

## **Landscape Committee May 2025 Report**

With many thanks to Chuck Taylor and Marty Shecter, the Japanese Hollies behind the Middlesex signs on the Pine Side have all been pruned and shaped nicely. All of the Pine side hollies by the Middlesex signage have been fertilized. We now wait to see if, after the growing season, the plants have developed substantial new growth in order to determine if these fairly old plants will grow back and thrive.

Swale maintenance will occur soon on Errett Road, which will also entail cutting down trees and bushes that are growing in the swales. If trees are growing in the affected swales, there is an orange marking on those trees to indicate that the trees will be removed.

The pollinator gardens along Beach Plum Road have been greening up and showing a lot of color. Earlier this month, we met with a consultant from Inland Bays Garden Center who provided suggestions and advice for maintaining a healthy pollinator garden. One particular issue is the bamboo along Beach Plum near Bayberry, which is insidiously spreading notwithstanding efforts to contain the spread. We will remain vigilant in efforts to keep the stalks from invading the pollinator garden. Christina and JoAnn have been hard at work in these efforts.

The effort is ongoing to provide the Fire Department unfettered access to all the Middlesex roads and homes, and in particular, to the Oceanside area on E. Short that abuts Sea Colony, where the BBVFC has already notified us that their access to the houses on Short is impaired. To that end, the trees along the Sea Colony fence line have been trimmed back substantially. The appearance is not great, and we plan, once BBVFC has given us the go-ahead, to plant something else along that fence line to obscure, to the extent possible, the Sea Colony parking garage.

We are exploring the possibility of using pine bark mulch along Beach Plum Road, and are awaiting an estimate from our landscaper. Pine bark mulch is more expensive than the pine needles that historically have been used, but it contains moisture and weeds better than the pine needles, and, to some, it is more attractive. No decision has been made as of the date of this report.

Property owners should be aware that vines growing on trees in the community are choking off the trees, which will in the long run impair the trees' viability. Residents are encouraged to take efforts to kill off the invasive vines to preserve the trees.

In our continuing efforts to improve the appearance of Beach Plum Road, and as well, to make it safer for pedestrians, cyclists, pets, and cars, we have cut back and cleared out (thanks, Dave Wiecking and Chris Kurtzman) some of the overgrown trees and shrubs that have sprung up on Community property. The mostly-volunteer plants and trees had become straggly and obscured views of the intersections, especially near both Evergreen and Errett Roads. As an interim solution we plan to sow ground cover seed, most probably, buckwheat, and plan for more permanent plantings in the fall.