

**VISION 2020 ENVIRONMENT TASK GROUP**  
**JUNE 3, 2014 Social - Notes**

**SPY POND COMMITTEE**  
**At Brad Barber's**

**In attendance:** Brad Barber, Bill Eykamp, Nancy Flynn, Jane and Pete Howard, Elizabeth Karpati, Derek Kenney, Irene MacKinnon, Mary and John McCann, Mary Morris, Harriet and Bob Noyes, Agnes O'Donnell, Alan and Luana Preston, Stroker Rogovin, Wendy Seltzer, Kathy Sullivan, Dick Terry.      **Facilitator:** Brad Barber      **Minutes:** Elizabeth Karpati

**2014 meetings:** 7:30 p.m. Tues. Aug. 5, Sept. 2, *Sept.* 30, Nov. 4 (moved to Oct. 28), Dec. 2.  
Town Hall Annex, first floor.

- This was our “summer break social,” with a much larger attendance than the monthly business meetings. It began with a barbecue, which was followed by a brief review of the history of efforts to protect and improve Spy Pond. No real business was transacted and the minutes of the previous meeting were not reviewed.
- In the 1950s, after ice harvesting had ended and fire destroyed the last ice house, the pond was choked with weeds to the point of being hazardous for boating. Nancy Flynn was involved in starting a Spy Pond Association and petitioned to have the pond cleaned up, which was done with herbicides. For safety reasons a horsepower restriction for boats was passed. For many years Eva Balazs gave swimming lessons for area children.
  - Documents from the history of this association were on display. These will be given to the Arlington Historical Society.
- In the 1990s Vision 2020 was started and its Spy Pond Committee was formed, replacing the Association which had become inactive. Some highlights of the committee's work:
  - Shanahan study – an expert review of some previous studies, resulting in recommendations for improving water quality in the pond.
  - A state grant to implement these recommendations, including installation of leaching catchbasins and water treatment (after research by the committee) with alum and a weed killer harmless to animal life.
  - Annual distribution of flyers to households throughout the watershed, asking people to use low- or no-phosphorus fertilizer to minimize runoff that feeds water weeds.
  - Getting Town Meeting to adopt goals for Spy Pond and to establish a water bodies fund in which money can be carried over from one fiscal year to the next so that weeds can be treated when it is most effective, and to make annual appropriations to this fund.
  - “Trails Day” (now 10 years old), an annual work day to clean up and improve the path along the southern edge of the pond, including building steps, with help from the Appalachian Mountain Club, to fishing spots to minimize erosion of the slope, and Steve Ricci's by now almost successful campaign to eliminate poison ivy from the area.
  - Working with MassHighway to get a replacement for the deteriorating fence which keeps debris from clogging the pond's outflow pipe (to be done soon).
  - Repeated, though so far unsuccessful, efforts to get the state to remove the sandbar built up by the huge Rt. 2 storm drain which empties into the pond.
  - Goose control by oiling the eggs, now done by trained volunteers from the committee.
  - Control of phragmites which had begun to spread seriously around parts of the pond; privately funded through a fund-raising campaign by the committee. =====