

Connecticut Invasive Plants Council
October 9, 2007

DRAFT Minutes

Present:

Members: Dave Goodwin, Nancy Murray (representing Ed Parker), Mary Musgrave; Paul Larson, Les Mehrhoff, Lou Magnarelli, David Sutherland, Phil Prelli

Others: Donna Ellis, Karen Weeks

Lou Magnarelli called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm.

Minutes – Sutherland moved approval of the April minutes, which never were approved; Prelli seconded. They were approved. Goodwin moved approval of the September minutes, Larson seconded; they were approved as drafted.

Public Inquiry – Magnarelli distributed a letter from Sal Gilbertie who owns an herb garden and who is concerned about some of the plants that are banned for sale. Magnarelli has invited him to our November meeting.

Annual Report – Magnarelli distributed components of the draft Annual Report, a list of members, and the draft letter to the Chairs of the General Assembly's Environment Committee. He would like to have the report approved at the November meeting. He urged members to email him with any suggestions for edits.

The group agreed that it would vote on whether to change the status of Porcelain berry from "potentially invasive" to "invasive" and whether to recommend that it be banned for sale.

Prelli suggested that in the Annual Report and elsewhere we refer to the relevant statutes instead of the Public Act numbers when referencing the invasive plant laws.

Updated Lists of Plants – Mehrhoff said that he would send out a list of possible changes to the List of Invasive and Potentially Invasive Plants for consideration at the November meeting.

Legislative Proposals – Sutherland asked whether the council felt that the phrase "with an effective date prior to ____" is necessary in Section 1 (d) of the legislative language, which reads:

[(c)] (d) From [June 26, 2003] July 1st, 2008, until October 1, 20[05] 13, no municipality shall adopt any ordinance with an effective date prior to October 1, 2011, regarding the retail sale or purchase of any invasive plant.

Most members felt that it is unnecessary. Sutherland said that he would try to determine the origin of that phrase.

Nominations Committee – Sutherland reported that the Nominating Committee is discussing candidates and intends to email the council with nominee name(s) at least a week before the November meeting so that a vote can be taken at that meeting, with the new Chair taking office in January.

Mehrhoff suggested that we set term limits for the Chair and rotate it. Prelli noted that under our enabling statute we probably can't formally establish term limits but that we could informally make an agreement.

Prelli suggested that we need to have a clear sense of DEP's commitment since it is the agency most affected by the council's work. Mehrhoff suggested that Murray be DEP's official designee.

Musgrave suggested that we invite the DEP Commissioner to a meeting to update her on the council's activities. Murray and Parker will talk with McCarthy about inviting her.

DEP Position - Murray reported that they are crafting the job description, hopes to distribute it before our next meeting. DEP is seeing the IPC as being an advisory group for the position. Nancy noted that one charge for this person will be to assess what other groups and agencies are doing.

Other Business – Magnarelli announced that he has sent a letter to the Attorney General on behalf of the CAES requesting an opinion regarding the cultivar issue as it relates to enforcement of plant sale bans.

Ellis suggested that the CNLA Work Day might want to focus same effort on invasive plant control projects and requested that the CNLA list serve include notices of CIPWG needs for volunteers to assist with invasive plant control projects

Mehrhoff noted that the recent CNLA trade nursery newsletter quoted or referred to him as saying that he was proposing that Silver banner grass be banned. He wants to clarify that that was not his suggestion – he is not even sure it should be on the invasive list. He wants to learn more. Larson reported that the association has heard back from two nurseries which do raise and sell it.

Prelli suggested that the job description for the Coordinator position include specified interactions with the Dept of Ag and the CAES.

Mehrhoff stressed that we should keep a distinction between early detection and rapid response.

Larson and CNLA have discussed a new version of the educational poster on banned plants and they would like to help produce a better, color, poster with larger pictures.

Magnarelli reported that the CAES held a workshop for property owners in Voluntown last week to educate them on invasive plant identification. They have a staff person available to do more workshops.

Magnarelli passed around a report from the USDA regarding invasive plant management.

Mehrhoff moved adjournment; Prelli seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 3:35.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 13th at 2:00 at the CAES lab in Windsor.