The Town of Fenwick Island

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ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
October 14, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
Town Hall

Members Present: Jim Simpson, Colleen Wilson, Liz Lear, Lois Twilley.

Members Present Via Zoom: Susan Brennan.

Members Absent: Beth Chapman, Suzanne Smith, Cindy Kerns, Pam Pridgeon, Stu Rubenstein.

Other Participants: Kathy Grab, Lynn Zimmers.

Call to Order/ Flag Salute

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m.

1. Approval of Minutes of September 9, 2026.

   Motion: Postponed, no quorum.

2. Pollinator Park.
   a. Workday, Friday, October 23rd at 9:00 a.m.
      - The Barefoot Gardeners will assist with seasonal maintenance on October 23, including pruning, removing dead plants, aerating soil, and preparing the park for winter. Volunteers are welcome.
   b. Plants for 2027.
      - Committee members recently worked with Gregg Tepper in the park.
      - The Committee discussed adding native plants, including plants featured in Tepper's children's book, *Mirabelle Visits the Garden*, and will revisit selections closer to spring.
3. Faucett Okie Family Nature Preserve.
   a. Gregg Tepper Consultation.
      - Gregg Tepper, a horticulturalist and honorary member of the Barefoot Gardeners, praised the preserve as an example of original coastal forest and offered suggestions for improving its layout, pathways, and plantings.
      - Plants purchased through a Center for the Inland Bays grant were affected by summer drought and have been replaced. The Committee discussed planting along the rear fence and the need for additional soil. Susan Brennan will ask Public Works whether soil is available.
      - The Committee discussed gradually removing invasive bamboo, including its roots.

b. Workdays October 8th and 9th.
   - Additional planting remains to be completed; volunteers should contact Colleen Wilson.

c. Barefoot Gardeners Collaboration.
   - The Barefoot Gardeners will be assisting with future work.

d. Halloween in the Woods; Friday, October 30th 7-9 p.m.
   - Planning continued for the October 30 event, including a storyteller, pumpkin-carving contest, treats, hot cider, pumpkin muffins, decorations, and music. Lois Twilley will contact Ron Blake as a potential storyteller because Tripp Colonel is unavailable.
   - The event notice should clarify that participants should bring a carved pumpkin for the contest. Paint, markers, and stencils may be available for those wishing to decorate without carving. Volunteers are welcome to help with setup and decorations beginning around noon.
   - The Committee discussed trail lighting, volunteers stationed at key locations, a possible parking-space closure near the preserve, and arrangements for power and refreshments.
   - Potential contest prizes included a business gift card or a basket of Fenwick Island items. Members also suggested a donation box or QR code to support the parks.

4. Highway Plantings.
   a. Jim Simpson/Barefoot Gardeners.
      - Jim Simpson presented a preliminary beautification concept developed with landscape architect Bob Avery and design assistance from Amy Tingle. Presentations: FI Beautification Proposal FI Preliminary Timeline
      - The proposal focuses on native grasses and perennials at the Town's north and south entrances and along the highway medians. The goals are to improve the Town's appearance and identity, support pollinators and birds, reduce mowing and watering, and create a more inviting streetscape.
      - A phased approach could begin with the entrances as a pilot and expand after evaluating one growing season.
      - The Committee discussed plant height, visibility, seasonal cleanup, drought tolerance, and the need for ongoing watering and maintenance. Members emphasized that the existing plantings along the sidewalks near Our Harvest and Seaside Country Store also need attention and should remain a priority.
      - Potential funding sources include donations, business sponsorships, and grants. The Committee discussed whether the Barefoot Gardeners could serve as a nonprofit partner and what separate accounting or administrative arrangements might be required. The Town's ability to administer donations was also raised.
      - DelDOT approval is a key first step because the highway and medians are under its jurisdiction. Colleen Wilson will follow up on the appropriate contact through Mayor Natalie Magdeburger. The Committee also discussed researching other communities' planting and watering approaches and encouraging local

businesses to help maintain plantings near their properties. No final plan or funding arrangement was approved. Jim Simpson will follow up with Natalie Magdeburger.

5. 2026-2027 Planning for Activities.
   a. Beach Grass Plantings.
      - The Committee will again ask DNREC to consider Fenwick Island for a beach-grass planting in March 2027, particularly in areas affected by the recent nor'easter.
   b. Earth Day.
      - Plans include the annual Bay-to-Beach litter cleanup and possibly an additional activity at the Faucett-Okie Family Nature Preserve.
   c. Summer Soirée.
      - The event is tentatively planned for the last weekend of June 2027.
   d. Storytime in the Park.
      - The Committee hopes to continue this activity in collaboration with the Barefoot Gardeners and local authors or other guest readers.
      - Members were encouraged to suggest additional activities.
6. Old Business
   a. None.
7. New Business
   a. None.
8. Public Participation
   a. None.
9. Date of Next Meeting
   a. Town Hall Closed November 11th.
      - The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 12, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.
10. Adjournment

    Motion: Adjourn at 10:21 a.m.

    Moved by: Jim Simpson

    Seconded by: Lois Twilley

    Abstained: None.

    Motion Carried.