



**CITY OF NORWALK
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
Norwalk City Hall
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**Minutes
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
July 23, 2019**

Attendance: Richard Whitehead, Chairman
Andrew Strauss
Cindy Cossuto

Absent: Erica Kipp, Vice Chairperson,

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

Liaisons: Laurie Mirra, Village Creek

Others: Jona Cruz

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Whitehead called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**2. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF
JUNE 25, 2019.**

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

3. REPORT - INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL CUTTING

Mr. Sotnik said he received a report of an illegal cutting in the Silvermine area from Mr. Montgomery of Parks and Recreation and he will be going to investigate the location and the incident.

4. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

a. New Planting Locations for Fall 2019

Mr. Whitehead said that the Capital Planting budget has been replenished and asked the Committee members to submit their lists of possible planting locations so that a master list can be compiled. Mr. Strauss said at the last meeting it was determined that the lists will be submitted at the August meeting. He said that he will be contacting Ms. Cossuto and they will look for possible planting locations in the East Norwalk area. Ms. Cossuto suggested Scribner Avenue as another possible planting location. Mr. Whitehead said that Ms. Washer had said that a pollinator pathway class was done at the Belden Library and they have requested trees along Mott Avenue and Union Park and he will be meeting with her. There are also nine (9) trees to be planted along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

5. UPDATE – TREE MAINTENANCE BY SECTION OF CITY

Mr. Sotnik distributed a list from Mr. Norman of Almstead Tree of the trees that were watered under the two year warranty program. Mr. Norman indicated that the tree at 7 Berkley Street is not doing well and said that he would replace the tree and plant the existing tree at another location. Mr. Whitehead recommended leaving the tree because moving it will cause more stress to the tree and suggested it be added to the structural pruning list. Mr. Strauss suggested that the trees on Washington Street also be included on the list for structural pruning. Mr. Whitehead said that would need to be scheduled in the morning due to the on-street parking in the area. Mr. Sotnik said that there are only two trees on Washington Street that are still on the watering list because the others are outside of the two year warranty period. Mr. Strauss said the trees on Washington Street are high visibility trees and suggested obtaining a price from the contractor for watering the trees after the two year warranty period has expired. Mr. Whitehead said there is still one tree that needs to be replaced on the south side of Washington Street and it will need to be added to the Fall 2019 planting list.

Mr. Sotnik said that there is one Maple tree from the Richards Avenue – St. Johns Cemetery planting that is struggling and Mr. Norman said he will replace it if the Committee would like him to. The committee agreed that the tree should be replaced. Mr. Strauss asked what the cause is for the tree dying. Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Norman had emailed him stating that two trees from this year's planting are dead and requested that he contact the maintenance crew at the cemetery to see if they are using any herbicides near the trees and also what the watering schedule has been over the past few weeks.

Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Norman also stated that one Linden tree needs to be replaced on River Road.

Mr. Sotnik distributed a photo of Fodor Farm and said that both mulch beds have become overgrown with weeds and grass was planted at Fodor Farm and the grass and weeds need to be removed because it is hurting the tree according to Mr. Norman. Mr.

Norman said that he would do the work, but he just wanted to be sure the grass was not intentionally planted. Mr. Strauss said that the grass can be removed and he will speak to the members of the Tree Alliance regarding having someone to do the weeding.

Mr. Whitehead suggested the trees on Broad Street and MLK also be looked at.

6. INFORMATION:

- a. Tree City USA Bulletin, May/June 2019.
Mr. Sotnik distributed.
- b. Arbor Day, July/August 2019.
Mr. Sotnik distributed.

7. UPDATE – 2020 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION LOCATION

Mr. Sotnik said he is still trying to make contact with the Principal.

8. PLANNING FOR FUTURE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM EVENTS/LECTURES

Mr. Whitehead said he will work with the City Tree Crews on a structural pruning session. Mr. Sotnik said that he will contact Mr. Torre and Mr. Roberts for dates of availability.

9. REPORT - NTA ACTIVITIES

- a. Update - Fall Planning
 - i. Third Taxing District Grant
Mr. Strauss said that they have received a \$2,500 grant from the Third Taxing District and the trees will be planted in the Spring 2020.
 - ii. Tree School
Mr. Strauss said that Columbus Magnet School is signed up and the three Tree School classes have been scheduled. The first one will be held in September 2019, the second one in the early Spring 2020 and the third one will be in May 2020. There will be 60 first graders from Brookside Elementary School and 40 from Columbus Magnet School attending each session.
 - iii. Summer School at Fodor Farm
Mr. Strauss said that a summer class will be held on August 7, 2019 consisting of tours and a beekeeper demonstration. He said that he has also received a \$750 donation from King Industries.

- iv. Fundraising - Charter Oak Award
Mr. Strauss said that he had put a solicitation out and there are three levels of fundraising for the Tree Alliance. He circulated the Charter Oak Award to the Committee members and said the first recipient to receive the award will be the Fairfield County Savings Bank.
- v. Fodor Farm Outdoor Classroom Concept Plan.
Mr. Strauss said Fodor Farm is an underutilized resource and the NTA has had an idea of creating an outdoor classroom bordering on the Tree Farm to be used not only for the Tree School, but to also make it available for other schools. He presented a map of the area which included three learning circles. He said that funds will be needed to create the plan and for the ongoing maintenance and that he would like the initial funds to be raised by the NTA. Mr. Sotnik said that a meeting will need to be scheduled with Mr. Carr and Mr. Roberts to put a plan together to present to the Common Council for approval. Mr. Sotnik also suggested contacting the Board of Education to gather for their support for the idea. Mr. Strauss said he has already started working on a verbal presentation including a background on outdoor learning classrooms.
- vi. Fall Open House Status.
Mr. Strauss said that the status of the NTA Open House will be discussed at the NTA meeting on Thursday and Ninety-Nine Bottles will be hosting a wine festival in September at Fodor Farm and the NTA would like to be a part of that and have the Open House as part of that event.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Cruz said that the United States doesn't seem to have as many programs for students planting trees as other countries, and she does not see any programs to teach students environmental awareness and suggested implementing a program for students that is hands on, and to start a tree program where students can plant a tree each year to increase the tree canopy in Norwalk. Mr. Strauss said that it is a great idea, but the Tree Advisory Committee is limited and does not yet have the resources to implement a program. Ms. Cruz said that she has proposed to the idea to the Superintendent of schools. Mr. Strauss said the Tree Advisory can assist her on resources that are available and suggested she begin at the Board of Education level to get the schools involved in tree stewardships and then the TAC could support a program.

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 P.M.
Respectfully submitted,
Dilene Byrd