

FRIENDS OF SPY POND PARK ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday December 8, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.
Jefferson Cutter House, Arlington, Massachusetts

Present: Karen Grossman, President; Eric Anderson, Betty Athanasoulas, Doris Birmingham, Bill Eykamp, Sally Hempstead, Ed Koenig, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Marshall McCloskey, Gail McCormick, Fred Moses, Richard Norcross, Ellen Robertson, Lally Stowell, Bev Williams, and Wallace Williams.

After a delicious potluck dinner, Karen introduced Cathy Garnett, Registered Landscape Architect and Arlington Conservation Commissioner. Cathy had not participated in the walk through the park in October, but used David White's photos taken that day to illustrate her talk. While she noted that half of the park still has adequate vegetation, she encouraged us to look at the original proposal from ten years ago to update plantings and correct erosion, wear and deterioration that has occurred over the years.

Her suggestions include:

- eliminate informal pathways that lead to erosion
- watch where plants are gone and grass has moved in
- check invasive plants that have moved to other parts of the park
- use rocks and coir rolls to combat erosion on the shoreline and discourage walkers along the shore
- look at what plants in the original plans have survived and use those as replacements
- take up grass in stages, replacing with native plants and shrubs by fences
- make replacements according to a master plan
- keep encouraging volunteers to help maintain the park!

Kellie Connelly, also a Registered Landscape Architect, was our second speaker who gave us the "big picture" of plants that can be used in this area. "Natives" refers to plants and trees native to New England and "naturalized" plants are those that have adapted to the climate of New England. She showed us many photos that included trees, shrubs, and low-to-the-ground plants that could be used in the park. Since the list was long and the secretary did not have time to write them with accuracy, Kellie offered to give us the list of recommended trees and plants. She also brought books and catalogs from which we could learn about and purchase these plants. Kellie and her son use Spy Pond Park, and she thanked us for our efforts in keeping the park beautiful.

Karen thanked our speakers for their excellent presentations and called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Each person introduced him/herself and noted one thing they appreciate about the park. Winter sunsets and migrating birds were high on the list!

Minutes: October 13 Board meeting minutes were approved with the correction that Gerda Brown agreed to consider replacing Jacki Katzman.

Treasurer's report: Marshall McCloskey presented the treasurer's report and the projected 2014 budget. Under "plants", the budget has been amended from \$500 to \$500-\$3000. Marshall answered questions about the reports, which were accepted with thanks. Lally Stowell reported that we have 197 t-shirts of all sizes; we will not have to order new ones for a while.

Beautification Committee: Marshall reported that snowplows pushed the shed off its foundation, but he and other volunteers righted it, so now it is stable. We all appreciate having tools and supplies nearby! Lally noted that she and the Beautification Committee walk through the park on the Monday morning before a Saturday Work Day, making notes of tasks in priority order. Each committee member is assigned to a planting bed to help volunteers complete the necessary tasks. Lally also reported efforts to transplant ferns in the barren spaces were not successful due to soil or drought. Members of the Beautification Committee, the Conservation Commission and Park Commissioners walked through the park on October 18 with Kellie Connelly to assess remedies for curbing erosion & will set a plan for remedying the current status of the planting beds. The Arlington sculptor, Kevin Duffy, with enthusiastic approval of the FSPP board, is seeking a grant to subsidize his sculpting a large swan from one of the rocks in the park. It will be constructed so that children can climb on it. The portable toilet on the gravel parking lot was not cleaned as often as promised. Boys and Girls Club did pay \$500 and we paid \$1,000 towards the cost of the unit.

Website: Thanks to Marshall McCloskey and Webmaster Fred Moses, the database and website are up to date. Fred plans to post 2013 photos on the gallery by the end of the year.

Outreach: Many thanks to former Publicity Chair, Jacki Katzman, who has left the area. Gerda Brown (see minutes above) is not able to take over this responsibility. Please contact Karen if you are interested in helping the park with publicity. Jacki has all the contacts and will share them.

Thanks to Betsy and her team for a terrific Fun Day in September. She reported using more natural objects in the games and treasure hunts; kids and their families were engaged in the activities. Betsy is unable to coordinate this event for 2014 since she will be away all summer. Please contact Karen if you are willing to continue this special FSPP tradition. Thanks to Sally for a great outreach year, including:

- March Library display
- Eco Fest - Marshall hosted our table
- Feast of the East
- Shakespeare in the Park
- Food Awareness Day
- Town Day
- Whole Foods in Arlington - FSPP was the first community group with a coupon day at the cash register in October; Karen and Sally staffed a table and raised \$225.
- Canopy set up each Work Day and flyers distributed about Friends of Spy Pond Park

Communications: Thanks to Karen, Sally and Jamie Ciocco for beautiful, interesting and professional newsletters throughout the year!

Goals: Standing goals have been met, except one: Recruit two new board members.... 2013 goals were met except plantings & soil enrichment (the latter deemed unnecessary).

Goals for 2014 are the same as for 2013 with the following changes:

2. Soil enrichment, if necessary, and include keeping the park free of trash (as is possible)
7. Advocate for MyRWA to collect more water quality data...being done. Delete this goal and add:
9. Install stone sculpture by Kevin Duffy

Slate of Officers with openings (opportunities) noted:

President - Karen L. Grossman

General Vice-president - OPEN

Recording Secretary - Beverly Williams

Treasurer and Membership Secretary - Marshall McCloskey

Vice-Presidents for Communication & Outreach - Sally Hempstead and Jamie Ciocco

Publicity Chair - OPEN

Beautification Committee - Lally Stowell, Chair; Betty Athanasoulas, Elizabeth Karpati, Gail McCormick, Richard Norcross, Bev Williams

Webmaster - Fred Moses

Chair for Park Events - OPEN

Fundraising Chair - Jason Fligg

Videographer - Erin Fliggburger

The slate was moved, seconded, and **passed**. The members toasted all who have worked on the park in 2013.

Next meeting: at the home of Karen Grossman on February 9, 2014.

Meeting adjourned 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Beverly E. Williams, Recording Secretary