

THE BEDFORD GARDEN CLUB
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, September 10, 2008
At the home of Wendy Cushman

Present: Ellen Conrad, Suzanne Bowers, Wendy Cushman, Lisa Hennessy, Heather Langham Virginia Maybank, Lindsay Matthews, Kim Morris, Varner Redmon, Janet Robinson, Bitsy Tatnall, Taylor Taylor, Bonnie Trotta, Leslie Wortman.

Call to order: Ellen Conrad called the meeting to order.

Corresponding Secretary's Report: There was a motion to waive the reading of the report. The motion was passed.

Recording Secretary's Report: The minutes were not present therefore a motion to waive the reading of the report will be put forward at the October 8 executive meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Virginia Maybank circulated a snap-shot accounting (as she described it) of BGC's operating and restricted funds, pointing out that this was a new format. Also provided was a transaction history for the period 6/1/2008 through 9/9/2008. Virginia commented that she would be happy to provide a detailed budget report to anyone interested. Following a discussion it was decided that in the event BGC drew down operating funds (from a current balance of \$13,301) money from the Newell Memorial Account (civic & educational expenses) would be used to pay for speakers and other educational expenses. It was also decided after discussion that the current six month Certificate of Deposit would be renewed.

Ellen commended Virginia on a job well done.

Announcements/Discussion Items:

Several dates on the BGC calendar were re-scheduled due to holiday and Election Day conflicts. In order to streamline future meetings, Ellen asked that all executive committee discussion items be pre-submitted to her prior to executive committee meetings. It was also mentioned that the minutes will, in the future, be posted on the website.

November 21, 2008 Fundraiser: Lisa Hennessy has graciously agreed to host our fall fundraiser. Liza Clymer is in charge of organizing the party and Ellen announced that an auction chair was still needed. Lindsay Matthews and Alison Ryan for graphics were suggested as possible chairs for these positions.

Several members graciously offered possible auction items: Bonnie Trotta offered her ski condo in Vermont, Taylor Taylor offered to secure a signed piece of professional sports equipment, and Wendy Cushman offered her home in Watch Hill.

In House Photography Class: Varner Redmon suggested that BGC organize an in house photography class at the October 15 meeting to be held at St. Matthews. Bonnie, Varner, and Denise are the organizers.

Visiting Gardens/Trips: Given the busy, full calendar this fall Lisa Hennessy will resume trips in the spring.

Greensday December 3 will be organized a little differently this year. The Holiday Boutique will be followed by the general meeting and wreath making. The intended lecture, on living wreaths, will begin at 10:30.

On the to- do list: supply each member with a carrying card identifying all the stores/nurseries in our community which provide discounts to Bedford Garden Club members (Shamans, Michael's in Bedford Hills, Perennial Gardens, Mill River Supply and others).

Environmental Summit: Kim Morris gave an overview of what has been accomplished thus far in the planning of the Summit. A date, Saturday January 31, 2009, and a venue, Fox Lane High School, have been secured (time 8:30 to 2:30/3:00). The next step is to secure a key note speaker. Olivia Farr is heading up this effort. From there workshops, expos and speakers will be organized. The organization of the summit is a multi- tier approach. The Bedford Garden Club, along with the Bedford Energy Advisory Panel (EAP) will be co-organizers. Next, identify 6 to 10 suitable organizations with which we can form partnerships, such as Westchester Land Trust, Nature Conservancy, Rusticus, Audubon, Westchester Interfaith Council, the Sierra Club, Rocky Mountain Institute, River Keeper, Mianus River Gorge Preserve. The next level will be our community supporters (ex. local High Schools, Boy and Girl Scouts, local businesses) followed individual volunteers.

The mandate, as articulated by Ellen Conrad, is for the Summit to serve as an environmental wake up call. Large topics and issues will be addressed by Keynote speaker and lectures. Workshops will be geared toward putting ideas into action and fostering grass roots efforts out in the community. This format, Ellen suggested, can become a template GCA and other Clubs can use. The hope is to publish all the lectures, in print and online, and to have copies available in our Libraries.

The Summit Committee members thus far are: Bitsy Tatnall, Ann Hoffman, Kim Morris, Olivia Farr, Kate Ginnel, Shirley Bianco, Ellen Conrad, June Weissinger, Bonnie Trotta, and Mary Beth Kass from Bedford's Energy Advisory Panel. Suggestions of possible speakers, workshops, and lectures can be emailed to Bitsy. Bonnie Trotta suggested that there be a Bedford Regulation workshop where ordinances regarding such things as farm animals on residential property are addressed and explained. The feeling is that some of the regulations are outdated and arcane and should be addressed by the Town. (Why, for example, is a tremendous amount of acreage required for raising roosters and chickens?)

Centennial Celebration: Ellen opened the discussion of this historic occasion by suggesting that what BGC ultimately decides should have an "enormous and lasting impact for this community". This is going to be a major community fundraiser and \$100,000 is not out of the realm of what we should consider raising. There are several possible ideas that have been put forward as follows:

Bedford Tree Mapping and Replanting Project: Virginia cited the Casey Tree project in Washington DC that provides technical support for tree mapping and replanting. The idea would be to map all of Bedford's roads and trees (using the Casey Project as a blue print) and devise a replanting plan.

BGC Almanac: Years ago BGC published the most delightful Almanac. Virginia said it was useful, helpful, *and* charming. The idea for an updated one would be to make it a *Green* almanac that could be sold through local merchants.

Anthology of Bedford's significant gardeners: Varner suggested that over the years there have been many contributions to garden design made by Bedford gardeners. Documenting these women and their contributions in this context has yet been undertaken.

Eco- Friendly Garden at the John Jay Homestead: Bonnie Trotta suggested this as a possible project.

Ellen asked that Centennial Project ideas be forwarded to her so that they can be addressed at the September 24 luncheon.

Membership: Suzanne Bowers reported that BGC has 90 active and sustaining members and there are at least 8 spaces for new members. This will be announced at the September 24 meeting and new member letters should be submitted by January 2009. Suzanne highlighted administrative issues she will be addressing: re-doing the blue card given out by the Proposer, updating membership profiles, and working with GCA to determine if an additional level of membership is needed. Also, mentioned was the GCA article that addresses how to get and retain new members and what they need to know before and after becoming a new member. Suzanne read a letter from Mina Edmonston submitting her resignation as of the 2009 annual meeting. A brief discussion ensued regarding how to acknowledge our long term members and their contributions to BGC. It was decided that the best venue would be the Annual Tea. Members we may want to consider acknowledging this year are: Louise Cunningham, Margie Pierce, and Virginia Stege.

Next Executive Meeting: October 8, 2008 at the home of Bonnie Trotta.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.