

**Draft Minutes of the Resilient Hartford**  
**Clifford Park Food Forest Design Workshop #2**  
**July 21, 2021**

A Resilient Hartford workshop was held on Wednesday, July 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in Room 2 of the Hartford Town Hall at 171 Bridge Street, White River Junction. The meeting was also accessible remotely via Zoom and several people participated that way. Chair Kye Cochran called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

**Resilient Hartford Members Present:** Chair Kye Cochran.

**Resilient Hartford Liaisons Present:** Jon Bouton, Conservation Commission.

**Staff Present:** Matt Osborn, Town Planner.

**Others Present:** Laura Brooks, Ruth Fleishman, Jesse Marksohn and consultants Cat Buxton and Karen Ganey.

**Discussion of Tree Species:** Horticulturalist Jesse Markson was present to discuss his recommendations for trees for the Food Forest. He noted that he seeks species that create the most food with the least effort.

Jesse recommends: Chestnuts, Hazel, Heartnut or Bitternut Hickory: for hardy, flowering in June, high starch content, good carbohydrate stable.

Moss barder - coldest Chinese Type

Jenny, Kinsel, (he can send list)

Yellow Bud Hickory - could outproduce olives per acre. 75-80% fat, highest fat content of any North American nut (olive is 11-30% fat). Thin shell/husk that is easy to remove as easy as cracking it on our teeth. One tree can produce up to 100 gallons! Low hanging fruit for a perennial stable fruit and is easy to grow. He can connect us to the best trees he's found. Mix of grafted and selected seed is most important.

Improved genetics means annual bearing, consistent staple crops that have thin shell or easy cracking or easy processing ability that are also nutrient dense and native. Tannins cause it to be bitter, but tannins are water soluble so you can slow cook them and it cooks off the bitter taste.

There are yellow bud hickories 10 feet from the water in the park between Norwich and Hanover. They can tolerate many different soil needs.

Sandy loam is good for chestnuts and is also good ph for chestnuts and hazel.

**Chestnuts -**

Don't get grafted trees. Get select seedlings, (Jesse can give us names)

**Hazels -**

If trying to do a living fence go with seedlings from improved parents.

- Get layered clones because they are not as true to parent and you can't just graft them and it takes longer to get food.

**Heartnut -**

Mutation of a japanese walnuts. They are easier to crack.

Can plant seedlings and if it is not a good progeny it can be drafted from the top with other varieties.

### **Persimmon -**

Weedy trees - you don't need to do much to them and they will still produce fruit. Significantly tastier than many fruits we can grow here. They graft easily. Downingtown middle, McKenzie Middle, Prock and Meter are all zone 4 hardy. A mix of seedlings and grafted trees.

A big range of phenology - early fruiting variety although there is a value to having mid to late fruiting varieties like deer magnet. Having a succession of food it can be delicious!

Best is grown in 1 year seedling air bed

Discussion: What about mycorrhizae ? Do we need to bring this in? Bringing local indigenous polyculture is the easiest most effective route.

How many trees do you need for pollination? Case by case but usually a small handful. Chestnuts are not self-fruitful. Even if they can be, they will be more successful with males around.

### **Burr Oak -**

Zone 5 hardy, low tannin, riparian zone success

### **Pawpaws -**

Hardy, fruitful in the shade, easy to graft and propagate.

### **Gooseberries and other ribes spp. -**

Medicinal and nutritious . Can lose up to 60 % shade cover and not drop in production

### **Linden -**

Delicious leaves, medicinal flowers, cut and have mid seasonal greens.

Design Ideas: Big trees by the river. Alley cropping works well in this context - undulating rows following the riparian area intermixing peaches and bitter nuts that will ripen as the peaches die out.

- Mulberries are also a great alley cropping tree. You can't compare with improved genetics that is more money up front, but if you plant with high quality trees, you're becoming a germplasm reforesting the agricultural lands around us, becoming food forest.
- Illinois Everbearing will produce for 100 years.
- Where is the best source for the genetics? He is starting a new sight in Northfield, MA.

Discussion: Jon Bouton presented a map that show the riparian area. He noted that the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources recommends a 100' buffer zone from the riverbank.

**Flood Regulations:** Cat Buxton noted that Matt Osborn heard back from the State Regional Floodplain Manager that the project is not exempt from Flood Regulations and that whatever we add to the park (soil/compost/woodchips) we must remove an equal amount. Cat stated that for the Lyman Point Park Rain Garden Project, she worked with engineer Anne Kynor on the application process which was approved. Cat offered to contact Anne about assisting on the application for the Food Forest. She thinks that since the project will result in greater flood resilience, approval for the project will be granted with the assistance of an engineer. Cat noted that we could do a one-time till and add compost and microbial teas to help build the soil without adding volume. With the sheet mulching we are also adding living roots in the soil to help hold it in place.

**Next Workshop:** It was agreed to hold another design workshop on Wednesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>. Karen Ganey suggested meeting in person. Others agreed.

**Adjournment:** Kye Cochran thanked everyone for attending. The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.