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MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Joe Herzenberg, Chair
Merritt Pasture Access Committee *B.W. for J.H.*

SUBJECT: Revised Merritt Pasture Vegetation and Maintenance Plan

DATE: January 24, 2002

The Committee met on January 24, 2002 and voted unanimously to recommend that the Council adopt a revised Vegetation and Maintenance Plan for the Merritt Pasture.

The Committee believes that the plan should address the following vegetation and maintenance issues:

ZONE MANAGEMENT OF THE MERRITT PASTURE

The Committee supports the concept of implementing a zone-based land management and mowing plan that would allow passive recreation and plant diversity. The Committee recommends that seven zones be established over the property, each of which would have a different management goal and mowing schedule.

Tree Removal from the Fordham Boulevard Right of Way:

The Committee recommends that trees be cleared on an as needed basis to preserve the views into the property.

Western Interior: This 10 acre (+/-) zone should be mowed once each in the spring and fall in order to promote passive recreation. In unusually wet years a third mowing may be necessary. Existing trees and new pockets of trees will be allowed to grow.

Milkweed Area: This area would be mowed once per year, in the spring, in order to promote growth of Milkweed plants. Milkweed is an essential plant for Monarch butterflies.

Central and Eastern Interior: Diversity of plant and animal life would be emphasized within the 10 – 15 acres (+/-) of this zone. Initially, some of the land would be cleared, grubbed and seeded. The area would be mowed once per year in order to keep woody plants from growing too large. The mowing schedule would vary from year to year in order to promote diversity of plant species. Passive recreation would be possible some of the year. At other times the site vegetation on the site would be too dense to allow recreational uses of the property.

Removal of Invasive Species: Town forces would use machines to clear large areas of honeysuckle and multiflora rose. Clearing would be required every 3-5 years. Volunteer groups would be allowed to remove non-native species of plants throughout the entire property.

Forest Restoration: Trees would be allowed to naturally regenerate on the eastern property line, in the southeast portion of the site and adjacent to Morgan Creek. A forested buffer of at least 130 feet would be maintained from the edge of the creek bank

Perimeter Trail: The existing trail would be mowed as frequently as needed to keep it walkable and widened from its 2-3 foot width to a width of 8-10 feet.

POND AND DAM MAINTENANCE

Trees would be removed as needed from the dam.

GATE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

The maintenance access gate and fence would be repaired as needed. A gate suitable for pedestrians should be installed adjacent to the existing maintenance access gate.