

## Fort Street Pollinator Habitat Report September 2024

On September 3, I met with Marietta Main Street director Jen Tinkler and city development director Geoff Schenkel to discuss the future of the habitat and the other two Harmar pollinator sites. We are in agreement that the site needs to be redesigned to simplify maintenance as there are not sufficient volunteers to control the large native species that have overtaken many of the shorter plants in the original design.

The basic design is likely to be something like this:

- the steepest part of the slope will be given over to the large species already there;
- shorter plants will be located at the top and bottom of the slope;
- if funding can be obtained, there will be a second paved path/terrace between the shrub border and the main habitat;
- edging will be installed around the memorial garden to minimize bermuda grass intrusion from the habitat and the city-maintained grassy area along Fort Street.

To begin the redesign process, volunteers will be removing excess vegetation and digging out plants to be relocated on October 12. The Noon Lions will be sending workers on this date, but more volunteers would be helpful. Volunteers are needed to overwinter smaller plants.

Jen Tinkler raised the possibility that starting over with a reasonably blank slate might be necessary, given the overgrowth that has taken place this year. We agreed to mark plants to be left in place or rescued with hazard ribbon and announce that interested gardeners or landscape restorers may dig out other plants for their own use. Those to be left in place will include the shrubs, Cody Henderhan's donated plants, the Girl Scouts' apple tree, donations to the memorial garden, and currently thriving natives in appropriate locations. I will be marking the plants sometime in the next week or two. Main Street is exploring the possibility of grant funding to improve the space.

A new coordinating committee needs to be formed due to life changes on the the parts of the original members. Dylan Holdren has agreed to chair the committee overseeing the Fort Street site but would appreciate a co-chair. I have put out a call to the Master Naturalists and will be meeting with the Master Gardeners on September 10 seeking stewardship committee members for both the pollinator habitat and the Harmar Bridge Butterfly Garden. And of course, Green Sanctuary representation on the committee would be welcome.

### Approval Needed

The CITF fund currently holds \$867.63. At last week's meeting, Jen, Geoff, and I discussed the possibility of creating a pollinator habitat fund under Marietta Main Street. I am requesting that some or all of the CITF fund be transferred to Main Street to serve as part of the local match for grant applications (realizing that monies will be needed to relocate the solar bench as well). The rationale for the request is that if there are no Green Sanctuary members on the habitat coordinating committee, the habitat has become more a Main Street project than a GS one.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rebecca Phillips