



**CITY OF NORWALK
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
Norwalk City Hall
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**Minutes
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
February 26, 2019**

Attendance: Richard Whitehead, Chairman
Erica Kipp, Vice Chairperson
Andrew Strauss
Peter Viteretto
Mary-Pat Cottrell

Staff: Paul Sotnik, Deputy Tree Warden
Dilene Byrd, Secretary
Jeff Spahr, Deputy Corporation Council

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Whitehead called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

**2. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF
JANUARY 22, 2019.**

On page 5, change "Westmere" to "Westermeyer"
On page 6, add "at the tree farm with Columbus Magnet School"
On page 6, change "Dunkin" to "Duncan"
On page 6, change "a lot" to "many"

**** MR. VITERETTO MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.
** MR. STRAUSS SECONDED THE MOTION.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Whitehead announced that Ms. Cottrell has resigned from the Tree Advisory Committee and that this will be her last meeting. The members of the Committee thanked Ms. Cottrell for all of her work and said that she was a great asset to the Committee and she will be missed.

3. APPROVE THE PROPOSED REVISION TO THE TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN DATED APRIL 2009

**** MR. VITERETTO MOVED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONSULT WITH LEGAL COUNCIL TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED REVISION TO THE TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN.**

**** MR. STRAUSS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Executive session began at 6:05 P.M.

Executive session ended at 6:30 P.M.

**** MR. STRAUSS MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION BY THE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO CLAIRIFY THE TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN:**

“BE IT RESOLVED, THAT WHILE THE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE IS ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO THE NORWALK CITY CODE AND HAS THE DUTY, INTER ALIA, TO RECOMMEND A TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN; RECOMMEND POLICIES CONCERNING SELECTION, PLANTING, MAINTENANCE AND REMOVAL OF PUBLIC STREET TREES AND PUBLIC PARK TREES WITHIN THE CITY; AND SUGGEST COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS; AND THAT WHILE THE COMMITTEE HAS DEVELOPED SUCH A “TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN”; THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS CONTAINED THEREIN ARE NOT BINDING UPON THE CITY OF NORWALK, THE CITY’S TREE WARDEN OR ANY EMPLOYEES OR OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF NORWALK AS OFFICIAL AND AUTHORIZED POLICIES AND REGULATIONS OF THE CITY OF NORWALK AND DO NOT CREATE ANY MANDATORY OR MINISTERIAL DUTIES OF PERFORMANCE ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF NORWALK, THE TREE WARDEN OR ANY OF IT’S EMPLOYEES.”

**** MR. VITERETTO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. 2019 EVERSOURCE TREE TRIMMING PERMIT

Mr. Sotnik said they had a meeting that was held on February 6, 2019 with Eversource concerning the proposed trimming locations for 2019. He presented a map of those proposed tree trimming locations for 2019 to the Committee members.

5. REPORT - INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL CUTTING

Mr. Sotnik had no new illegal cuttings to report.

Mr. Whitehead said that a there was a motor vehicle accident on Main Avenue that had taken down one of the trees, and is waiting for the police report to obtain the insurance information for the driver of the motor vehicle so that a claim can be filed to pay for the

replacement of the tree. He said he will also be obtaining a quote from Almstead Tree for the removal of the remainder of the tree, the stump extraction and clean up, as well as the planting of a new tree of the same size.

6. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

Mr. Sotnik asked if there are any changes from last month.

a. East Avenue

Mr. Strauss said that 20 locations have been identified for potential planting locations and two trees had been planted last year. He asked if he should contact the property owners for potential Spring 2019 plantings. Mr. Sotnik said there is enough funding to plant four to five trees this Spring.

b. Main Avenue

Mr. Viteretto requested that the planting for Main Avenue be removed from the list.

c. West Avenue

Mr. Sotnik said that there is nothing new to report.

d. Richards Avenue

Ms. Cottrell said that she will contact the diocese regarding Phase II of the planting. Mr. Sotnik said that the planting will be done in May 2019. Mr. Strauss asked what immediate next steps are required. Mr. Whitehead said that he will be contacting the maintenance staff at St. John's cemetery and the planting locations will be staked.

e. Wilton Avenue

Mr. Whitehead stated that there are 58 potential planting locations.

f. Park Street

Mr. Whitehead said there are 5 potential planting locations.

g. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive

Mr. Whitehead said there are 9 potential planting locations.

h. Woodward Avenue

Mr. Whitehead said that Ms. Mirra has requested that he meet with her next week to look for locations for future plantings, and that Parks and Recreation will also be completing phase II of the Woodward Park planting.

7. UPDATE - FY2019 - 2020 CAPITAL TREE PLANTING BUDGET REQUEST/STATUS

Mr. Sotnik provided an overview of the Capital Budget process and said this year for the five year plan staff has requested \$60,000 per year. He said when the Finance Department had put their recommendation together for the five year plan their recommendation was for \$50,000 per year, and the Planning Commission has just made their recommendation, but he does not have those numbers yet. He said that he should be receiving those numbers within the next few days.

8. INFORMATION:

- a. Tree City USA Bulletin, January/February 2019.
Mr. Sotnik distributed.

9. UPDATE - PLANNING FOR 2019 ARBOR DAY - WOLFPIT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mr. Sotnik said that the first planning meeting was held on February 1, 2019, and that the Arbor Day celebration will be held on April 26, 2019 at Wolfpit Elementary School. He stated that the next planning meeting will be held on March 8, 2019, at 10:00 A.M. at Wolfpit Elementary School and they will be selecting the final species of tree and location to be planted. He said the final planning meeting will be held on April 22, 2019 at 10:00 A.M. He said he has already spoken with Mr. Norman of Almstead Tree and they will supply plugs rather than seedlings due to the new ordinance to ban plastic bags. This will make it easier and neater to put them into a paper bag for distribution to the students. Mr. Viteretto recommended placing a logo of the Tree Advisory Committee onto the bags if possible.

10. REPORT - UPDATE ON KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL GRANT

Ms. Kipp said on January 30, 2019 the first meeting was held for the Norwalk Campus Advisory Committee to have Norwalk Community College become a Tree Campus USA and that the meeting went well and meeting minutes will be distributed. She said the next meeting is scheduled for April, prior to Arbor Day.

Ms. Kipp said that she will be submitting the Keep America Beautiful Grant application this week and that she has received all of the renderings and will include information on how much 44 trees would intercept in that area in terms of ecosystem services. Mr. Sotnik said that DPW had prepared and put the 50 Washington Street Plaza Improvement project out to bid for the Redevelopment Agency. He stated that the low bid came in at \$1,245,609.00 and that Deering Construction was the low bidder. DPW will also be administering the construction for the Project. He said that the grant Ms. Kipp has applied for is going to cover the cost of some of the tree planting that is part

of this project. Ms. Kipp said that 44 trees are scheduled to be planted. Mr. Viteretto asked who the grant will be administered through. Ms. Kipp said through Keep Norwalk Beautiful because they are the affiliate. Mr. Viteretto said he wants to be sure that the Tree Advisory Committee is recognized for applying for the grant since a member actually did the application. Mr. Strauss said that when the grant is received that he and Ms. Kipp will meet with The Hour to have an article done. Mr. Sotnik suggested they also contact Mr. Morgan to do a press release.

Ms. Kipp said that she has been elected onto the board of Keep Norwalk Beautiful.

11. PLANNING FOR FUTURE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM EVENTS/LECTURES

Mr. Whitehead said there are currently two potential future events being planned and the Pollinator Pathway is interested in doing two planting programs in Norwalk. He stated that Oak Hills was hoping to be the recipient of one of those programs and he had just done the trail walk on Saturday, February 23, 2019. The Pollinator Pathway Coordinators don't want to plant at Oak Hills because one of the pollinator pathways objectives is to plant in pesticide free zones. Mr. Sotnik requested that any photos that were taken of the event be sent to him so he can include them in the file for the Tree City USA recertification for this year. Mr. Whitehead said that the smaller events seem to be more effective than having just one large event and both the cost and staff coordination time is far less.

12. REPORT - NTA ACTIVITIES

- a. Third Taxing District Spring 2019 Tree Planting Grant
Mr. Strauss reported and said that an article had been put into the Third Taxing District newsletter advertising the tree planting and there are still a lot of people on the list for trees. He said that this will again be done as a lottery and that information on the lottery will be going in their March newsletter. He said there is an invitation to apply for the grant for next year and he will be submitting the application and will present it before the Third Taxing District Commission on April 3, 2019.
- b. Fodor Farm Tree School Funding Campaign
Mr. Strauss said the Tree School is going well and that he has received a well thought out lesson plan for the two Spring sessions and that it is based on the approved science curriculum for the Norwalk Public Schools. He discussed the funding and that they have received a promising note from Graham Capital and they will be reviewing the grant application on March 5, 2019. In addition, they have received \$2,500 from Fairfield County Savings Bank in Rowayton, and that he has sent in a request for \$2,500 to the Westport Rotary Club Community Grant program. Mr. Viteretto asked what the program is. Mr. Strauss said the relationship with nature and science and that he will send the Committee the lesson plan.

- c. Mr. Strauss said that the Tree Alliance will be attending the Zero Waste Fair in Wilton and that it is being partly organized by Ms. Duncan.
- d. Mr. Strauss presented the first annual report that includes highlights of what has been done, sponsors and the financials. He said that the next Tree Alliance meeting will be held on Thursday, February 28, 2019.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Viteretto said that there is an amazing opportunity on Wall Street on the plaza above the railroad tracks to install street trees and that there is a lot of green space. Mr. Sotnik said that there may be opportunities as part of the grant they have just received to do some tree work between Main Street and Brook Street.

14. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. VITERETTO MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
**** MR. STRAUSS SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Dilene Byrd