

Minutes, NGLA Meeting
May 21, 2009

Ecology/Sustainability Panel Discussion

1. Approval of Minutes, Jerry Kreutzer, NGLA president
2. Police Updates by Commander Perkins
Crime is down in general
There have been a few more car thefts
3. Ecology and Sustainability Panelists:
Joel Reich, CSU Extension Service, Horticulture Agent
Ernie Wintergerst, Arborist with the City of Longmont
Ron Shaw, Sustainability Coordinator with the City of Longmont
Laura Lavid, Program Coordinator with Denver Urban Gardens
Paula Fitzgerald, Project Coordinator Parks and Open Space, City of Longmont
4. Watering/Irrigation Systems and Resources
 - There are different levels of watering prices that are on going as well different levels of watering restrictions based on level of drought. Level 1 is no unattended irrigation between 10 and 6, and Level 2 carries mandatory restrictions. Longmont has a good supply of water and it is unlikely to reach Level 2 this year. Longmont has excellent water rights.
 - HOA watering: Irrigation audits can be requested (free for residents, a fee for commercial sites) – part of the Water Conservation Master Plan. Contact the Center for Resource Conservation.
 - There is a Colorado law that exempts homeowners in HOAs from covenants that require a certain type of grass if the new landscaping is environmentally friendlier.
 - Carol O'Meara from CSU Extension Service can do a lawn check for \$70/hour to discuss turf issues and soil/weed management.
5. Drought Resistant Grasses
 - CSU is testing new grasses, which depend on soil, sun and type of landscape
 - Aeration does work by providing air and nutrients to the lawn, especially when top dressed with compost or organic matter. Also mowing high, leaving clippings on grass can be beneficial.
 - Northern Colorado Water Conservation District has demonstration gardens, xeriscaping and different turf species.
 - A short moistening time for an area (set sprinkler for 2-3 minutes) and then a longer period can help with absorption.
 - Sledge can be high in salt, and the free sledge program doesn't exist anymore.
6. Tree Recommendations
 - 80% of tree failure is from the planting process
 - www.dug.org has a list of approved street trees

- Longmont has design standards with approved trees and materials, also prohibited trees
- Ips beetle – attacks spruce trees, good watering practices can help combat infestation
- Some trees on county roads are affected by the magnesium chloride used for icy roads.
- Pine Bark Beetles, the severity in Longmont is low to moderate
- Winter watering of trees is essential and can help prevent stress in trees and prevent infestation or disease
- Transporting firewood can transport beetles – buy local firewood

7. Composting

- Denver Urban Gardens has free composting classes, and community gardens have compost systems
- Denver (and soon Longmont) has a pilot curbside compost pick-up
- DUG and CRC also has classes and information on worm composting – odor free, easy, in your kitchen, cheaper than using the disposal

8. Open Space Update

- 2100 acres of Open Space, 240 acres of conservation easements
- Dry Creek is in the works but may have a minimal beginning– example of how the City’s budget constraints are affecting development of parks and open space
- Prairie Dogs – City does not replant in areas with prairie dogs. The plague comes through every 7 years or so and manages the size of the colonies, then the City revegetates. Don’t let dogs off leash near PD towns, especially since rattlesnakes can be hiding in the holes.

9. Sustainability

- Definition: not compromising future generations’ needs to meet our needs
- Includes water, resource consumption, food production and our resilience to climate change and higher oil prices – social, economic and environmental sustainability
- State is offering solar PV rebates; Ann Livingston is the Boulder county sustainability coordinator and starting a green work force

10. Educational Programs

- Paula – potato project at Roger’s Grove (collecting 50 pounds for OUR Center), Sandstone Ranch visitor center; MESA program at Silver Creek
- Laura – DUG works with 4 schools intensively, grow labs and worm composting, youth farmers market, Master Composting, Master Community Gardener, Delaney Farms
- Ron – Sustainable Harvest Fair focusing on water and energy conservation, this year doing outreach to several groups, grants to work with Downtown Development Authority on energy audits and education business on energy conservation, creating garden council to create community gardens with educational opportunities

- Ernie – Arbor Day, self guided tree tour of Thompson Park, partnering with various volunteer programs including the Russian Olive Tree removal at Golden Ponds, booth at Rhythm on the River
- Joel – Home scale food production classes, master gardening, master food production, farming programs using mentors, Head Start, family and home science, 4-H, and the lease of county lands.

11. Best products for weed and feed – variable, and CSU extension service can help make assessments

12. Ancient cottonwood trees – next to irrigation ditch, what to do about them?

- Needs to establish ownership
- Asses course of action
- Is anything getting damaged or will be damaged?

13. Pollution and companies that pollute or produce suspicious chemicals

- Toxic Release Inventory with the EPA has a database of research of all companies that are required to report the chemicals that are released.
- The state and federal government oversees emissions and provides the control for companies.
- Boulder County Public Health, Environment Health Division can help explain the research found on the TRI website and can guide individuals with complaints or concerns.

14. Staff Updates

- Code Enforcements has been combined with Community and Neighborhood Resources – the NGLA’s input is welcome as the groups continue to coordinate efforts and learn about each other.
- Linda Kopecky is available to hold a Tamales and Talk with your neighborhood or group – 303/651-8637, linda.kopecky@ci.longmont.co.us

Meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Linda Kopecky, Neighborhood Resource Specialist, City of Longmont