

Landscape Stewardship Committee Meeting
Minutes of March 5, 2014

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm at the Gillette residence (206 GHR). Present were: Hayden McCann (presiding), Pat Gillette, Pat White, Bill Olson, Cathy Kennedy, Marc Silberman (note taker), and Dylan Duhr (Prima Management).

New voting member Pat White has assumed the place of John Schimmelmann, who has resigned from the LSC.

Minutes of the February 5, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved.

Two residents – Bonnie Broderick and Susan Sweeney – have agreed to work on the ad-hoc “tree inventory” committee and its mission to begin preparation for the expected emerald ash borer invasion, but they cannot begin their task until ca. mid-April. If others wish to join Hayden on the ad-hoc committee and begin earlier, they are welcome to contact her. Approximately 40% of the trees in Highland Woods are potentially endangered by this insect invasion.

Both Hayden and Dylan have spoken with city and county foresters concerning the emerald ash borer (EAB). Residents are encouraged to check both the city and county websites, which are well-constructed and have important information and updates about the progression in Dane County of this devastating invasive insect. See:

<http://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/services/forestry/pests/eab/>
<https://www.countyofdane.com/lwrp/parks/eab.aspx>

Residents need to be aware of firewood hazards; the LSC recommends that the spring newsletter include a strongly worded reminder not to purchase any non-local firewood (i.e., from further than 12 miles away) because this is one of the prime means for the EAB to migrate.

Hayden solicited bids from two vendors (Avant Gardening, Good Oak) about costs for professional pruning of shrubs and small trees in Highland Woods. Both came in around \$6000/year, much higher than the current allocation for Alpine’s “pruning” services. Dylan will confirm the 2014 budget allocation for pruning, and then Hayden will request from both vendors to rebid based on that amount.

A small ad-hoc committee will do a walk-around in the Highland Wood property before the HWCA board meeting on March 25 in order to ascertain the remaining storm damage to trees and stumps still unaddressed during last year. Marc and Hayden hope to spearhead this before March 17, if the snow cover has receded sufficiently.

The first LSC volunteer workday is set for Sat., April 5, 9-12 noon (rain date = April 12), meet at GTC cul-de-sac. Marc and Pat G. have agreed to be team captains on April 5. Focus activities include weeding the rain garden, cleaning up the common area at the confluence of GHR/GTC/GTR where the new Siberian spruce was planted and the common grassy area in front of 229 GHR, and garlic mustard plucking on both sides of the GTR entrance (adjacent to OMR behind 102/104 GHR and behind 101 GHR).

The LSC encourages residents to “adopt” once again a clean-up area with neighbors during the summer. The six areas that need attention in summer 2014 include:

Glen Hollow entrance (the swamp); 2 guest parking areas on GHR; GTR rock wall near the curve; the GTC cul-de-sac island and rock wall; GTC entry island; GTR entrance.

So far Pat G., Hayden M., Cathy K., Marie B., Pat. W., and Joan P. have volunteered but we need about 2-3 people per area (i.e., 12+ volunteers). Dylan will send out a message requesting residents to choose an area they would like to work on and to volunteer. This is light labor at one’s own pace and appreciated by everyone in Highland Woods.

The LSC will organize volunteer waterers once again for summer 2014 (with token reimbursement for water charges), in case we have dry weather. These include 5 key areas: GHR entrance (new replacements for the dead arbor vitae planted by Good Oak last summer), Good Oak demonstration garden, GTR rock wall (newly planted shrub last year near the curve), GTC entry island (new crab apple tree planted); newly planted Siberian spruce on GHR corner. The LSC recommends that a message be included in the spring newsletter to the effect that ALL residents should water around their homes if the summer turns out to be a dry one. We do not have a watering “service” or common area water spigots, and the minor cost of watering the residents’ adjacent common area is not prohibitive for individual owners.

Dylan requested bids for spraying the garlic mustard carpets behind 102/104 GTR and near the entrance of GTR (behind and adjacent to 101 GTR). He will present them at the March 25 HWCA board meeting with a recommendation to budget ca. \$700 for Good Oaks to do the spraying as soon as possible in this season.

Hayden is exploring a grant proposal of \$1000 to the City of Madison for the planting of 20 trees along our OMR perimeter that would be supported by funding available to the city from American Transmission Co. (power line provider). We would have to provide the volunteer labor.

Bill Olson summarized briefly the Old Middleton Slope project, for which the first assessment is due on April 1. The Board is waiting for additional information from city/county engineers about an alternate drainage method to augment or replace the aqua boxes suggested in the bid. It is expected that the project will move forward but possibly with a begin date slightly later than had been anticipated.

The next LSC meeting is scheduled for Wedn., April 2, 7 pm, at the Kennedy residence (226 GHR). NOTE: the spring “walk-through” with Dylan will take place immediately preceding the meeting at 5:30 pm, begin at the GTC cul-de-sac.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.