

GLENCANNON COMMUNITY PARK CREEK/ WATERSHED GRANT PROJECT REPORT

Dear Neighbors,

As VP Common Area, I was asked by the board to bring you up to date on the Neighborhood Enhancement Program Grant project around the Glencannon Community Park Creek and Watershed for you. Briefly I would like to start from the beginning.

The Glencannon park area had been looked at by and was part of the Fairfax County Watershed Division master plan. It was brought to our attention they were considering building a 3.8 acre retention pond because something needed to be done to protect the creek bed, which is part of the Piney Branch section of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, from future erosion. With all options on the table it was agreed that our best choice was to apply for a NEPP Grant, call Fairfax County to come out and walk the area with us, and implement their suggestions. Input and guidance was received from Fairfax County Watershed Division, Virginia Department of Forestry and other research that was done by the board to make sure the project was carried out in the most effective and productive manner. The input from the various groups all reinforced and aligned with each other.

In brief they suggested planting more native vegetation including trees and shrubs, make a larger no mow zone, keep the dead wood in the creek bed where it did not block water flow and provided habitat for wildlife, cut some of the dead trees ready to fall and just leave the stump, remove invasive plants from areas near the creek and it's tributary and cut down the invasive vines growing on existing trees to protect them from being choked.

My first tasked was to hire someone to cut down the trees in question, and to remove the largest two areas of invasive vines choking out everything in their path. Then, I had the

pleasure of working with a fellow neighbor, Chas Mater, who just graduated from college with a major in forestry (how lucky was I), and together we put a plan in place to get the community involved in planting naïve vegetation to complete the first phase of the project. Fall was in the air but the weather cooperated, and we got a wonderful response from families eager to contribute. Also included were some students needing community hours. Thank you to one and all that came out and helped. You made such a huge difference! Lots of hard work happened that weekend and as a community we got the 45+ seedlings planted in the very rocky ground. We all slept well that night!

We called upon the county again to come out and see what we had accomplished thus far. More suggests were given. Using bio bark around the seedlings was a top recommendation. And in early December with very short notice, the bio-bark was ordered and the community asked to come out to put it around the seedlings. Thank you so much to those who came out at the last minute to make this project happen!

From there a team went out and researched getting a few larger trees as part of the plan and to maximize use of the grant money. A great nursery was found in Loudon County and we were able to get a large number of more mature trees which were planted in December.

The last thing we are looking at doing that Fairfax suggested was putting "live stakes" in one area of the bank of the actual bed of the creek where the erosion is the worst. I am in the process of looking into getting that implemented by the first of March.

This brings us into March. I am asking fellow neighbors to come out one more time to tie up the project. We will have to plant the live steaks and clean up a few areas we don't have money to hire someone to do. While the leaves are still off the trees and things haven't begun

to grow we invasive vines that need to be removed that need to be removed, most of which are grape and honey suckle. I have penciled in March 9th as a community clean-up day for the park. As always I encourage every household to participate; especially households who haven't had the opportunity to come out and be a part of this great project. Come join help those who have already worked so hard in assuring our park remains a beautiful place to stroll through.

Assuring the environmental integrity of the park and creek bed is an important and continuing project. I will keep a sharp eye on things over the next year and ask anyone who has a concern about the new seedlings or recently planted trees to feel free to contact me. I know we will lose a few seedlings but I hope most of them take this growing season. We have been blessed with a mild winter with lots of rain. It was the perfect year to implement such a project.

THANK YOU AGAIN TO EVERYONE INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT!

Dennise Davis, VP Common Area