

**In attendance:** Karen Grossman, Eva Balazs, Doris Birmingham, Bill Eykamp, Rafe Ezekiel, Jason Fligg, Erin Freeburger, Sally Hempstead, Elizabeth Karpati, Jacki Katzman, Carol Kycia, Marshall McCloskey, Gail McCormick, Kathy Modigliani, Fred Moses, Sally Naish, DP Powell, Lisa Reynolds, Myra Schwartz, Joe Snodgrass, Lally Stowell, Jane Whitmore, and Lisa Wolfe.

**Rain Gardens** (Sally Naish, guest speaker)

Sally is a Certified Landscape Designer who designed the rain garden recently installed at Spy Pond Park next to the playground. She described the hows and whys of a rain garden. Its purpose is to keep stormwater on site and let it soak into the soil so that the soil filters it as it slowly seeps into the nearest water body, rather than rushing into that water body over the surface carrying pollutants like oil from cars and lawn chemicals, and creating erosion.

A rain garden is a depression located at the low point of an area so that storm water collects there. It needs enough space between the surface and the water table underneath to allow the collected rain to soak in without creating a puddle that lasts long enough to allow mosquitoes to complete their breeding cycle in it.

A rain garden is made by digging out an area, one to two feet deep with a flat bottom and sloping sides, amending the soil as needed, and putting it back while planting suitable plants in it: those that can stand both dry spells and periods of having “wet feet.” Sally mentioned several books that can help with essential details such as the size of a rain garden needed to handle storm water from a given area and lists of suitable plants. She also mentioned some caveats for those who want to rush out and put a rain garden in their back yard: keep it at least ten feet away from the foundation and don’t put it over buried utility lines or a septic tank.

After Sally’s most informative talk we proceeded to business:

The **minutes** from the October meeting were approved.

**Finances:**

- Jane Whitmore handed out the financial report and proposed budget for 2012. FSPP ended both 2010 and 2011 in the black. After the dues mailing in the spring, we did an additional solicitation in the fall that has netted approximately \$1000 thus far.
- Question for the next meeting: if we again do these two mailings, would the savings from getting a bulk-mailing permit justify its cost?
- Our T-shirt inventory stands at 98 youth and 113 adult sizes, which should be enough for next summer. Someone suggested we try to get some other FSPP item to sell, e.g. a tote bag.
- Eva Balazs offered some copies of her “Spy Pond Stories” and CDs for us to sell and keep 20% of the proceeds.
- If the Town cannot provide a portable toilet for the summer, we could consider sharing the cost of one with the Arlington-Belmont crew.
- Some time ago we approved \$2,500 to help fix the erosion on the park paths and handicapped ramp. This money has not yet been spent, and is not shown in the proposed budget since there are no firm repair plans as yet.
- Our tax-exempt status (from Massachusetts sales tax) has finally been approved, and the required annual financial reports have been filed.

### **Committee Reports / Accomplishments:**

- **Beautification:** Doris and Gail organize the Work Days; Bill Eykamp is the pruning chief. The planting beds look pretty good, thanks to help from many volunteers, but recruiting groups for each workday is a big job.
- The Town has sprayed the poison ivy infestation jutting into the playground. Poison ivy is also on the bike path embankment adjacent to the parking lot and has also turned up in a few spots in the planting beds.
- The long-broken bulletin board has been repaired and put up at Linwood St; another near the playground needs some shingles.
- Partying in the parking lot and throwing trash and bottles into the poison ivy is a problem. Police promised more patrols, but when an abutter called about a party in progress, police merely dispersed the group and did not fine them.
- Tool storage: Home Depot has a plastic shed for \$500 on sale but Kathy reports that it isn't sturdy. Not an acute problem since the Fliggs can store our tools for now.
- Erosion: CRJ Associates has designed, pro bono, some re-grading to ease this problem. Heimlich hasn't provided an estimate, so Joe Connelly is ready to use another contractor. DPW needs to look at the irrigation system, which may have some leaks. The StaLok® installation near Linwood Circle has settled; the manufacturer will add some more in the spring without cost.
- **Website:** Fred has added lots of pictures, and links to other organizations.
- **Outreach:** Jacki publicizes the workdays on websites, with posters sent to various groups and notices in the *Arlington Advocate*. This has brought some new people to each Work Day. We have a new Facebook page with some 68 "friends" so far, and a new PSA.
- The Fun Day Betsy Leondar-Wright organized and the Town Day booth Sally Hempstead organized both went very well; the latter brought in 2½ pages of sign-ups. The performance of *Macbeth* at Spy Pond Field was also successful.
- Lally created a **memory scrapbook** covering about 20 years. Doris suggested scanning it and putting it on the website.
- Eric Berger and Jamie Ciocco did a great job on the **newsletter** (4 issues this year). 2012 will be Eric's last year soliciting articles for the newsletter, so he is looking for someone to work with him and then take over for the following year.
- **Grants:** A grant from NEGEF (New England Grassroots Environmental Fund) to Sustainable Arlington and the Garden Club made the rain garden possible. SA has applied to the Cultural Council for a grant for students from the Hardy School and perhaps the High School to make signs for the rain garden.

**Officers for 2012** The proposed slate of officers and chairpersons was elected:

President – Karen L. Grossman

General Vice-President – Open

Treasurer – Jane Whitmore

Recording Secretary – Beverly Williams

Membership Secretary - Marshall McCloskey

Vice-Presidents for Communication – Eric Berger and Jamie Ciocco

Co-chairs for Publicity – Jacki Katzman and Lally Stowell

Beautification Committee – Doris Birmingham, Gail McCormick, Lally Stowell, Bev Williams

Webmaster – Fred Moses

Chair for Park Events – Betsy Leondar-Wright

Outreach Coordinator – Sally Hempstead

Fundraising Chair – Jason Fligg

If we join ACMI, we can get up to four people trained in videography and editing. We need volunteers for General VP – President-in-training and for Videographer – a new position.

## **GOALS:**

### **STANDING ANNUAL GOALS FOR FSPP**

1. Increase **active** membership, enlarge the core group of volunteers.
2. Maintain the park.
3. Have Town Day and EcoFest booths
4. Send bi-monthly meeting announcements including main topics to be discussed
5. Sell more t-shirts
6. File annual report and PC report to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
7. Have a library display, as permitted
8. Increase awareness of FSPP and park events
9. Maintain and update the FSPP database
10. Maintain and update the FSPP website
11. Publish quarterly newsletter
12. Create archive of news items on Spy Pond Park (Memory Scrapbook)
13. Create a scorecard on annual goals.
14. Recruit two new board members from a broad range of the membership  
*(Sally Hempstead and Jason Fligg in 2011)*

### **GOALS FOR 2011**      *(ACCOMPLISHED)*

1. *Seek additional funding sources [fall solicitation]*
2. Submit warrant articles to Town Meeting for *no-wake* and boating signage
3. Maintenance details: plantings and soil enrichment in beds 2 and 3; *pursue poison ivy eradication; have Town plant two trees for playground shade [one planted] & remove dead tree (no)*
4. Encourage Town to install a porta-potty at Spy Pond Field *[see below]*
5. *Add web links to similar organizations and our PSA*
6. Involve more school groups in maintenance *[see below]*
7. *Schedule a different group for each Work Day*
8. *Schedule more nature crafts in the park, where possible*
9. *Obtain requested MA sales tax exemption*
10. *Advocate for MyRWA to collect water quality data for Spy Pond*
11. Repair bulletin boards *[one of two done]*

### **ADDITIONAL GOALS FOR 2012**

1. Investigate purchasing tool storage shed
2. Collaborate with Town officials and neighbors to eliminate dumping and partying in the park
3. Encourage people to pick up litter in the park
4. Involve more groups in maintenance while continuing to solicit volunteers from our database and the community
5. Investigate digitizing the memory scrapbook
6. File a Town permit for installing a portable toilet in the gravel parking lot on Pond Lane
7. Ask the Town to plant an additional tree at playground
8. Investigate concrete pavers with holes for a durable but permeable path surface

**Next meeting:** 7 p.m. Sunday, February 5, 2012, 32 Hamilton Road #402, Arlington, MA.

Respectfully submitted,      Elizabeth Karpati (secretary pro tem)