



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
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## Minutes 03/11/2008

**VISION 2020 ENVIRONMENT TASK GROUP**  
**MARCH 11, 2008 MEETING**

**SPY POND COMMITTEE**  
**Town Hall Annex, First Floor**

**In attendance:** Francis Callahan, Frances Cameron, Bill Eykamp, Jacob Friis, Joey Glushko, Deborah Goldsmith, Jane Howard, Elizabeth Karpati, Dick Terry; Rachel Calabro.

**Facilitator:** Jacob Friis     **Minutes:** Elizabeth Karpati

**Next meetings:** 7:30 p.m. Wed, April 9 & Tues, May 13, Town Hall Annex, First Floor

### **Business Meeting:**

- The **minutes** of the previous meeting were accepted.
- **Fertilizer Flyers** are ready. Dick Terry has distributors for all areas; he handed out the flyers for distributors present at the meeting.
- The Finance Committee has unanimously approved the **waterbodies** warrant article, including the request for \$15,000.
- Jacob reported that Steve Ricci is trying to set up a meeting with MassHighway about the **sandbar**.
- **Goose eggs:** The Town has obtained a permit to addle them again this year. We have some volunteers; Geesepeace is planning additional training sessions.

A graduate student who is doing a documentary on Spy Pond wants to film the distribution of fertilizer flyers.

### **Rain Gardens** (Presentation by Rachel Calabro, Mass. Riverways Program):

- Rachel briefly presented the concept of a watershed and the elements of a healthy river system, which include water quality and quantity, sediment balance, flow regime, complexity of habitat (“Good habitat is messy”), and connectivity,
- Rain gardens are designed to capture runoff, which can be 30% of the rain that falls on an urban area. (Other ways to reduce runoff include pervious pavement, saving trees, and loosening compacted soil, e.g. aerating a lawn.)
- A rain garden is a depression made in an already low area, e.g. near the bottom of a sloping lawn, with the soil beneath it made porous enough by adding sand or gravel so that water collecting in the depression drains in 48 hours.
- Downspouts can be extended to end in a rain garden, which can handle runoff from a roof about three times its size.
- Many plants that like moisture but don’t like constantly wet feet can be grown in a rain garden.
- A rain garden that replaces a piece of a lawn is of double benefit because watering lawns can use up 30% to 60% of potable water in a community, and a lawnmower used for an hour can pollute as much as a car driven 350 miles.
- Mosquitoes are not a concern because a rain garden drains faster than their larvae can develop.
- Rachel supplied committee members with information sheets on creating a rain garden and on plants that would thrive in it.