

Friends of Camillus Park Committee Meeting
June 21, 2012 Minutes

Mary Flynn opened the meeting thanking those that handed out hundreds of Friends of Camillus Park flyers to our residents. The purpose of the flyers was to make people aware of the Friends of Camillus Park and to invite our Community to participate in the Revitalization of Camillus Park.

Last month's minutes: no changes made.

Suellen Callahan continues to head the T-Shirt drive. T-Shirts are available for \$10. The shirts help raise money for our Community's project and promotes awareness.

Eric Bacon updated the Committee on the New State Grant Procedures. There is a standard application process that is only accepted electronically. This standard application process allows one application to be considered for various grants without having to file multiple applications. Eric has met with people who are aware of what Camillus did with the aqueduct and these key people are aware of our intentions for the park. Given the uniqueness of our park, Eric expects we will qualify for Environmental Protection Funding "EPF".

Some critical criteria needed in order to qualify for the EPF focuses on how this project will address "hot topics" ie: Handicap accessibility, ways to combat/address obesity, and economic development. Eric notes the grant writing will take a creative approach to obtain funding. The Town of Camillus would have to match the grant from NYS- the match can be from donations, supplies/materials, and/or labor. The grant application is due 7/16/12. Eric will continue to work on this process.

The Master Plan for the Camillus Park will demonstrate what our Community wants based on feedback obtained from our residents. Eric is optimistic about the Camillus Park being a very marketable project, and eligible for grant money.

Mary recapped the success and fun everyone had at the Memorial Day Parade. Several people walked in the parade, carrying our Friends of Camillus Park Banner, T Shirts were sold and worn, and Dave Callahan drove his vintage car-all efforts to raise awareness and spark interest in the revitalization of the park.

Mary presented the ESF (Environmental Science Forestry) Executive Summary, this is available online at the Town of Camillus website. She recapping the timeline of the Camillus Park Project. Park Project started November 2011 when the Executive Summary of the Camillus Park Project was presented at two Town Board Meetings.

In January and February 2012 Environmental Science Forestry Faculty and students toured the Forest and several committee members. Graduate students from ESF Forestry Club did onsite inspections of the Forest.

May 2012 Alison Dixon developed our Mission statement which explains who we are and what our intentions are as the Friends of Camillus Park.

There is a five year Master Plan for the revitalization of the Camillus Park. The students of the ESF Forestry Club have made recommendations and detailed analysis of the park, but they are unable to make certified recommendations given their student status.

Eric Bacon commented that in December 1999 the NYS DEC did an assessment of the Forest and this report was given to the ESF students to assist in their analysis.

Mary Flynn reviewed the Executive Summary. Three pressing issues for the Town:

1. Park Boundaries
2. Assessing the Health of the Forest
3. Risk Management of Hazardous Conditions in the park ie: diseased trees, trees at risk of disease or falling.

The Camillus Park is an extremely unique Forest in a residential area. The approximate average age of the Forest is 127 years, with trees ranging in age from 100-167 years old. Total park size 34 acres, with 23 acres of this being forest.

Residents present at the meeting expressed concern about tree boundaries and property lines. Residents were reassured the Park Boundaries will be identified. There is an expected 75 foot buffer planned between private property and the park. Volunteers are asked to help with identifying boundaries given map survey, boundary markers and a GPS system. A survey will need to be done before The ESF Forestry Club is able to continue to help us with this project. A park map was shown identifying original trails, current and potential tree hazards and boundaries.

Other topics to be further discussed: Hours of operations for the proposed splash pad, possible fee for use of splash pad, levels of difficulty for proposed trails, exercise stations, and educational benefits of the forest and how this will be best represented.

The Committee still needs to determine how hazardous trees will be taken down. Ash trees in the forest are at increased risk for disease and these trees will need to be removed. There is a potential for income from these trees which will benefit the park. How these trees will be removed is still to be determined.

Issues and concerns to be further discussed: Park access via walking path on Winding Way, opening up Camillus Park Drive for possible park entrance, Community building, moving park pavilion closer to parking lot.

The target population for the revitalization of Camillus Park is the age group 45 years old and older, focusing on active older adults, but will benefit all age groups in our Community. It was stressed that we care about the health of our environment (the Forest) and the health of our residents.

Eric Bacon acknowledged Mary Flynn's tireless efforts heading the Friends of Camillus Park Committee and Eric also thanked Dave Callahan for his ongoing support of this project.

Obtaining grant money will help to propel this project forward, taking it from conceptual and planning stages to action. Volunteers to join the Committee is encouraged. Friends of Camillus Park is a Community effort. Becoming involved helps to clear up any misunderstandings of what the Friends of Camillus Park is about, and what we are striving to accomplish.

Friends of Camillus Park meeting dates are posted on the Town of Camillus website.

The next meeting: 7/26/12 Thursday 7PM Large Conference Room at Town Hall.

L Gleason