

## Conservation Committee Minutes

June 15, 2015

In attendance: Jan Burkhart, Cheri Calvert, Judy Dauchy, VeeAnn Finnemore, Greg Ware  
Absent: Jane Harris, Scott Huff, Marleah Llewellyn,

### **A) The committee approved its 5/18/15 minutes**

### **B) Backyard Habitat Certification Program report.**

Cheri Calvert reported that she is working on her garden area to achieve the Backyard Habitat Certification offered through the Columbia Land Trust in partnership with the Audubon Society. Her project is going well. She has removed invasive plant species, ameliorated the soil, and is in the process of increasing the number of native plants to help restore native wildlife habitat.

The committee is pleased to let HOA members know that any homeowner with a personal garden area can apply for Backyard Habitat Certification. The Backyard Habitat Certification Program has its own new website. Visit the new site at [www.backyardhabitats.org](http://www.backyardhabitats.org) to learn about and sign up for the program. But briefly, upon receiving your application the Columbia Land Trust will schedule a site visit with a Backyard Habitat Technician to provide technical assistance to help you identify ways to enhance habitat in your yard. Following the visit, the technician will send a personalized Site Report which outlines the steps to certification discussed during your visit. A fee of \$35 is due at your site visit.

In addition you'll receive discounts and incentives for native plants and other materials to help you on your way and a monthly e-newsletter to keep you informed of local events, workshops, plant sales and other great resources.

When your yard meets the criteria, we'll send a certification technician back to give you the Certified Backyard Habitat sign! It generally takes homeowners 3 months to 1 year to get certified.

### **C) Committee Goals**

The committee has, for a period of time (to be determined), divided its membership into three working groups. Each group will tackle one of the committee's three goals listed below. These groups will meet independent of the standing monthly meetings. Each group has a coordinator responsible for organizing meetings. Time during the monthly standing meetings will be allocated for progress reports from the working groups to ensure ongoing alignment and coordination.

The Conservation Committee would be delighted to have additional HOA members participate in developing one or more of the following goals.

#### **Goal 1: Conserve water to reduce both our water bill and landscaping bill.**

Working Group: Jan Burkhart (group coordinator), Scott Huff and Cheri Calvert.

Action: Develop a plan that may include, but not be limited to, strategies and recommendations to:

- reduce the amount of lawn currently being watered and maintained,
- install smart devices controlling watering,
- encourage the installation of low flow devices in units,
- disconnect downspouts that run into the bay and redirect to rain gardens,

#### **Goal 2: Habilitate the Riverhouse shoreline to support and diversify bird and pollinator species inhabitation.**

Working Group: Marleah Llewellyn, Greg Ware, [needs an additional member. \(coordinator tbd\)](#)

Action: Develop a plan that may include, but not be limited to, strategies and recommendations to:

- plant flora that will filter water run off and help remove pesticides and pollutants that degrade water quality and harm aquatic animals,
- plant flora that will encourage and support bird and pollinators – while not obstructing resident’s view of the bay,

**Goal 3: Bring regional and native plant life into our landscape that are resilient to disease, will thrive in existing climate and soil conditions, and will attract birds and pollinators while maintaining or improving on the existing level of aesthetic beauty.**

Working Group: Judy Dauchy (coordinator), Jane Harris, VeeAnn Finnemore.

Action: Develop a plan that may include, but not be limited to, strategies and recommendations to:

- develop right plant right place solutions. This includes locating/relocating plants that have similar needs in proximity to each other.
- an integrated pest management plan that reduces our use of traditional pesticides and herbicides,
- improve soil conditions,
- redesign some planting areas.

#### **D) Green Landscape Contractor**

The Conservation Committee believes that its planning and work would be greatly enriched and accelerated if we were able to work in close collaboration with a landscape company with high knowledge and experience in all areas of conservation. From crossover membership between the Conservation Committee and the Landscape Committee we understand there is interest in exploring such a direction from the Landscape Committee. We recommend the Landscape Committee and Conservation Committee form a small group to research potential green landscape companies and develop a request for proposals to better understand how such a company could help us conserve resources and achieve a more sustainable landscape.

Respectfully submitted,  
Greg Ware

**The next meeting of the Conservation Committee will be on Monday, July 8, 2015, at 7:00 pm in the Pool House. All HOA members are welcome to attend.**