

The Forest Management Plan to Restore Hillside Woods & Park to a Self-Sustaining State

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

- *Will a deer exclosure actually work to keep out deer and permit seedlings and saplings to grow?*
 - Yes, there are numerous examples nationally (Flat Rock Brook in NJ, Camp Woods in WV, etc.) plus Untermyer Gardens and Teatown Lake Reservation here in Westchester County. We are already in contact with them and will also be able to copy the best practices of successful deer exclosure projects and learn from any mistakes made in the past.
- *Can you replant in a forest without a deer exclosure?*
 - Yes, you can (by using tree tubes around hand-planted seedlings) and we will do so in certain areas of the park that are not protected by the fence, but the forest there will not be able to create its own natural understory as deer will continue to over-browse the remainder of the forest floor.
- *What happens if we simply do nothing?*
 - The exact timing is unclear, but experts forecast that within the next 10-30 years the forest canopy will be dramatically thinner due to trees dying from age, storms, and vine infestation; and the forest floor will be choked with invasive plant species such as garlic mustard.
- *Will a deer exclosure in Hillside Woods & Park drive deer into people's yards?*
 - No. The proposed exclosure will at most cover 55 acres of the park's roughly 100 acres leaving plenty of room for the deer to sleep at night or hide during broad daylight. Already the lack of food supply in the forest has driven deer to search for food in our residential neighborhoods. That activity might actually decrease if the reduced sleeping area for deer encourages some herds to migrate to another town.
- *Will Village taxpayers likely bear the full expense of the project to restore the woods?*
 - No. A project of this type is very likely to receive considerable funding from a number of sources including federal, state and county environmental grants as well as grants from private (non-governmental) organizations and foundations promoting healthy forests. We also anticipate that certain passionate Village residents may want to donate their labor, to reduce our costs, or contribute money, to increase the number of trees and shrubs we can plant.
- *Is a deer exclosure difficult and/or expensive to maintain?*
 - We will need to maintain a perimeter path and patrol the fence line on a semi-regular basis (2-4 times per year, and especially after big storms that might uproot dead trees) but the labor and materials to effect repairs are expected to be quite small. For example, the galvanized woven cattle wire that makes up the actual fence costs less than 55 cents per linear foot!
- *Will deer attempt to breach the fence?*
 - It is very unlikely for a number of reasons. Currently there is little or no food for them in the forest so there is no incentive for them to do so. There will also be

acres of unfenced area within Hillside Woods & Park for them to congregate and forage in without the extraordinary effort of breaching the fence. Village residents who have fenced their own back yards will attest that deer simply move on to what's easily available to them rather than try to leap the fence into an area from which they may not be able to escape.

- *How quickly will the forest rehabilitate if we take these steps?*
 - It depends upon the exact type of trees we plant, but typically trees grow at the rate of about 1-2 feet per year so in 8-12 years we could have a very healthy understory. More importantly, we envision the forest to become self-sustaining once there is a healthy understory back in place.
- *Will people be permitted inside the enclosure?*
 - Yes, there will be a number of S or Z-shaped gates that permit humans to come and go freely (without opening & closing latched gates) but prevent deer from entering. We will also likely have two or three vehicular gates to permit maintenance equipment to pass through, although these may be locked.
- *Will small animals be able to come/go within the enclosure?*
 - Yes, they will easily pass through the cattle wire fencing material.
- *Will the fencing be obtrusive/ugly to nearby residents on Circle, Edgewood, etc.?*
 - No, the fence will be set back from the roads and follow the path of least resistance through the forest. Additionally, once the forest understory inside the fence line has regenerated the fencing material will be difficult to spot against the background of the new growth (as seen in this photo).



