

Pierce, Steve

From: Jackie Algon [rennipsj@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 03, 2020 4:28 PM
To: Pierce, Steve
Cc: Susan DiLoreto; DiLoreto, Susan; Joe Bear; Conklin, Mike; Cathy Smith; Ross Tartell
Subject: Start of project at west end of Community Garden

Hi Steve,

Hope you are well and surviving these challenging times. I'm writing regarding the project that Parks and Rec approved in January and that the Conservation Commission endorsed in March for Joe Bear and volunteers to install a wildflower meadow at the west side of the Community Gardens in Allen's Meadow. This is an integral component of the Pollinator Pathway and would support not only habitat and nourishment for insects but for the migratory and local birds that use Allen's Meadows as their flyway and nesting sites.

Joe had been asked by Lynne VanderSlice to resolve two issues related to insurance before the project could go forward, and both of those were handled. Norwalk River Watershed Assn. (NRWA) agreed to cover the insurance. The project was then shovel-ready and Joe's friend (who is a police officer and who also has a contractor business) offered to mow the field as soon as the 'green light' permitted.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 quarantine began thereafter, and the project was put 'on hold'. Until recently, that hold did not matter, but now that Spring is here and the Town is beginning to reopen, the timing is of great importance. All of the volunteers working on this outdoor project would be social distancing and taking appropriate actions to stay safe and to protect themselves, each other and the community.

Joe has obtained two grants to manage the expenses of the project. These grant funds will expire if unused this year, and the 'window' for mowing, solarizing and replanting is also getting close to shutting for this year. It's my understanding that some outdoor projects in Town will begin to move forward, and we're hoping that this can be one of those.

As a member of the Conservation Commission and with my community garden plot adjacent to the area to be mowed, may I volunteer to monitor the project if it may start, since I am there every day? That way, your staff might only need oversight periodically and I could report any concerns to whomever you name as the responsible person.

I'm hoping you can bring this request to initiate the project to Lynne's attention and let Joe Bear know the status in whichever way it proceeds. Many thanks in advance for your support of this project and for considering the urgent timing of this request.

-Jackie Algon
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