

**SOUTH PORTLAND PEST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES
5/4/20 (5-6:30 PM) – ZOOM MEETING**

ATTENDEES

Residents / Taxpayers	MBPC-Licensed Professionals	Agronomist
Andrew Capelluti Cathy Chapman Linden Thigpen	Justin Nichols Todd Robbins (absent)	Jesse O'Brien (Chair)
City Staff	Guests	
Fred Dillon (notes)		

1. 4/6/20 meeting notes inadvertently lost or deleted during or shortly after Zoom videoconference

- No action needed

2. Consider PMAC letter of support for LD 2083 (ATTACHMENT 1)

- Brought up in the last legislature just before COVID-19 crisis; no action since then
- Sponsors would like support letters
- Would reclassify neonics as prohibited or limited
 - Prohibition for landscape gardening by certified applicators
 - Limited use for landscape gardening by certified applicators if MBPC determines limited use is necessary
 - Annual review to specify allowable neonic product uses in terms of timing, location, quantities, target plant and insect species and application methods
- Not clear if homeowners cannot use under any circumstances or if/how retail sales affected
- Fred will check with Julie on submitting letter on behalf of City
- Question about whether PMAC can/should support it
 - Don't believe we have in the past though previous Chair Ann Morrill may have submitted support letter as a private citizen for rejection of bill(s) to preempt local pesticide ordinances

3. Review recent waiver request & inquiry (ATTACHMENT 2)

- Waiver request for 32 Crestview was denied because ordinance language is very restrictive (can't do preemptive treatment with prohibited pesticides nor broadcast applications)
- Applicant didn't try other methods and didn't meet preconditions for public health/safety and invasive plant threats
- Unlike performance turf, the ordinance really doesn't provide any flexibility to use synthetic pesticides to address grubs on residential lawns
 - Consider ordinance amendment or just accept that grubs will be collateral damage
 - It's really an issue of soil and turf health and not necessarily location specific (they don't necessarily spread from adjacent areas); infestations are haphazard
- There are 7 different species of white grubs all with different habits
 - Need to set and monitor traps to identify adults

4. Presentation on alternative grub treatment methods by Jesse O'Brien

- Nematodes are the most numerous multicellular animal in the world
- Only a few nematodes are parasitic - emerging science
- Use nematodes for control of white grubs: Hb nematodes work really well in lab conditions but not so well in the field
- Nematodes will suck organs out of the grubs to kill them
- Leading scientist for turf applications (ref to slides)
 - Need to be applied to turf surface and picked up by the grubs – it's hard to get them
 - Best to spray on cloudy day
 - Sort of like the Goldilocks syndrome – everything's got to be just right
- Not sure about their relative effectiveness, especially after an outbreak
- It all depends on how "effective" and "success" are defined
 - Nematodes can reduce extent of damage but may also require reduced expectations for perfect lawn (i.e., weed and pest-free vividly green monoculture)
- Professional applicators resistant to use nematodes because of uncertainty
- Need to use priority shipping – 2 days max; if they don't come with an ice pack then they're probably not as viable
- Possible to increase effectiveness by combining nematodes with organic methods
 - Milky spore is only specific to Japanese beetle
 - GrubGone effectiveness is iffy
 - Have to treat preemptively (with allowable substance)
 - Core aeration helps
 - Adult trapping helps
 - Skunk damage: can rake it and replant it

- Can have infestation one year and then they're gone so not chronic problem
 - Might be helpful to educate residents about what to expect
 - Maybe also consider centipedes but need to research
- Ref to Scarborough where nematodes and GrubGone were used (Osborne Organic's methods)
 - Experienced real destruction – not just an aesthetic issue
 - There was no real buildup of grubs to provide an early indication
- If grubs are present then it's too late and "rescue" treatments are needed
 - Theory would be to have someone closely monitoring to determine whether preemptive applications are needed – but it requires time and effort (aka "scouting")
- Should ordinance be amended because grubs are doing so much damage to residential lawns
- Invasive plants are a more significant problem than grubs
- Best way to address grubs is preventative (preemptive)
 - Acelepryn is a preventative treatment (not rescue)
 - There are no products that effectively kill grubs except for rescue treatments using Dylox (highly toxic)
- Are there established scouting thresholds and if so what are they?
- Importance of creating healthy lawn conditions: need more detail on GHSP
 - Provide general and detailed info for folks who want know/learn more
 - GHSP doesn't have much detail: most of the organic experts don't have much to offer
 - UMaine Coop Ext has lots of good info – better to link to existing resources that are already well established
 - Are grubs are one of the primary issues?
 - Only beginning this year for residential lawns
 - Maybe include in GHSP intro that there are always going to be problems (e.g., grubs) and that it's an intermittent problem
 - Then refer to other website(s)
- We should also provide a detailed letter to applicants who have had their waivers denied
- Motion sensitive sprayers are effective: blasts animals when they walk on lawns (though not inexpensive)
- We might want to consider providing a little bit of relief with more flexibility in ordinance to avoid risk of folks being turned off if their lawns get destroyed
 - We've only had 2 waiver requests for grubs submitted and one didn't seem to be a serious request
 - Also 1 inquiry about submitting waiver request for Acelepryn use at Ocean House Condos

- Therefore, up to now grub damage on residential lawns doesn't seem to have been a serious or widespread problem

5. Discuss recommendations in draft 2019 Council report

- Invasive plants recommendations consistent with MNAP recommendations – don't write language and get guidance from MNAP (more discussion below in agenda item 6)
- Performance turf language – support preemptive application to allow Acelepryn; no language yet
 - Allow City staff to apply without PMAC oversight?
 - Require annual report with detail to allow for PMAC consideration – needs to provide sufficient detail so we can make informed judgement
 - Shouldn't have to be reviewed by PMAC each time
 - Revamp waiver process
- Issue of grubs on residential lawns doesn't seem to prevalent enough to warrant ordinance amendment

6. Other agenda items / discussion topics?

- Invasive plant control using glyphosate given its effectiveness (ref to recent scholarly article)
 - People who manage invasive plants really do need to resort to synthetics in certain circumstances
 - Some folks advocate for letting the invasive species settle in and letting the “chips fall where they may”, HOWEVER, the species unique to Maine will be decimated by the invaders
 - Mechanical treatments aren't practical in most cases
 - There's a place for synthetics for invasives but only for certified applicators
 - Make recommendation to City Council to allow for some flexibility in ordinance
 - Confer with Nancy Olmstead / MNAP
 - Ref to Parks Dept 2018 invasive report / map and check with Parks on any plans for invasives management
 - Consider overlaying invasive map with current and planned Open Space areas
 - Invasives are a larger community-wide problem; not just at the individual residential parcel scale
 - Could be cost-prohibitive for individual homeowners to deal with
 - Require homeowners to provide photos
 - Maybe should be more of a concern for public land (ref. to Ft. Williams)
 - Treatment would need to be done in low impact manner; painting / brushing
 - Economic value / ecosystem services basis – big picture impacts to forestry and ag

- Stem injection is really expensive
- Goats are also an option and now allowed by Animal Grazing Ordinance

7. Adjourn

NEXT MEETING: 7/6/20 FROM 5-6:30 PM