

# SOUTH PORTLAND PEST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

9/10/18 (5-6:30 PM) – COMMUNITY CENTER

## ATTENDEES

Residents / Taxpayers	MBPC-Licensed Professionals	Agronomist
Cathy Chapman Bret LeBleu Ann Morrill (Chair)	Justin Nichols	Jesse O'Brien
City Staff	Guests	
Fred Dillon (notes) Addie Halligan		

**1. Review, revise or approve 8/6/18 meeting (ATTACHMENT)**

Approved as written

**2. Yerxa Park project status update (Fred)**

a. ScapeGoats, ensuing media coverage and promotion as demonstration project

- Fred & Addie described project and how well-received it was by virtually all members of the public including the City Council and Manager; most PMAC members were able to visit project area. 8 goats defoliated approx. ¼ acre of dense Japanese Knotweed and other invasive plants in a period of about 6 days. Staff hopes to have the goats return in the spring but an ordinance amendment may be required to do so (see below).

b. Permitting requirements

- Permit by Rule (PBR) application submitted to DEP and approval expected based on site visit and conversations with DEP staff.
- Local shoreland zoning requirements normally involve sending a copy of the PBR application to Code Enforcement Officer for review and approval but in this case an ordinance amendment may be needed because the “keeping of farm-type animals” is prohibited by the City’s ordinance. Staff will be meeting with CEO and Community Planner in Oct to discuss next steps.

c. CDBG grant requirements

- There was some confusion initially about which regulations applied: Maine’s Natural Resources Protection Act or the National Policy Environmental Act. Under normal circumstances state NRPA rules apply (and require only PBR application) but because federal HUD/CDBG funds are being used for the project NEPA rules – which are much more involved – also apply. Staff is working with CDBG project manager to ensure we’re in compliance with federal requirements.

d. Next steps

i. Consider covering area this fall (community volunteer day)

- Potential vendors of cover material include: Tractor Supply, RH Harris, Griffin Greenhouse Supply, Paris Farmers Union
- Concerns with making sure plastic liner is removed; also concerns that wood chips could create anaerobic conditions and poison the soil if placed under plastic liner
- Consider soil testing before/after treatment
- Consider trying a couple different covering methods including nonwoven fabric, carpet, clear plastic (for solarization), cardboard, and just wood chips (that come from “clean” source – i.e., not carrying winter moth)
- Goal is to manage knotweed / invasives without the use of ANY synthetics

ii. Interpretive signage (Addie)

- Info on sign will include project goals and how they relate to the pesticide ordinance, concept plan, steps we’ve taken thus far, before/after photos (including goats), and request for community input; also will integrate with GHSP website.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- Inform folks about how the restoration project relates to what they can do in their own yards
- Include steps that we’re doing along with visuals and concept plan
- Consider community event to place covering(s) over affected area (MCC, Rotary Club, SPLT, PSP, etc.)
- Consider leaving dead trees (assuming there are no public safety considerations)

**3. E&O Campaign**

a. Review PMAC tabling events

- i. Knightville Festival on 8/17: won’t be able to provide PMAC presence

- ii. Art in the Park on 8/11: Cathy talked to 18 people and will help with improvements to table display
- b. Bug Light Park Demonstration Project
  - Jesse provided an overview of prominent role that landscaping professionals will play though it's still not clear what Chip Osborne's status / role will be
  - There may be a ribbon cutting ceremony and possibly presentations & speeches
  - MBPC will attend but would like more clarity about what we'd like them to do if they get questions on which products can (or can't) be used (refer questions to PMAC table); they will also be able to address questions about pests
  - Stonyfield may want roundtable for folks to respond to questions
  - Cooperative Extension will be there to talk about soils
  - City will be there to talk about mowing practices
  - Concerns about landscapers and MBPC promotion of synthetics
  - PMAC members who will be there: Cathy, Ann, Jesse, Fred – Jesse recommends being prepared to answer questions about crabgrass; promote cultural practices but be ready to provide info on organic alternatives
- c. Grow Healthy South Portland website will have new "button" for demo projects: Julie will have it placed soon

#### **4. Waiver request updates / public comments on ordinance implementation**

- a. Bartlett Tree 8/30/18 application needs to be re-submitted due to insufficient info
  - Waiver request for synthetics to control magnolia scales: delayed response by City staff after initial submittal of waiver request; need to ensure that we respond promptly to applications (maybe something IT can help with)
  - Julie followed up later that more info was needed on form
  - There are organic alternatives (horticultural oil) and the application didn't meet waiver criteria given availability of non-synthetic methods
  - Ask applicant to describe what other methods have been used and note importance of identifying type of scale and size of tree
- b. Resident question to Julie about pesticide use; she'll follow up this week
  - Important to keep log from for residents who have contacted Julie / City her with questions or concerns about how to manage particular pests

**5. Status of Vacant Arborist Position on PMAC**

- a. Nothing back yet from Lucas Tree; still awaiting replies
  - Question about whether we could use upcoming NOFA training as opportunity to solicit involvement for participation; check with Arborist's Association; try Dirigo Tree; Jesse will check Whitney

**6. Other Considerations?**

- a. Naming Yerxa Park "Yerxa Park": get more info from Parks Dept on status
- b. Federal Farm Bill includes provisions to disallow states from preempting state level ordinances; suggestion to write letter on behalf of City to our Congressional delegation
- c. Question about wood chips: check with tree companies for "clean" chips that come from a clean area (due to concerns with spread of winter moth)
- d. Concerns about using goats for invasive management due to the potential for nitrogen runoff and spreading of resistant seeds in their dung

**7. Adjourn – next meeting Mon. 10/1/18**