

Event Summary, Foothills Park Pollinator Garden Project

Prepared by Thomas Newman, Chair, Pequannock Environmental Commission

Event: #2 - Site Preparation at Foothills Park, Detention Basin #1

Date: October 23, 2022

Time: 11:30am-2:00pm

Volunteers: 2 adults, 8 students

1. Environmental Commission
[1 adult]
a. Tom Newman, Chair
2. Pequannock High School,
Future Business Leaders of America
[1 adult, 8 students]
a. Al Wehrhahn, Faculty Advisor
b. 8 students
3. Pequannock High School,
Environmental Club
[4 students, all also FBLA members]



Weather: Conditions were cloudy, with temperatures around 60. Last rain was approximately 0.27 inches on October 17. Detention pond had no pool.

Tasks Completed:

1. **Checked status of previously installed terraces and fixes to eroded areas.** Inspection showed that the work done during Event #1 on October 2 was holding up well, despite the area having received a total of nearly 4 inches of rain, including one 3-inch storm.

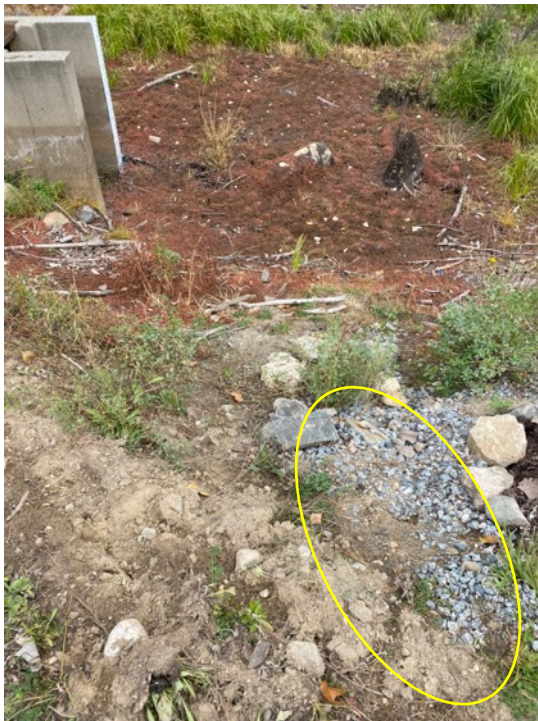


Figure 1a. Previously Fixed Eroded Gully: Still Good.



Figure 1b. Previously Installed Terraces: Still Good.

2. **Finished installation of Trex Bench.** This task involved leveling out the ground around the bench, filling in with several inches of wood chips, and removing a part of a metal bracket that was protruding from one of the legs (see finished result in photo below).



Figure 2a. Completed bench.



Figure 2b. Leg bracket before trim.



Figure 2c. Trimmed bracket.

3. **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. During Event#1, the edging was not buried deeply enough to protect against the rhizomes. During this event, the edging was re-done properly. In addition, gravel and/or wood chips were placed around the upper borders of each bed to further suppress future mugwort plants. In addition, in one bed, a shallow spot was filled in with compost.



Figure 3a. Volunteers working on beds.



Figure 3b. Completed beds.

4. **Began filling in a heavy mugwort area with a deep layer of wood chips.** In the hopes of suppressing an area with heavy mugwort, volunteers spread a deep layer of wood chips. During future events, more wood chips will be spread to suppress mugwort over a larger area.



Figure 4. Deep layer of wood chips place on part of heavy mugwort area.

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 April. 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.