

Event Summary, Foothills Park Pollinator Garden Project

Prepared by Thomas Newman, Chair, Pequannock Environmental Commission

Event: #1 - Site Preparation at Foothills Park, Detention Basin #1
Date: October 2, 2022
Time: 1pm-4pm

Volunteers: 7 adults, 12 students

1. Environmental Commission
[3 adults]
 - a. Tom Newman, Chair
 - b. Tom Andrea, Secretary
 - c. Spencer Andrea, Alternate Member
2. Pequannock High School, Future Business Leaders of America
[1 adult, 7 students]
 - a. Al Wehrhahn, Faculty Advisor
 - b. 7 students
3. Pequannock High School, Interact Club
[1 adult, 3 students]
 - a. Jennifer Staropoli, Faculty Advisor to Interact
 - b. 3 students
4. Pequannock High School, Environmental Club
[2 members]
 - a. 2 current student (and 1 already counted as FBLA)
 - b. 1 former member, now graduated
5. Pequannock Community Garden
[2 adults]
 - a. Loretta Terraneo, Membership Coordinator
 - b. Julie Lastname, Member



Weather: Although the forecast had been calling for rain before and during the event, the rain did not materialize during the afternoon. Conditions remained cloudy, with temperatures in the upper 50s to low 60s.

Tasks Completed:

1. **Terraced four recently planted trees/shrubs with eroded, exposed root balls.** This involved using rocks the team collected from the area to form an anchor, then filling in with gravel, soil, and compost to protect the root ball and hopefully mitigate future erosion. (Photos of subjects from east to west)



Figure 1a. Serviceberry

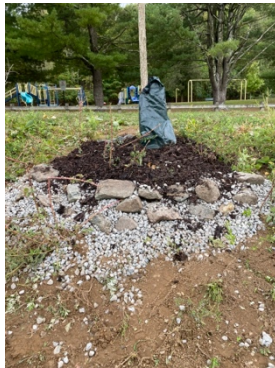


Figure 1b. Swamp Oak



Figure 1c. Viburnum



Figure 1d. Serviceberry

2. **Shored up eroded gully on basin's bank slope.** This involved filling in an eroded gully with some rocks and gravel to try to stabilize the bank slope.



Figure 2a. Gravel-filled Gully

3. **Painted a water-level gauge on the concrete overflow structure.** This will enable better tracking of water-level frequencies in the basin, which in turn will enable better matching of subjects to planting locations along the bank slope.



Figure 3a. Overflow Box



Figure 3b. Level Gauge Detail

4. **Installed two “beds” using 8-inch-deep landscape edging in heavy mugwort areas.**
In lieu of applying herbicide over essentially the entire project site, this alternate plan involves using 60 ft of 8”-deep landscape edging to create two ~40 sq. ft beds. Because mugwort rhizomes are typically shallower than 8”, the hope is that applying herbicide in these beds will create two “mugwort-free” zones in which subjects planted spring 2023 can get a foothold to better compete with surrounding mugwort. Once the plants are established, the edging can be removed and the process repeated in another location.



Figure 4a. Bed#1



Figure 4b. Bed#2 (right side)

5. **Collected seeds, removed bindweed, & photographed unknown plants for identification.** Bindweed observed on two shrubs was snipped at the root and foliage removed. Where appropriate, other invasive subjects were pulled. Suspected invasive plants were photographed for later identification and control. Wildflower seeds were collected and labeled for later sowing in suitable areas of the site.



Figure 4. Volunteers removing bindweed and collecting seeds.

6. **Assembled and installed Trex bench.** The Trex bench that the Environmental Commission earned from recycling plastic film at the Library was assembled and installed near the Swamp Oak (a location previously discussed with DPW). The bench feet were screwed to two 8-ft “landscape timbers,” each anchored by driving three 20”-long pieces of 1/2” fiberglass rebar into the ground through holes drilled through the timbers. To discourage theft, we used screws with a less-common star-shaped driver, and angled the rebars to make it more difficult to lift the timbers. In the spring, we plan to place an informational kiosk on the entrance side of the bench, with “Pequannock’s Pollinator Garden” signage on the kiosk’s entrance side, and infographics (e.g., a map of the park/basin and plantings, ecological info, future plans, etc.) on the bench side.



Figure 6a. Bench Location



Figure 5b. Rear (Wood Chips to be Installed)



Figure 6c. Sitting on Bench

Tasks still to be completed/redone:

Item 4 (new beds). The landscape edging was not installed deep enough and was not backfilled properly. In order for the edging to keep mugwort roots from intruding into the bed, the edging must reach from just above the ground surface to its full depth of 8 inches, and then the edging must be “locked” into place with soil.

Item 6 (bench installation). There was insufficient time to properly level out the ground around the bench and fill in with a thick layer of wood chips.

A tentative date of Sunday Oct 9 is being considered for a follow-up event to complete the above tasks.

Future Events:

Fall 2022. A potential fall-planting event is being considered. The idea would be to take the opportunity to sow wildflower seeds and/or set potted plants that would benefit from fall planting in areas that will not be in or near possible herbicide application.

Early Spring 2023. A potential early spring event is being considered to assemble and install the informational kiosk at the site, adjacent to the bench just installed. This work may require assistance/oversight of the Township DPW.

April 2023. A major planting event is being planned during this time. During this event, live plants will be planted, compost added, mulch covered, and watered both inside the two new beds and elsewhere throughout the pollinator garden, according to the planting plan now being finalized.

May 2023. An event is being planned to officially unveil the pollinator garden to the public. Township officials will be invited and Environmental Commission members will lead informational tours to show the public the work done to date as well as plans for future work and the vision for the completed park renovations.