

Landscape Maintenance Tips for the Wild Rose Meadow Neighborhood

As shared in a letter from Lisa dated May 26, 2011 and updated August 4, 2011

Wetlands Management: Two recent questions that have arisen need to be answered:

1. Is it okay to weed whack around the wetland, and if so, where? *Answer: Robin Kucklick recommends weed whacking twice a year to prevent alder trees from taking hold—once in the spring (May) and once in the Fall (October).*
2. Is it okay to fish in the pond? *Answer: From an ecological standpoint, we don't know. Jeanne Beck is doing some research to understand the risks (or benefits) of limited fishing. Until she completes that research, I recommend that there be a no fishing policy (including no catch & release).*

What happens on the property when it rains a lot? The Wild Rose Meadow neighborhood was designed so that no more rainwater leaves the property today (with the houses and roads in place) than left the property in 1990 (when it was a mix of pasture and woodland). Many features of the neighborhood are part of the stormwater management design, including:

1. pervious asphalt in the East Cluster (water percolates through pores in the pavement, rather than running off),
2. pervious gravel paths through each cluster,
3. bio-filtration swales planted with water loving plants along the road and through the Oberon Meadow property,
4. enhanced wetland plantings at the south end of the property,
5. a 60,000 gallon underground “tank” under the community garden, and
6. a cistern to control the flow of water off the property at the northwest corner (near Jamie and Fabrice’s house).

This system requires care and maintenance. I know that Jim McKeon has agreed to facilitate maintenance activities. This is an important role and I think it is helpful for each resident of the neighborhood (adults and kids) to understand the importance of maintaining this system. There are daily and annual habits that will help the system function at its best, such as:

1. **Minimize the number of times you drive a vehicle on the gravel paths** to access your home. The paths were designed to enable occasional vehicle access (such as moving in and out or for the delivery of an appliance or a load of chips or manure), but frequent vehicle trips will cause compaction, reducing the ability of rainwater to penetrate through the path, an increasing the instances of puddles.
2. **Vacuum the pervious asphalt as necessary.** (If the pores of the pavement get too clogged with dirt or needles, then the rainwater can't percolate through to the ground, below.) This may need to be done once a year, or every two to three years. OPAL intends to do it this summer, which we hope will be an opportunity for us all to learn. Jeanne will work with you to schedule the timing.
3. **Annually inspect sediment levels in the detention tank,** and, when necessary, contract to have sediment removed from the tank. This is not likely to be necessary for many years.
4. **Care for the wetland plants and pond.** To thrive, the wetlands will need to remain free of invasive plants, and free of a lot of human activity. This is a place to enjoy by looking as you pass by on the bridge and path, but not to be in it (except for occasional maintenance). Our hope is that critters will thrive in the wetlands, which is more likely if we humans keep our distance.