



**CITY OF NORWALK
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
Norwalk City Hall
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**Minutes
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
January 24, 2017**

Attendance: Richard Whitehead, Chairman
Gay Mac Leod, Vice Chairperson
Andrew Strauss
Rob Frazier
Peter Viteretto

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

Absent: Rob Frazier

Neighborhood Liaisons: Laurie Mirra

Guest: Ernie Grevers, Village Creek Board
Elsa Obuchowski, Member, Oak Hills Park Nature Advisory
Committee
Audrey Cozzarin, Member, Oak Hills Park Nature Advisory
Committee

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Whitehead called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

**2. APPROVE MINUTES OF THE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING OF NOVEMBER 22, 2016**

**** MS. MACLEOD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. REPORT - INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL CUTTING

Mr. Sotnik said that he had no new illegal cuttings to report.

4. REPORT - CITY TREES - REMOVALS FOR THE SoNo COLLECTION

Mr. Sotnik said that one (1) 8 ¼" London Planetree has been posted for removal, and that some of the trees will start to be removed in the near future related to work for the Mall. He said that there are sixteen (16) other trees that will be removed, but are not required to be posted because they are under the 8" size requirement for posting. He stated that the Developer is currently hiring a tree removal contractor who will be obtaining a tree removal permit. He said that the Developer will be doing an extensive amount of tree replacement and other planting as part of the Mall project, and they have already submitted the replacement planting plan to him that will be approved as part of the removal permit. He stated that there is a large variety of trees that will be planted. Ms. MacLeod asked if the trees being removed can be relocated. Mr. Whitehead said that was looked at, but they are not worth moving and that there are a lot of underground utilities in very close proximity to the tree pits.

5. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

a. East Avenue

Mr. Frazier said trees from I-95 to Route 1 will be planted to fill in gaps. There are a number of spaces that need to be filled. He said that he is requesting assistance with the Baptist Church regarding relocating the Japanese Maple tree. Mr. Sotnik said that he has their contact information, but those trees were planted as replacement plantings as part of the Lockwood Lane Storm Drainage project and were planted only about four years ago. Mr. Whitehead asked if he will be planting more Elm Trees. Mr. Frazier said "yes" and that he is requesting a maximum of 10-15 trees to complete the project in the Spring of 2017.

b. Shorefront Park

Mr. Strauss said he has spoken to Ms. LeCoz and she is requesting two to five trees for the Spring of 2017 and that he has requested that she have a definitive list by the next meeting.

c. Calf Pasture Beach Road

Mr. Whitehead said the trees were planted in the Fall of 2016 at fourteen (14) locations to fill all the remaining gaps on the Taylor Farm side of the road. He said that there are still some gaps on the west side or residential side of street which they opted not to address last fall, but that they will be done as potential Spring of 2017 plantings. He said that they will require the property owners to be contacted in advance of the planting orders.

d. Main Avenue

Mr. Frazier said that this has been divided into three components and will begin at the north end near the Merritt Parkway on the east side of the road. Mr. Whitehead asked if columnar trees will be planted in that area. Mr. Frazier said in that area there are fuller canopy trees. Mr. Whitehead said he does not think that

variety of existing species of trees is on the list in the tree planting contract. He suggested that when it is time to order the trees, more lead time will need to be given the Contractor to procure them. Mr. Sotnik stated that we should try if possible, to utilize species that are on the contract list, otherwise he has to ask for a special price quote.

e. Marvin Beach

Mr. Sotnik said that several potential plantings remain for the Spring of 2017.

f. Village Creek

Ms. Grevers said she is more than happy to put in time for the Woodward park plan as a separate project that is connected to Village Creek, but their main objective is the Village Creek planting. Ms. Mirra said they did get approval from their board for \$7,600 for six holly trees and 20 bayberry bushes. Mr. Strauss said whether the grant is received or not, it will not affect the commitment to Village Creek. After further discussion it was decided that there will be five trees installed as a Spring of 2017 planting.

a. America The Beautiful Grant Application - Woodward Park

Mr. Sotnik said Mr. Yeosock had found a grant application to try and do something with the area of the Park, and that the grant is a \$12,000 grant, but the City would need to match the funds. Ms. Mac Leod asked if the \$12,000 will come out of the tree planting budget. Mr. Sotnik said "yes" unless other funds can be found, but that it will be done in the Fall 2017 project after the new fiscal year funds are available. Mr. Frazier said those funds should come from the Recreation & Parks Department budget. Mr. Sotnik stated that he agreed, but he did not believe that the Recreation & Parks Department would provide the funds based on conversations with Mr. Moccia. Mr. Viteretto presented the Woodward Park Tree Planting plan and said as part of the plan, it will include removing the chain link fence and replacing it with a low wood barrier fence, and to change the physical entry to the park and use street trees to create a condition of getting to Village Creek using the Woodward Park frontage, and use the grant money to pay for this piece. Mr. Frazier said that this is the first step of a larger plan and suggested having a fundraiser with the neighborhood and use this as an opportunity to begin to bridge the communities. Ms. Mac Leod also suggested looking for a sponsor from the businesses in this area.

Mr. Strauss asked Mr. Sotnik when he will need a definitive list of locations to order the trees for a Spring 2017 planting. Mr. Sotnik said that he would like to have the final list by the end of March, so that he can place the orders in early April.

Mr. Sotnik updated the committee on the planting budget balance and said that the planting budget for Spring of 2017 plantings is \$ 28,340.00.

6. UPDATE - TREE MAINTENANCE BY SECTION OF CITY

No discussion, nothing new to report due to winter.

7. INFORMATION

- a. Tree City USA Bulletin No. 15
Mr. Sotnik distributed.
- b. Arbor Day, January/February 2017
Mr. Sotnik distributed.

8. TREE CITY USA AND GROWTH AWARD

Mr. Sotnik said the Tree City USA application for recertification and the Growth Award for 2016 was submitted on January 9, 2017.

Mr. Sotnik distributed the Growth Award eligibility requirements and said there are four categories. He said that the Committee will need to look and see which categories can be utilized when planning future programs. If there are programs where public outreach and education is being done, we should be cognizant of this list to be sure they are meeting the growth award requirements for the future. Mr. Strauss said that he will also be discussing this at the next Tree Alliance meeting.

9. 2017 EVERSOURCE TREE TRIMMING PERMIT

Mr. Sotnik said that Chris Torre, Jose Ortiz and he had met with Eversource and Lewis Tree on December 8, 2016, and went through the permit with them. He stated that Mr. Torre signed the permit for 2017. He displayed the map of the areas that will be trimmed and said that it is available on the City's website.

10. PLANNING FOR 2017 ARBOR DAY - BROOKSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mr. Sotnik said that the first planning meeting is scheduled for January 27, 2017, at 9:30 A.M. at Brookside Elementary School.

11. PLANNING FOR FUTURE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS/LECTURES

a. Presentation Test - Fox Run School - Value of Trees to Home Owners

Ms. MacLeod said that she is planning to do a test at Fox Run School and she is hoping to get a good response by working with the West Norwalk Association and the Principal, and that she is planning on scheduling it the same night as the West Norwalk's Association's annual meeting. She said that she is planning on discussing the value of trees and would also like to discuss tree planting, and the issue of chopping trees because she is seeing this now being done in front of homes and not just commercial locations. She requested that members of the committee send her any information they have to incorporate into the presentation. She said she would also like to leave some education pieces behind. Mr. Whitehead said there is a photo library of improperly pruned trees that she can incorporate into that presentation.

12. REPORT - STRATEGIC TREE CANOPY ENHANCEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Viteretto distributed an updated plan and said that he would continue updating it. He requested that if anyone on the committee had any changes, to e-mail them to him and he will incorporate them into the plan.

- ### a. Update - Letter to Zoning Commission Chairman from Committee
- Mr. Sotnik said that he spoke with Mr. Kleppin of Planning & Zoning about the pending invitation. He stated that Mr. Kleppin asked him to send an updated letter directly to him. Mr. Whitehead requested that the photos be updated prior to sending the letter.

13. REPORT - NTA ACTIVATES AND RECRUITING

Mr. Strauss reported and said the next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 26, 2017, and that there is a new Board, the meetings have been well attended, funding is now stable, and there is a new website. Ms. MacLeod asked how many members there currently are. Mr. Strauss said approximately 20. Mr. Strauss said that they are trying to recruit new members for special projects such as the Tree Farm.

- ### a. Rosa Parks Arboretum - Signage
- Mr. Strauss reported that Ms. LeCoz is working on replacement signage. Mr. Sotnik stated that Mr. Moccia of the Recreation & Parks Department has committed to funding the replacement of the three dead trees in Spring of 2017.

14. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Obuchowski and Ms. Cozzarin of the Oak Hills Park Nature Advisory Committee provided an update of Oak Hills Park and said that the two garden areas have been constructed, and in conjunction with that, they would like to improve the walking trails with some tree identification signage. They requested assistance with properly identifying the species of trees for that signage. Mr. Whitehead said that he would help to identify the trees and provided his contact information.

15. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. VITERETTO MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 8:16 P.M.