

Deer Committee Report

Feb. 12, 2013



Background

- **Sept. 11, 2012 TNT5 meeting on deer**
- **Committee formed to study deer problem**
- **556 responses received from survey**

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Survey results

	RESPONSES	% SEE DAILY	% EVERY FEW DAYS	% LYME+	% CAR+
Meadowbrook	293	35	41	7	14
Near Eastside	2	0	0	0	0
Outer Comstock	32	13	22	9	6
Salt Springs	47	17	38	4	32
University	78	9	36	9	6
University Hill	1	100	0	0	0
Westcott	103	8	24	11	10
Grand Total	556	23	36	8	13

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Sample of responses on Lyme disease

- *- I got Lyme disease in June, 2009. I know I was bitten while working in my front yard garden. Fortunately I was diagnosed early by my daughter & was successfully treated with antibiotics. I am not convinced my doctor would have found the bite if I hadn't gone to the office with the diagnosis. (The bite was in the crease behind my knee.) I spent that entire summer suffering and recovering from the disease & continue to get regular blood tests to be sure it is under control. It was a horrible experience I wouldn't wish on anyone and believe we should do all we can to control the carrier, deer.*
- *- My next door neighbor spends a significant amount of money saving his one year old dog from the disease. I treat my dogs and family members with antibiotics each time there is a tick bite. This is not something I wish to do, but with the threat so high in the area to begin with, no amount of preventative measures are helping control the problem.*
- *- I tested positive for Lyme disease and was in the hospital for a week. The Lyme disease triggered an autoimmune disease that I am still being treated for, and it has turned into a long-term condition.*

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Sampling of responses from open-ended questions

- *- The back half of our yard is unusable due to the amount of scat they leave. My children are not able to play in their own yard, due to the scat and we fear ticks carrying Lyme disease (one of our neighbors found a deer tick on her cat). We have tried several methods to deter the deer from coming into our yard, all unsuccessful.*
- *- Unfortunately as much as I like deer, I feel the problem in our area has gotten out of control. The destruction of property and safety concerns for drivers really needs the attention of our elected officials.*
- *- The deer have destroyed shrubs which were planted long before we purchased our property in 1989. This past year we put in a permanent deer fence around the garden at a cost of \$1650.00.*

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Sampling of responses from open-ended questions (continued)

- - *They've made it impossible for us to have a vegetable garden. They seem to eat everything except hot peppers. We have had a vegetable garden for over 25 years, and this year we gave up.*
- - *The deer invasion into residential areas **MUST BE STOPPED!** By any means! The devastation and the health/safety risks carried are too high to tolerate! It feels like living in a Hitchcock world... Yet, worse, the city "codes" prevent us to build any defense, including a simple, almost invisible net!?*
- - *The deer are looking very thin and unhealthy. The herd should be managed so the healthy survive. There should be a special tax for this area to help solve the deer issues. If we do nothing the problem will only keep getting worse. The sooner we can get some action the better for the deer and the residents.*

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Comments in support of the deer

- - *We really enjoy the deer, and they do not come into our backyard because it is fenced in for our dogs, but we have no fancy landscaping and no vegetable garden because we know it will just get eaten by the deer. That is fine with us.*
- - *We have a wooded lot. Deer pass frequently. They are relatively harmless. We have more important issues to focus our limited resources on.*
- - *Let them live; enjoy them. Put up deer Xing signs on Euclid. Tell people what plants not to plant.*
- - *Killing unacceptable; move deer or spray to encourage them to move*

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Recommendations

- TNT5 should begin to work with its legislators and/or relevant city agencies to formulate and then implement a deer-management plan.
- If costs prove prohibitive, City should create a special tax district to pay for deer management
- A city agency should initiate a program to educate residents on how to protect plantings
- The city should allow eight foot fences on side and rear yards

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Findings

- High level of concern and frustration with number of deer
- Problem needs to be addressed sooner rather than later
- Overall environmental imbalance
- Disease and sanitation
- Deer/vehicle accidents
- Damage to flora and other property
- Psychic impact of the deer infestation



Recommendations (continued)

- The County Health Department should educate residents regarding Lyme disease
- A deer management plan could eventually be used in other areas of the city.

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Questions or comments