

## **Council Testimony to the City Council, October 19, 2022**

Last Sunday, October 16, nineteen volunteers worked with Climate Action Coffee to remove non-native invasives from Dorothy's woods. Following instructions from Anna Mische John (aka the City Gardener), we cut, dug, pulled and piled up nine different kinds of plants. Along with Randy Gibson, I coordinated this event. Bruce Sidwel gave a helpful introduction to the history of the area. Randy gave a brief history of Dorothy's Woods. We had five certified Weed Warriors to lend expertise. In two hours, we cleared a small fraction of all the invasives in the area.

In preparing for this event I worked with Daryl Braithwaite and Anna Mische John. Anna was key to identifying which plants to remove, and exactly how each should be handled. The new electronic system for registering the event and filling out waivers is a good improvement over the previous paper system. There is still room for improvement. The ten day before the event requirement for the waivers is not necessary.

The bigger question that came up as we worked is the future of Dorothy's woods. Climate Action Coffee has developed a vision but clearly there are several possible answers. The covenant demands that it remain a woodland park of some kind. The city, with input from residents, will eventually make the final decision, but it seems to me there might be interim steps. One possible step could be to spread wood chips to make paths. It would encourage enjoyment of the property, giving an easy way for people to see the whole property including the many native trees and plants. It would also make it easier to remove more invasives. Wood chips can be removed or will simply compost in a few years. I'm confident this could be done by volunteers

Second, if you actually walk around Dorothy's woods you might notice some new plants have been planted. The invasives will be less likely to grow back if new native species are added. It is wonderful that many citizens are willing to donate their time and energy to improve this valuable resource that is Dorothy's Woods.