

Deer Management Task Force Meeting notes – November 12, 2009.

After Vanessa Sandom welcomed all the volunteers of the new deer management task force, all identified themselves and their role within the township. Bill Cane and Denise Moser from the Zoning Board were nominated and voted as the co-chairs. We all wished Bill a speedy recovery.

Mike VanClef reviewed the power-point presentation prepared on behalf of the Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space that was presented at the committee meeting on September 14, 2009. Discussion followed.

- Is the deer population too high for our square mileage? Different opinions depending on your point of view.
- It was decided by the group not to hire companies such as White Buffalo at this time to kill the deer but to deal with the issue using local hunters.
- Need to educate residents on plantings that deer do not like.
- Pocket deer – how to deal with deer in developed areas such as Brandon Farms. Farmers/hunters in the group noted that in order for the deer to be dealt with in these circumstances, the deer would need to be driven to an area where hunting is permitted. This would require coordinating land/home owners to allow this process. Also noted was that “pocket” deer will always be an issue.
- Increase in Lyme’s disease – only reported if blood test given and shows positive so under-reporting is probable. Is there a public health emergency?
- Farmers in the group discussed their large losses and the planting of “sacrificial” crops.
- Deer crash numbers are too high.
- Use of birth control currently being tested in Morris County.
- Audience members asked about hunting on the Greenway land throughout the township and were told that it needs to be opened to all residents of NJ as it was funded partially with state funds.

Several ideas were given:

Develop baselines such as current deer population, accident reports, and financial loss via farmers, landscaping, and accidents.

Surveys – suggested one for farmers and one for “other”. It was decided to do one survey.

Get deer count using Fish & Wildlife methodology of counting eyes at night in while driving specific routes in March

Have the hunters in the group detail issues/suggestions from their point of view such as the current rules farmers have about 1 or 2 doe before a buck.

Intertwine education in all we do – example – Plant education, Lyme’s disease issue

Hunters for the hungry – investigate feasibility in regards to cost of butchering and want of venison.

It was mentioned that we have a small budget to work with which will be shared as soon as we get the details. Our next meeting will be scheduled for the end of January at which time the groups will present their results, if any.

Groups:

Survey Development:

Francesca Calderone Steichen

Jim Gambino

Phil Robbins

Hunters:

Drew Haftl

Bob Ongradi

Barry Taylor

Dave VanSelous

Finance:

Carol Kleis

Mort Rosenthal

Denise Moser

Education:

Carol Kleis