



NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

APRIL 16, 2019

7:00 PM

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES
 - a. March Minutes
- IV. STAFF REPORTS
 - a. Arborist Report
 - b. Environmental Programs
- V. COMMITTEE REPORTS
 - a. Programs
 - b. Communications
 - c. Budget
- VI. NEXT MEETING DATE
- VII. ADJOURNMENT

Alpharetta Natural Resources Commission

Meeting Minutes - March 19, 2019

Call to Order

A meeting of the Alpharetta Natural Resources Commission was held at City Hall on March 19, 2019. Attendees: Deb Zemlock (Chair), Sandra Kinney, Geri Chapple, Cat Fisher, Ben Manley, Kate Tunison, Terry Porter (Staff), and Amanda Musilli (Staff).

Approval of Minutes

February 2019 Meeting Minutes were accepted unanimously by the Commission. A change has been made to a line under Committee Reports > Events > Tree Sale - "KT, DZ, and SC will lead this event". The line should read "KT, DZ, and SC will coordinate this event."

Staff Reports

- ***Arborist Report***
 - No report
- ***Environmental Programs***
 - Events
 - Vegetable Garden event on 3/20 is at capacity; GC volunteered to help
 - Fragrant Garden event on 3/27 at Public Works is at 78/80 sign-ups; DZ, AW, and AM volunteered to help.
 - Water Festival 5K and Fun Run has approximately 780 sign-ups
 - Pollinator event has been added to the event schedule on 6/8 at the Mansell House.

- The Atlanta Audubon Society was recently awarded a grant from the Georgia Ornithological Society's (GOS) Bill Terrell Avian Conservation Grants fund to implement bird-friendly habitat restoration at Big Creek Greenway in Alpharetta. Grant funding from GOS will be combined with funding from Patagonia Atlanta to allow Atlanta Audubon to restore approximately ten acres of important habitat along a stretch of the Greenway. Atlanta Audubon is partnering with the City of Alpharetta and the Ed Isakson/Alpharetta Family YMCA to complete this work in approximately 6 acres of land north of the YMCA to just north of the ropes course between the path and the creek. The funding will also assist in the planting of native plants and educational courses. As part of the restoration process, the privet will be left there to decay after being cut to help with erosion concerns. DZ asked about signage; AM explained that Parks and Rec is using Audubon's past projects as an example of how to post signage.

- BM asked why Audubon has taken an interest in the Big Creek Greenway; TP explained that the Big Creek Greenway has proved to be very important greenspace for resident and migratory birds in Fulton County as documented through birding surveys. The focus of this restoration project will be to create bird-friendly habitat by removing invasive and exotic plant species such as Chinese privet and oriental bittersweet, and installing native plants as appropriate that will assist resident and migratory birds to use the area as nesting, foraging, and stopover habitat. Birds help spread the privet seed. DZ asked if the clearing of the privet will reduce food for certain birds; TP explained that privet out competes the native vegetation. Birds eat a variety of food sources and there is a lot of food sources available along the greenway. Restoration of what would normally be expected to grow there will create more diverse habitat and an increase in the wildlife attracted. It won't happen overnight but the project is expected to have a very positive result.

- **Committee Reports**

- **Events**

- Great American Clean-up
 - Very successful - two dumpsters full of trash and debris; volunteers included Boy Scouts, Young Men's Service League, and neighbors from the surrounding subdivisions.
- Arbor Day at Cogburn Park
 - Had 60 volunteers from MA Center, Alpharetta United Methodist Church, Roswell residents, and local neighbors from the surrounding subdivisions.
 - There is an issue with children hanging on trees and breaking branches; suggested that signage be created to prevent damage to newly planted trees.
 - DZ suggested that next year DS, WE, and NH could all discuss different topics on trees as part of a series of Arbor Day events.
 - TP suggested that next year's planting should be done at Wills Park to complement the stream buffer project; WE suggested replacing turf grass along the stream in Wills Park with water-loving plants to help with erosion.
- Pollinator Workshop
 - The target audience for the event are homeowners that would like to attract monarchs to their yard; KT talked to Ellen Hunnicutt of Georgia Native Plant Society and the event is set for Saturday, June 8th from 10:00 AM - 11:15 AM; the event will start with a presentation at the Mansell House followed by a tour of the Old Rucker Road Farm to see native pollinators.
 - Volunteers needed
 - TP asked about parking; AM said there is parking available on the side of the road leading up to the Old Rucker Road Farm, but no formal lot; discussed hiring a shuttle to reduce traffic and parking congestion at Farm.
- Podcasts
 - GC asked if the City had the equipment to record; KT said that Appen media has a recording studio; SC suggested that GC check with Gwinnett Tech to see if there is a studio there.
 - BM asked if we would create and host the podcast, or be featured on an existing podcast; AM discussed the option of being featured on Appen's Made in Alpharetta podcast and that she would provide GC with the contact information for the host.
 - Episode ideas include recycling (TP), conversation with WE (GC), conversation with the Mayor (GC), birds (DZ), privet cleanup (KT), littering (GC), wildlife in your backyard (SC), yard certification (DZ), why BCG floods (CF).
- Lowe Lane Update
 - The structures on the property are being demolished; DZ contacted the property owner to discuss demolition and recycling and was given answers including appliances can't be used due to liability; paint cans were not recycled, but 5-gallon buckets are still on the property.

- **Communications**
 - No updates
 - CF to send logo used for the tablecloth covers to NRC for review.
- **Budget**
 - BM asked if money for the Pollinator Event will come out of this year's budget.
 - CF suggested the use of excess funds to purchase branded tent and swag for the volunteers like long-sleeve branded shirts; Boy Scout Ryan suggested purchasing pop sockets and phone wallets; CF will investigate pricing for all items.
- **Educator Farm / Pollinator Garden**
 - AM asked about funding to replace the sign at the Pollinator Garden; the sign was not waterproof and is now damaged.
 - TP suggested that AM connect with her to explore options she has available.
 - Richard Lebovitz suggested adding bloom times to sign.
 - Food Forum was successful; great community engagement.
 - The event also helped raise the profile of City to Foodwell; Foodwell will be making a decision at the end of April on a \$150,000 investment that could go towards the Old Rucker Road Farm.
 - Need to raise money for the fence; working to develop a community agriculture program to raise funds from members.

New Business

- **Mid-Month Meeting**
 - DZ suggested a mid-month meeting; CF suggested it being on the phone to help with scheduling issues.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, April 16, 2019, at City Hall.

Alpharetta Natural Resources Commission
Public meeting April 16, 2019

Environmental Programs Coordinator Report – Terry Porter

Past Public Offerings

- 3/16 Alpharetta Arbor Day Celebration and Tree Planting at Cogburn Road Park
- 3/20 The Basics of Vegetable Gardening Workshop
- 3/23 The 7th Annual Water Drop Dash 5K and Water Festival
 Chattahoochee Nature Center - 5K Run/Walk and Kids' Fun Run/Walk
- 3/27 The Fragrant Garden Workshop

Upcoming Public Offerings

- 4/18 Earth Day Festival at Sanctuary Park
- 4/27 Computer and Electronics Recycling Collection
- 4/27 Community Shredding Event
- 5/1 Gardening Myths Workshop
- 5/2 Recycling – Taste of Alpharetta
- 5/7 Northern Children's Water Festival