchange meeting will be held at Tina's barn on Harris Road on May 23rd. Liza had had the opportunity to see what she termed "exquisite" space. Among the plants to be made available are some great poppies that Tina has grown from seeds.

Zone III Meeting

Liza, along with Wendy Cushman, will attend the Zone III meeting in Cooperstown, NY, May 15-17. Planning by our committees for this latter event, she said, is in good shape. We are delighted that Carole Rice will create our floral entry.

Civic Affairs & Conservation

Jayni Chase spoke about the luncheon at her house the preceding day for club members and guests from Rusticus. The many who attended thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated the presentation by Audubon Society's founder of *Women in Conservation* Allison Rockefeller and lively conversation that ensued. The presentation was a lead-in for the May 15, 15th annual Audubon Society *Women in Conservation* luncheon at NYC's Plaza Hotel for the presentation of the Rachel Carson award. We will have tables reserved for BGC members who attend.

Ellen Conrad introduced a new project that the committee is planning to embark on jointly with Horticulture and Photography. The project will entail solar array planting at 5 Spoke Creamery Farms, Goshen, New York. She said that Minnesota Company, Prairie Restorations, the leader in growing native plants under solar arrays, has provided a plan for planting native plant seeds and plugs. Annie Farrell, the organic farmer who runs Millstone Farm in Wilton, CT, will be project manager.

We would need 10 to 15 of our members to volunteer to plant on a day yet to be arranged in June, with another session in mid-summer to weed and, finally, one in the fall to "see, celebrate and collect seeds". Ellen plans to provide educational material to Nancy V to email to our membership. Ellen will make a presentation on the topic of native plants and solar arrays at the May Zone meeting.

Several questions and comments were raised, among them:

- Varner wondered if a project closer to us could be found that people can see locally and learn to do themselves, too. Travel time for our volunteers was also noted as a concern in generating club participation.
- Heather recommended that Ellen and Jayni engage participation of their committee members to discuss and gain commitment to such a project. She noted that when Nancy Kronenberg and she had chaired the committee, their meetings attracted a good number of participants.

Heather also recommended that the two send to our membership a brief and concise plan of what exactly is being planned and its positive impact. Nancy V suggested that they consider bringing in a speaker on the subject to raise awareness and gain the commitment of our membership. Unfortunately,

she said, we're not getting as many lookers as we want at our Constant Contact postings. Jayni said that she would be glad to send an email directly herself to our membership.

Floral Design

Liza reported in Wendy Cushman's absence.

The GCA is encouraging a basic floral design course for its member clubs. (Anita thought the idea of a Photography 101 course a good idea, too.) Varner suggested that we hold a club floral design show to which each member would bring her own native plant material and flowers, rather than ones that were purchased.

Visiting Gardens

Varner Redmon announced that we have filled the places available for the up-coming May 16 visit to Jamaica Bay. On June 20, we will visit the PepsiCo Sculpture Gardens for a guided tour. Then, in August, Cynthia Mas has arranged for a tour of Roosevelt Island which, unbeknownst to many of us, has extensive gardens.

Regarding the gardens for which we take responsibility, she reminded us that clean-ups were scheduled for 1:00 p.m., May 2 for the Sundial Garden at the John Jay Homestead and the morning of May 4 at the Bedford Village Courthouse Garden. Much help is needed and all were asked to come and participate, if only for a short while.

Garden History & Design

Special thanks were given to Nancy V for her tremendous work on our submission to the Smithsonian of documentation on Marna MacLean's Riverview Ranch, Wilson, WY. This is particularly important as it will be the first garden in Wyoming to be documented and submitted to their archives. Other submissions in varying stages of completion include the gardens of Diane Lewis, Denise Santomero, and Susan Burke. Nancy V suggested that we coordinate Garden History & Design with Photography.

Membership

Janet Robinson read sponsors' letters for two outstanding candidates for membership: Susan Crater, sponsored by Lisa Ghiskey, and Laura Harris, sponsored by Robin Ashley. After a motion was made and seconded to accept the two as members, both were unanimously approved for membership.

Varner recommended that to help avoid misunderstandings, we should set forth written guidelines as to what is expected of a new member in her first year with the proviso that if the member finds that she cannot fulfill her responsibilities she can leave the club without any ill feelings. After discussion dealing with how to guide new members as to their responsibilities, Liza formed a committee consisting of Varner, Heather, Nancy V and herself. The committee is charged with developing a plan to be presented to the Executive Committee for vote.

Programs

Joyce Corrigan announced that Nancy Kronenberg would be assuming the Programs chairmanship this fall. We all applauded Joyce for the fantastic speakers she brought in during her tenure.

Liza said that in order to bring in more of our members to enjoy our wonderful programs for certain meeting we may try times other than our usual 9:00 a.m. refreshments with the business meeting at 9:30 a.m. followed by a speaker.

Branch Out!

Heather Langham recapped the history of Branch Out! since its inception in 2010. After several years of intensive work and accomplishments, she said that for various reasons they had gone “underground” more recently. Virginia and she now want to resume activity. The two have been looking at many areas in Bedford where they could make an impact and ended up focusing on a plan to plant trees to replace dead and fallen ones along Route 172 by Sunnyfield Farm. They think that, along with the private owner of the property and the Town, the Club may be able to finance and execute such a program.

Another need she mentioned would be to replace a few of the trees planted a few years ago in front of the Hunting Ridge Shopping Mall in the Village that have not received sufficient care by the mall. Any work on this would include training for mall personnel on essential tree care. Other trees planted through our efforts over the past 10 years are, she assured us, doing very well. In the interest of continuing Branch Out’s activities, she proposed including \$2,000 in the 2018 – 2019, adding to the existing balance available of more than \$5,000.

An alternative to resuming Branch Out activities, Heather said, would be to terminate it if there was not sufficient interest, not just financially, within the club.

The discussion focused on the following themes:

What is Branch Out?

- Not a standing committee.
- Identifiable projects.
- It needs to have an active committee with as many as possible club members involved.
- Has the potential to support worthwhile projects while involving more club members.

Should Branch Out be a part of the BGC, or have another affiliation?

- Varner: Maybe it should be part of Bedford 2020? Are we doing BO a disservice by not opening up to larger funding sources than available through us?
- Ellen: Bedford 2020 had been started by the BGC. Maybe it should be a partnership with Bedford 2020. Regarding Sunnyfields, why should we help out a wealthy landowner?
- Heather: Virginia and she had rejected a potential partnership with Bedford 2020, believing that we would lose control with such an arrangement.
- Ellen: Should BO be a sub-committee within Hort?

If a part of the BGC, how should its activities be funded?

- Ellen: As an example, JJ Sundial Garden has funding for yearly projected expenses. For special needs, must propose special funding.
- Varner: Adding \$2,000 to the budget is not appropriate. We should not be building up a reserve.
- Liza: What if we decide that we do not want to fund a Sunnyfields project? Whether we do or not, “we’re all behind you!”. (The club’s support for Branch Out was voiced by Varner and several others.)

Recommendation: Heather was asked to enlist other members of the club to form a committee that would come up with a plan for where Branch Out wants to go. For the present, the \$5,000 set aside for BO’s use could be drawn upon. Any projects requiring new funding would need to be proposed to the Executive Committee and, after being approved by the Committee, would need to be voted on by the entire membership at our annual meeting as part of our budget process.

Other Matters

2019 Fundraiser: Liza announced that in 2019, as the then former president of the BGC, she will chair our bi-annual fundraiser. The theme will be pollinators and trees.

There will be a screening of *The Gardener* at Bedford Playhouse June 9. The film looks back on Frank Cabot's creation of the magnificent gardens in Quebec, *Les Quatre Vents*, which several BGC members had the opportunity to visit in June, 2017.

June Executive Committee Meeting

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held at 9:30 a.m. at the home of Liza Clymer on Wednesday, June 6, 2018.

Meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Linda J. Merrill
Recording Secretary