

Minutes
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
November 24, 2015

Attendance: Richard Whitehead, Chairman
Peter Viteretto
Andrew Strauss
Rob Frazier (via phone)

Staff: Paul Sotnik, Deputy Tree Warden
Dilene Byrd, Secretary

Absent: Gay MacLeod

Norwalk Tree Alliance: Dan Landau

Others: Jim Schell, Golf Course Superintendent, Oak Hills Park Authority
Shelly Guyer, Executive Director, Oak Hills Park Authority

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Whitehead called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M.

2. ANNUAL UPDATE - OAK HILLS PARK AUTHORITY

Mr. Schell reported and said that there is not much planned as far as tree removals for next year, and that any removals that will be done will be due to winter damage. He said that brush management work will be done for enhanced air flow at the course. He stated that there is an architect working on plans for the course, and that once they are completed they will have a plan for some tree removals as well as a replacement tree planting plan. Mr. Whitehead asked who the architect is that is working on the plan. Mr. Guyer said Robert McNeil. Mr. Guyer said that there will be no course work done until the Spring 2016, and at that point they will only be working on the 15th hole. He said that in the Fall 2016, work will be done on the front nine holes and the following fall, Fall 2017, work will be done on the back nine holes. Mr. Viteretto requested that once the plan has been completed that it be brought before the Tree Advisory Committee for review, and that Mr. Sotnik be given a schedule of the process. Mr. Guyer said that the plan will also be reviewed by DEEP. Mr. Frazier requested that the trees planted are selected for diversity and placed thoughtfully especially along the perimeters. Mr. Sotnik asked if the planned work has anything to do in preparation for the proposed driving range. Mr. Guyer said "No, it has nothing to do with the driving range." Mr. Guyer provided an update on the driving range and said that the plan is now back to phase II and that they are now focusing on the grant. He also stated that there is a study being

done which will be completed in the next couple of weeks and be given to the Finance Director.

3. APPROVE MINUTES OF THE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF OCTOBER 27, 2015

**** MR. VITERETTO MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. DISCUSSION - DECEMBER MEETING

There was discussion regarding whether to hold the December meeting since it is scheduled so close to the Christmas holiday. After further discussion it was decided that the December meeting will be held as scheduled and that an Item concerning the 2016 Tree Festival be included on the agenda.

5. REPORT - INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL CUTTING

Mr. Sotnik said there were no new reports of illegal cuttings. He gave an update on the illegal pruning that occurred at 536 West Avenue, and said that he is still working with Contractor for the required documentation for the permit. Mr. Whitehead asked if they now have the proper insurance. Mr. Sotnik said "yes." Mr. Whitehead asked if the pruning's in front of the other stores on West Avenue has been scheduled. Mr. Sotnik said "yes, Mr. Ortiz has informed him that the work would be done in-house sometime in the late Winter or early Spring of 2016." Mr. Viteretto suggested that other street trees also be looked at for pruning.

6. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

- a. East Avenue
Mr. Viteretto said there is nothing new to report. Mr. Sotnik said that there should be no trees planted on East Avenue from St. John Street to Winfield Street due to the upcoming bridge project.
- b. Ponus School
Mr. Sotnik said that there is nothing new to report.
- c. Fox Run School
Mr. Whitehead said that a Maple Tree that was donated by the Norwalk Tree Alliance has been planted.

- d. Shorefront Park
Mr. Sotnik said that there is nothing new to report. Mr. Strauss said that he will contact Ms. LeCoz to discuss the tree plan for species selection, and that he will provide an update at next month's meeting.

7. ROSA PARKS ARBORETUM - SIGNAGE

Mr. Landau said that the signage installation is scheduled to be completed in the Spring of 2016.

8. REPORT - STRATEGIC TREE CANOPY ENHANCEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

No discussion.

- a. Letter to Planning & Zoning Commission from Committee
Mr. Sotnik said that he had a discussion with Mike Greene, the Director of Planning & Zoning and that he had recommended that a letter be sent from the Chairman of the Tree Advisory Committee, Mr. Whitehead (with the endorsement of all of the members of the Committee) to the Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission, requesting that it be put on their agenda, and have this item proceed through the process. After further discussion it was decided that Mr. Viteretto would send the letter to the committee members and Mr. Sotnik for their review and comment at the next meeting.

9. REPORT - NTA ACTIVITIES AND RECRUITING

Mr. Landau said that the annual meeting was held last week, the Officers were elected and Ms. Names will now be the Acting Treasurer until a replacement can be found. He said that the NTA will be working on identifying the trees on Sheffield Island and that it will be completed in the Spring of 2016.

Mr. Landau said that St. Joseph Church was the recipient of a number of Eastern Red Bud trees which were donated to their parishioners by Barlett Tree Company. He said that the trees have now been donated to the Norwalk Tree Alliance, and are now at the Tree Farm. Mr. Viteretto asked how many trees there are. Mr. Landau said there are total of 40 - 18 inch to 24 inch high trees.

- a. Planting Locations - Third Taxing District \$2,000 Tree Donation

Mr. Strauss reported and said that 20 trees have been purchased and that approximately 15 of them have been planted, and that he has spoken to both landscapers who have donated their services, and they said that they will be planting the balance of the five trees the week after Thanksgiving. Mr. Viteretto asked where they will be planted. Mr. Strauss said in the East Norwalk area, and that most will be planted on Fort Point Street and Edlie Avenue. Mr. Viteretto requested that the list of planting locations be forwarded to Mr. Sotnik so that he can update the list for the Tree City USA grant. After further discussion it was decided that Mr. Frazier would send the list to Mr. Sotnik with the planting locations and the species. Mr. Whitehead asked Mr. Frazier if he had procured the funds from the Third Taxing District. Mr. Frazier said "yes" and that he had done a program on behalf of the Tree Advisory Committee last spring, and that the goal was to find areas that are recently being paved and getting new sidewalks that will need trees. Mr. Whitehead said that he thinks it is a great thing that Mr. Frazier has done, but requested that in the future that he make the Tree Advisory Committee aware of it first.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Frazier said that the tree on Highland Avenue has been removed approximately two weeks ago and that he is proposing that a good solid tree be planted in that location in the Spring of 2016, he will provide location. Mr. Whitehead said that because the location is on private property that the homeowner will need to be contacted.

Mr. Sotnik said that the current tree planting contract will expire on June 30, 2016, and that he will be having the Purchasing Department put together the RFP so that it will be ready to go out to bid in February, have the bids received back by the middle of March, so that the contract is in place by June 30, 2016 in plenty of time for the fall planting season. He will send a copy of the previous RFP for the current contract to the Committee members for their review and input.

11. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. STRAUSS MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 P.M.