

Lakemoor Legacy Park and Garden (LLPG) Planting Plan Subgroup (PPSG) meeting

February 1, 2023

Attendees: Kristin Bianconi; Gina Bond; John Bradley; Fran Thomforde [absent: Gloria Lewis]

LLPG was reviewed by section. The discussion that pertained to plans and actions to be taken is summarized below:

Raingarden: The shrubs are in position and are growing. With few exceptions, the shrubs are “within bounds” of their intended space. In the south end the single beautyberry (*Callicarpa*) will require yearly spring pruning to reduce its size, whereas the spicebush (*Lindera*) and smooth witherrod (*Viburnum*) require only selective pruning to retain their current size and shape. In the north end the sweetspire (*Itea*), summersweet (*Clethra*), Virginia spirea, winterberry hollies (*Ilex*), red chokeberry (*Aronia*), swamp azaleas (*R. viscosum*), and witchhazels (*Hamamelis*) appear to be doing well, as do the smooth hydrangeas and bottlebrush buckeyes (*Aesculus*) near to the isthmus of the Raingarden. The hydrangeas may warrant some removal of dead stems later in the spring. The perennials warrant removal of dead foliage before they initiate spring growth, eg in February. The wire supports may be removed for this dead-heading, and clumps evaluated for possible reduction. The brush should be deposited in the compost area across the road at the mouth of the Haynes’ driveway. Leaf duff should be left in place. If beebalms (*Monarda*) from the south rim above the Rock Garden have survived, they can be transplanted to open areas in the Raingarden.

South Entrance: There are open areas for addition of sun and heat-tolerant perennials, particularly at the west end of the South Entrance, but also directly in front of the boulders. Possibilities include echinacea, rudbeckia, and achillea (yarrow). The area has some butterflyweed (*Asclepias*), rudbeckia, and single specimens of *Echinacea pallida* and *Helianthus ‘Maximillian’* – assuming they have survived the winter – and a front edging with creeping Jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*). The *Itea* and *Fothergilla* appear to be surviving. The *Clematis armandii* and *Gelsemium sempervirens* (Carolina jessamine) have been severely winter-damaged and we will have to watch for their recovery. The sundrops (*Oenothera*), rudbeckia, echinacea (purple and white), *Veronica ‘Georgia Blue’* are expected to survive and recover, but the blanketflower (*Gaillardia*) in front of the boulders are uncertain and additional/replacement planting may be necessary. We discussed addition of small/short spring flowering bulbs such as daffodils, crocus and grape hyacinth (*Muscari*) – recognizing that these are not native but rather “naturalized”.

East Entrance: The dogwoods and periwinkle (*Vinca minor*) appear to be doing well, although the most recently planted section of periwinkle at the south end may warrant some plugging of bare areas later in the spring. The deutzias at the south end and the St. John’s wort (*Hypericum ‘Brigadoon’*) and rosemary ‘Hill’s Hardy’ bordering the stone steps have winter damage and we will need to observe them for recovery. The hypericum may be divided and plugged betwixt the rosemaries this spring. The ‘Nelly R Stevens’ hollies flanking the top of the stone steps were discussed and it was agreed to not initiate pruning of them at this time. We agreed that about five horizontal-growing junipers can be planted

about 3' above the east bench this spring. Gina will see if the plants can be sourced in the early spring so they can be planted well before onset of hot dry weather.

East Woodland: It was agreed that the near dead nandinas and mahonias can be removed (John will do this), as can English ivy. The wintercreeper will be retained as a groundcover. We will observe what spaces are available for planting of spring ephemerals and/or bulbs. This area is rocky and dries out early in the summer, which limits our options. Crocus is a possibility (again, “naturalized” but not native). The deciduous azaleas appear to be doing well, although the *R. canescens* ‘Candy Stripe’ is unlikely to bloom this spring. They will benefit from further efforts at soil improvement and judicious watering during the summer. This applies to the rhododendron located near the dry stream bed as well.

Fern Garden: The Bracken ferns (not true ferns) have provided a nice backdrop above the exposed boulders, but have spread below the boulders – infringing on the true ferns. It was agreed that they should be removed from below the boulders (Kristin offered to do this). Additional ferns may be added if space is available. We expect the diana, sundrops and veronica behind the north bench will recover. We discussed the Burford holly, and specifically reduction/removal/replacement. This is an open discussion for the PPSG.

Rock Garden: The sedums have done well, and require mostly timely weeding to remove unwanted interlopers. The steep, sunny, dry area above the exposed rocks is an opportunity to add taller succulent specimens, replacing the beebalms. The rim is being stabilized by a line of burning bushes (*Euonymus alata*), which will require intermittent attention to keep them to the desired shape and size.

West Woodland: The trees and shrubs are established or establishing well. We agreed to keep the possumhaw viburnums at their current size and form, and considered whether another variety, eg blackhaw viburnum, might perform better in the shaded conditions. Kristin may have some for us to try planting in the East Woodland. The deciduous azaleas and rhododendrons and the mountain laurel will require soil improvement and timely watering to ensure that they thrive. We have planted numerous spring ephemerals in this area, and will have to observe how they perform this spring. If possible, we should add white and red trilliums.

Meadow: Overall we would like to keep this area natural and low maintenance. If its appearance is too “shaggy” we can consider shielding view of it from the road with some medium-height shrubs, eg ‘Grey Owl’ junipers. The current plan is to “mow” it once a year in the late winter/early spring. This has been done by John Haynes for 2023.

Meadow Edge: The small trees, eg pawpaw (*Asimina*) and dogwoods, are doing well and do not require thinning or substantial pruning at this time. The Eastern red cedars bordering the paved path may warrant limbing up if they are encroaching on the walking path. The existing birdbath is “temporary” pending a better and more permanent solution. The plantings around the birdbath stump need to be evaluated regarding their survival and sustainability. We discussed placement of a water feature under the dogwoods near the Gathering Place. The specifics of the water feature remain an open PPSG discussion, but it was reiterated that the open water should be shallow and recirculating to a substantial reservoir to minimize maintenance requirements. The recirculating feature would likely be driven by a solar-panel powered submersible pump.

Gathering Place: The mulch floor is probably good for this year. The perimeter plantings with hosta 'Royal Standard' and hellebores are expected to recover well. However, the *Osmanthus fragrans* are uncertain. Some spring flowering bulbs may be added to the perimeter, particularly those with short foliage and tolerance for shade. We discussed the possibility of adding two more benches that match the two that were installed last year. Kristin will look into whether they are available for purchase at this time. If so, the purchase proposal can be presented to the Garden Club at an upcoming meeting. The white cedar benches can be moved elsewhere.

Signage, etc.: The *Lakemoor Legacy Park and Gardens* sign may be upgraded to something more attractive, and may be relocated. The location options include either side of the South Entrance paved path, at the south side of the East Entrance stone steps, and behind the South Entrance boulders. Fran and Kristin will scout these and other locations. The PPSG can also consider size, design and construction of a new sign. The PPSG is not enamored with the positioning of the pet waste bag dispenser. This was presumably installed by the Lakemoor Hills Homeowners' Association (LHHA). We can propose moving it to LHHA.

Maintenance: It is recognized that LLPG requires some maintenance, and that volunteers must be recruited and assignments agreed. Kristin will evaluate what areas require maintenance, and how the areas and tasks might be divided.