

Connecticut Invasive Plants Council
February 13, 2007

DRAFT Minutes

Present:

Members: Dave Goodwin, Les Mehrhoff, Philip Prelli, Nancy Murray (representing Ed Parker), Tom McGowan, Lou Magnarelli, David Sutherland

Others: Donna Ellis

Lou Magnarelli called the meeting to order at 2:09.

January Minutes: Phil Prelli moved approval of the January minutes; Dave Goodwin seconded. They were approved.

Proposed Bills: Lou Magnarelli reported on the Environment Committee's Public Hearing on Bills 282 and 6865. He noted that Representative Shawn Johnston, from Thompson, presented testimony on Bill 6865 that he had introduced and that would establish an aquatic invasive plants program at DEP to be funded by the sale of stickers on watercraft. Magnarelli stated that he had discussed the Council's recommendations as part of his presentation on the Agriculture Experiment Station. He noted that Bill 282 had two additional sponsors, Representatives Hurlburt and Alberts.

The group discussed various means of generating support for Bill 282, and the importance of grassroots contact with legislators was stressed. Prelli said that he would talk with the two Co-Chairs of the Conservation and Development Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee.

Magnarelli noted that Representative Fritz had written a letter to US Representative DeLauro requesting federal funding to assist the Council. Nancy Murray reported that the staff who worked on the Aquatic Nuisance Species Plan are still waiting for final approval of the plan, which would make the DEP eligible for federal funds for some of the recommended work.

Screening of Imported Plants: Magnarelli distributed comments of the American Nursery and Landscape Association concerning screening by the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and explained the current quarantine procedures.

Porcelainberry: Les Mehrhoff explained why he feels Porcelainberry meets all of the criteria for invasiveness, and noted there have been 21 reports of it in Connecticut, mostly along the coast. There was agreement that we would not consider trying to ban it this year. Magnarelli suggested that we ask Bob Heffernan about the industry's view of the plant at the March meeting so that we can further discuss it at our April meeting.

Rosa rugosa: Mehrhoff stated that he felt there was no sense in banning this plant, because it is only a problem in coastal areas, but that we do need a significant education effort about its threat to those areas.

Plant Guides: Magnarelli passed around guides to invasive plants from other states. The group discussed whether Connecticut should have its own guide or could use ones from other nearby states.

Dave Goodwin left the meeting at 3:37.

Fact Sheet on Proper Disposal of Invasive Plants: Magnarelli distributed comments by an employee of the Agriculture Experiment Station expressing concerns about previous draft information that had been distributed about the proper disposal of invasive plants. Mehrhoff and Murray are preparing a new version of a fact sheet on disposal for distribution at the upcoming flower show.

Mehrhoft noted that we may need to wait for staffing before widely distributing a fact sheet because we might have a problem currently with fielding calls asking for follow-up information. He said it would be valuable to get something out to the industry before the growing season. Prelli reported that he had met with pet store industry representatives, who said that they would be willing to distribute fact sheets.

Mehrhoft moved adjournment at 3:53; McGowan seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting of the Council will be March 13th at 2:00 at the DEP.