

Landscape and Garden Committee for August 4, 2012 meeting

After many tries to get a convenient meeting date we ended up with five members of our committee and had a very productive meeting on July 18th. There was a long agenda and we began by walking through the property so that we could begin discussions on site.

We looked around at places commanding admiration and concentrated on a few needing attention. We decided that we would, as funds are available, continue to do work on identifying plants and keeping those that are historic and to remove others that are not. We like the idea of replacing a non-historic tree with a peach tree. Beatrix Farrand's favorite fruit was a peach from her own tree and that tree did not survive. We'll do some research to find out if the variety she grew is still available and get a replacement. The rose embankment next to the Terrace Garden will need some weeding out of non-roses and identification of what's left. We hope to find historic roses using the CLR as a guide.

Documentation of the plants in the wildflower and entrance gardens is well underway and Brenda will supply each member of our committee with the results of her meticulous work. As weedy plants are removed many treasures have appeared in the wildflower garden. There will be a small demarcation appropriate to the site to set off the wildflower garden so that visitors don't unwittingly step into a patch of non-blooming treasures.

There is good news on the bittersweet eradication after last fall's spraying. Most of the pest is gone and we'll have another spray applied by the arborist this fall. It will be done after most visitors have gone as happily the timing for greatest effectiveness of the spray coincides with the end of our busy visiting season. During and after spray application visitors must be kept away from the spray area. Other problems, fire ant testing and hogweed eradication are being handled by Lois, Carolyn, and Tom. A opportunistic hogweed has suddenly appeared in a bed adjacent to the Terrace Garden and will be dealt with when the original hogweed site is treated. This is both a toxic and invasive pest and we need to maintain vigilance on this front.

New labels will be added to the wildflower and entrance gardens and they should be like those in the Terrace Garden. We'll look for larger but similar labels for the trees and shrubs. By labeling one plant of each variety we'll avoid the "garden of labels" look when each plant in a garden sports a label.

Bringing back the birdhouses of an earlier time and adding pots of rosemary will bring us closer to the look of Farrand's day.

I think it will serve the committee well to be headed by year-round leadership with a clear definition of the committee's responsibilities.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret P. Bowditch