

Fenwick Island Environmental Committee (FIEC) Meeting

April, 14, 2016

Committee Members Present: Mary Ellen Langan, Buzz Henefin, Betsy Henefin, Alex Daly, Colleen Wilson, Virginia Childers-Davidson, Roy Williams, David Van Kavelaar

Town Representatives Present: Merritt Burke, Linda Poole

Committee Members Absent: Patty Breger, Pat Schuchman

Guests: Taylor Pridgeon, Pam Pridgeon

Call to Order: Mary Ellen called the meeting to order at 2:32 and the Pledge of Allegiance was spoken by all.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made, and seconded, to approve the March 3, 2016 Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes. As there were no objections, corrections, or deletions to the document, the 3/3/16 minutes were unanimously approved.

Earth Day Event: Colleen presented an itinerary for the 1st Annual Fenwick Island Earth Day Event being held on Friday, April 22, 2016 from 9:00 to 11:30. This town clean-up day was announced in the Spring newsletter, on the town hall's electronic billboard, and may even be announced in the regional Coastal Point publication providing Laura Walter, a staff writer, can be contacted in time. On the day of the event, Betsy will hostess the coffee and donuts portion of the program that will be held at the Town Hall where tables and displays will have available information on the town's current pine wilt problem and also some information on the Center for Inland Bays. Tumblers will also be given away. At around 9:30, the volunteers will be given gloves and trash bags and proceed to their designated area for clean-up. Buzz has broken the incorporated township into fifteen parcels where trash will be removed from town roadways and adjacent rights of way. Volunteers are not accessing private property for trash removal. After each group has finished the clean-up in their area, they will return to the Town Hall. When all volunteers have returned, door prize sign-up, drawing, and distribution will commence. Several local businesses have contributed gifts or gift cards for the clean-up participants for which the FIEC is extremely grateful. A local business may even contribute a metal detector for the door prize drawing. After the event, Mary Ellen will present the specifics of our Earth Day undertaking to the Town Council and letters of appreciation will be prepared and sent.

Pine Wilt Disease: There was a well written presentation of the pine wilt problem in the winter edition of the Fenwick Island News Letter and a follow up on the disease will be in the spring edition. Mary Ellen is attempting to contact Laura Walter who, as mentioned above, writes for the Coastal Point publication. The FIEC wishes to disseminate this information via the print media so regional residents may be alerted to the destructive nature of pine wilt. Mary Ellen, along with Katie Maglio who is a graduate student at Salisbury State University, photographed over twenty-four dead pine trees on the ocean side of Coastal Highway and these diseased trees have been stored by location with global position satellite (GPS) technology. There are other dead trees on the bay side but not yet quantified. Ms. Maglio may be *hired* to further delineate areas where the pine wilt problem persists.

It has been determined that the pine wilt disease can spread to nearby trees. These diseased trees should be removed so as not to endanger healthy pines (Roy Williams removed two dead trees at his residence). A letter to home owners of parcels where pine wilt disease is prevalent will be prepared. In the letter, the disease will be briefly summarized,

the disease's danger to surrounding pines presented, and a strong recommendation for tree removal advised. It was suggested that, on the letter's envelope, a stamp or seal (perhaps "Action Required") be affixed. Mary Ellen stated, from a discussion with councilperson Bill Weistling that an ordinance can be presented to the Town Council that would require home owners to have diseased trees removed. Before any ordinance is considered, however, the FIEC wants to see if residents will police this problem themselves without a directive from town government being necessary.

In the event of tree removal, it was brought up that the Arbor Day Foundation would give trees to residents but they would be extremely small. Also, could trees be replaced at discount prices from the East Coast Nursery if the volume of purchase was relatively high? Merritt stated that the town could file for a grant for tree replacement where half the cost is undertaken by the State.

Old Business: The Arbor Day Foundation has recognized, for the tenth year in a row, the Town of Fenwick Island as a "Tree City".

New Business: Alex brought up a concern about the bayside canals potentially silting up and plans to obtain some base line canal depths. Merritt stated dredging is an expensive undertaking. Merritt also mentioned that there is about \$2M available for dredging and beach replenishment but no apparent assistance available from the Federal or State governments. This amount of available funding is insufficient to address future needs and this issue, which could require home owner assessments, will be brought up at the April 27th council meeting.

The American Lung Association signs are now up on the life guard stands.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) is to prepare the beach and walk ways for the up-coming season. Although no time table to initiate this work is established, DNREC will have things ready for Memorial Day week end starting May 27.

The next FIEC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 12, at 2:30.

Having no further business to discuss, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously agreed upon to adjourn the proceedings at 3:47.

Respectfully submitted,

David Van Kavelaar