



**CITY OF NORWALK
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
Norwalk City Hall
125 East Avenue, PO Box 5125
Room 225
Norwalk, CT 06856-5125
P: 203-854-7791 / F: 203-857-0143

**Minutes
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
October 22, 2019**

Attendance: Richard Whitehead, Chairman
Andrew Strauss
Peter Viteretto
Cindy Cossuto

Absent: Erica Kipp

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Whitehead called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.

**2. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF
SEPTEMBER 24, 2019**

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

3. APPROVE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020

**** MR. STRAUSS MOVED TO APPROVE THE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR
CALENDAR YEAR 2020.
** MR. VITERETTO SECONDED THE MOTION.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. REPORT - INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL CUTTING

Mr. Sotnik said that he is still working on the list of illegal cuttings from last month and

that there were no new ones to report this month.

5. UPDATE - TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

a. New Planting Locations for Fall 2019

Mr. Sotnik said that they have received a White Oak Tree from the Connecticut Tree Protective Association for the Centennial celebration of the Arborist law in the State of Connecticut. He stated that it will be planted in the Great Lawn at Mathews Park tomorrow at 1:30 P.M. He said that anyone on the Committee is welcome to attend and that they will use the opportunity to advertise the Fall tree planting program.

Mr. Sotnik provided an overview for the Fall 2019 tree planting program and said that trees will be planted at the following locations.

- Thirteen (13) Bloodgood London Planetrees on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.
- Three (3) Arborvitae on Fox Run Road.
- Ten (10) trees at various locations in East Norwalk and that he will be placing an order for one (1) additional tree on Cloverly Circle.
- One (1) Kwanzian Cherry tree was planted at 23 Walnut Street and one (1) Yoshino Cherry tree was planted at 9 Walnut Avenue instead of 4 Birch Street. Ms. Cossuto said the location of the tree on Birch Street had to be changed to another location.
- One (1) Redmond American Linden Tree was replaced on Washington Street that was out of the warranty period.
- There will be a replacement tree planted on Alden Avenue and they have requested that two (2) additional trees be planted and another one (1) at 38 First Street.

Mr. Sotnik said there is a total of 33 trees for the Fall planting. Mr. Strauss asked if that is a good number for a Fall planting. Mr. Whitehead said "Yes" and that it is more than what we normally would do, and represents over 50% of the FY 2019 – 2020 Capital budget, but there was a big waiting list due to not having a sufficient budget the prior year. Mr. Strauss asked how much will be requested for next year's budget. Mr. Sotnik said he will be requesting \$60,000 for the FY 2020 – 2021 Capital budget. Mr. Whitehead suggested that they request \$65,000. Mr. Sotnik stated that he would request that amount.

b. Replacements

Mr. Sotnik said an order will be placed for the replacement trees at St. John's Cemetery, Broad Street and Alden Avenue. Mr. Viteretto said the London Plain Trees on Belden Avenue will need to be replaced as a Spring 2020 planting.

Mr. Strauss requested that Mr. Whitehead walk with him on Flax Hill Road because there are two street trees that are dead and he thinks they need to be removed. Mr. Whitehead said that this should be included on the Spring 2020 list for replacement trees.

Mr. Viteretto suggested a planting on River Street considering the attention that has been given to Wall Street recently. Mr. Sotnik said they will need to investigate what utilities are in the area prior to planting.

Mr. Strauss suggested Westport Avenue also needs a tree planting. Mr. Viteretto said that they don't have a lot of control in that area unless they go through Planning & Zoning regulations. Mr. Whitehead said that stretch of road is extremely challenging because there is no land. Mr. Strauss asked since the State has mandated that the road be widened and the trees needed to be removed as a result, if they have any mitigation responsibility to replant the trees. Mr. Sotnik said they ask them to do new planting, but it is a State Right-of-Way and the trees don't always get done.

Mr. Whitehead asked that the Committee members begin canvassing areas and come up with at least five locations for potential Spring 2020 plantings. Mr. Sotnik requested the Committee members bring a list of 10 possible tree planting locations for a Spring planting to the February meeting for discussion so the order can be reviewed and placed by the end of April 2020.

6. INFORMATION - EVERSOURCE POLE REPLACEMENT PROJECT IN SILVERMINE AREA

Mr. Sotnik said that Eversource has two circuits that go into New Canaan and if something were to happen in the area on New Canaan Avenue, both circuits would be taken out of service. He said they are planning a project called the Lakeview Contingency Overload Plan to break up the two circuits and use an alternate route to get one of the circuits into New Canaan and away from New Canaan Avenue for resiliency purposes. He said that they had begun permissioning residents without contacting the Tree Warden or DPW staff. As a result, staff had requested a meeting with them and Mr. Torre had told them they he was not happy that they had not contacted him regarding work in the City's Right-of-Way, and that staff requested that they revisit the route and look at alternatives, conduct a field walk and also to lower the height of the poles and the required trimming. He said that Eversource has since contacted Mr. Carr and Mr. Torre stating that they probably will not change the route, but that they will change the height of some of the poles and will install the new wires. Mr. Viteretto requested that Mr. Sotnik contact Eversource and request that they use insulators rather than a cross arm which would save trees and be better for the neighborhood.

7. UPDATE – TREE MAINTENANCE BY SECTION OF CITY

Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Norman has not sent him a report this month.

8. INFORMATION:

- a. Tree City USA Bulletin 2019 Annual Report
Mr. Sotnik distributed.

9. UPDATE - D.P.W. OPEN HOUSE - OCTOBER 5, 2019

Mr. Sotnik said that the D.P.W. Open house was held on October 5, 2019 from 10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M. at the Public Works Operations Center and that it was very well attended.

10. UPDATE - 2020 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION LOCATION

Mr. Sotnik said that the Principal of Cranbury School has said she is interested in hosting the 2020 Arbor Day celebration and they will begin the planning in January.

11. UPDATE - KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL GRANT - 50 WASHINGTON STREET

Mr. Sotnik said that that the event was held last Saturday and it was a good event and that Mayor Rilling, Mr. Whitehead and Ms. Kipp had spoke at the event and that they had 25 attendees. Mr. Whitehead said that Ms. Kipp was instrumental with getting the volunteers.

12. UPDATE - SEPTEMBER MEETING - TREE CAMPUS USA AT NORWALK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Mr. Sotnik read an e-mail from Ms. Kipp as follows:

The Tree Campus meeting for Norwalk Community College went well and they have approved an environmental science club and two students of the club and the Campus Committee will be working with Mr. Whitehead to begin a tree inventory on campus, and this work will collaborate with the service learning office at Norwalk Community College and may also collaborate with Mr. Strauss and the Tree School. Keep America Beautiful has also asked that she host a webinar regarding the resiliency and restoration grant that she was able to obtain for this item. The planned Urban Park is set to take place tomorrow afternoon and she will be searching for the next grant and will have a tentative list at the next meeting.

13. PLANNING FOR FUTURE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM EVENTS/LECTURES

Mr. Whitehead said that October has been very busy and the educational outreach has been done through smaller events rather than having one big Tree Festival. He said that on Saturday, October 5th the D.P.W. Open house was held, Saturday, October 12th the community involvement was held at 50 Washington Street for the Grant, on Friday, October 18th the planting at Woodward Park was done and 30 volunteers from Fact Set had attended and they had also donated \$3,500 and that 13 trees were delivered and installed around the perimeter of the playground, and that 20 shrubs were also installed for the polluter pathway. He said that REI is also doing a planting at Oyster Shell Park, the tree planting event in observance of the Centennial celebration of the Arborist Law in the State of Connecticut at Mathews Park is scheduled for tomorrow and on Sunday a tree inventory will be done on the west campus of Norwalk Community College.

14. REPORT - NTA ACTIVITIES

a. Update

i. October Officer Elections

Mr. Strauss said the N.T.A. annual meeting will be held on Thursday and elections will be held.

ii. Fodor Farm Outdoor Classroom.

Mr. Strauss thanked Mr. Sotnik for scheduling the meeting with Mr. Carr and Mr. Roberts. He said that the concept plan for the outdoor classroom was presented to them and they were very enthusiastic. Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Roberts will be sending a letter to Mr. Wrinn of Planning & Zoning. Mr. Strauss said that there will also be an informational only presentation given to the Recreation and Parks committee of the Common Council.

15. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Viteretto said the street trees near the SONO Collection are low branched and he is concerned about the quality of the trees and that they would not be accepted by this Committee. Mr. Sotnik suggested that he send him documentation. Mr. Strauss suggested to be proactive have the key attributes of what a street tree should be in Norwalk and provide it as an advisory to the Committee for any future projects.

16. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Dilene Byrd