



TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

OCTOBER 26, 2021

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Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Dilene Byrd at dbyrd@norwalkct.org to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

Attendance: Professor Kipp, Chair
Richard Whitehead, Vice Chair
Peter Viteretto
Cindy Cossuto

Sonja Oliver

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Professor Erica Kipp called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M.

2. PUBLIC INPUT - GUESTS AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS MAY SPEAK TO ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA. (COMMENTS SHALL BE LIMITED TO NO MORE THAN THREE (3) MINUTES PER SPEAKER.)

There was no public comment this evening.

3. APPROVE MINUTES OF THE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2021

**** MR. WHITEHEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.
** MS. OLIVER SECONDED THE MOTION.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. APPROVE THE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2022

**** PROFESSOR KIPP MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2023 MEETING SCHEDULE AS PRESENTED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. CAPITAL TREE PLANTING PROGRAM - FALL 2021 PLANTING LIST

Mr. Sotnik presented the tree planting locations and said that to date, 75 trees have been ordered, 47 of the trees have been planted and 28 trees are still on order. Ms. Oliver said that she has reached out to the board at 15 Madison Street and they all agreed to have the Red Maple and Sugar Maple trees planted on the Madison Street side of the 15 Madison Street complex. Mr. Sotnik asked what species they prefer for the Monroe Street side. Ms. Oliver said Redmond American Linden trees. Professor Kipp said that two Redmond American Linden trees will be planted on the Monroe Street side. Professor Kipp requested that an additional column be added to the chart to include the genes species name of the trees. Professor Kipp asked if the 75 trees that have been ordered is reflective of just the Fall 2021 plantings. Mr. Sotnik said "yes" and

that it is a record for one planting cycle and the tree planting record for one cycle was just last Fall and was 56 trees planted. Prior to that, the record was two years ago and was 35 trees planted in one cycle. Professor Kipp said that is over a 50% increase.

Planting Locations	Number of Trees	Planted/Ordered
Aiken Street	26	Planted
15 Madison Street	19	Ordered
23 Calvin Murphy Drive	2	Ordered
466 Flax Hill Road	4	Planted
3 Driftwood Lane	1	Planted
Merrill Road	13	Planted
8 Raymond Terrace	2	Planted
133 Murray Street	2	Ordered
31 Cannon Street	4	Ordered
32 Kossuth Street	1	Ordered
21 First Street - Replacement	1	Planted
TOTAL	75	Planted 47 of 75 ordered to date 28 on order

Mr. Sotnik said that Bradford and Tracey Craighead are two new tree liaisons that have been recruited from the Wall Street area and have agreed to take part in finding planting locations at the upper end of East Avenue from Lockwood Lane to Westport Avenue. Professor Kipp requested that Mr. Sotnik share their contact information so that they can be included on the master list of Tree Liaisons and get them a copy of the past emails regarding the training information and a copy of the Charter Oak newsletters so that they can be brought up to speed with the rest of the group.

Professor Kipp said the planting at 23 Calvin Murphy Drive is scheduled for this Friday, October 29, 2021, but has not been confirmed so she reached out to Norwalk High School to see if they could get a program together in such short notice and they were adamant that it be a student-centered program that can be used as an educational opportunity. She said as soon as she finds out if Friday will work for them, she will send the Committee an email.

6. UPDATE - CAPITAL TREE PLANTING BUDGET REMAINING BALANCE

Mr. Sotnik reported and said that with the remaining funds from last Fiscal Year and the approved budget for this fiscal year, the available budget is \$76,389.50 and we will be spending approximately \$68,599.25. This leaves a balance of \$7,790.25. We will be receiving a reimbursement of approximately \$13,000 back for the planting on Aiken Street since it was related to the Soccer Complex Project, so the combination of the two will leave an available budget of approximately \$21,000 for the Spring 2022 plantings.

Mr. Torre said there are also funds available of approximately \$4,000 in the newly created Tree Account from the violations for the illegal tree removals on 9 Belair Road. Mr. Viteretto asked if the funds were from the fines that were levied. Mr. Torre said "Yes."

Professor Kipp said just focusing on the Tree Advisory Committee asked what the available budget is and how many trees can be planted in the Spring 2022 because the Tree Liaisons are receiving many requests for tree plantings in the Spring. Mr. Sotnik said there will be enough funds available for approximately 30 trees. Mr. Whitehead said if the Tree Liaisons have tree planting requests that could not be done in the Fall 2021, those requests should roll over into the Spring 2022 planting list.

7. PROMOTION OF TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

Mr. Sotnik said he will request that Mr. Morgan do a press release on what the Tree Advisory Committee has accomplished for the Fall 2022 tree plantings.

UPDATE - ALMSTEAD TREE WATERING/MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

Mr. Sotnik presented the list of watering locations that was received from Almstead Tree and they have begun to add the new tree planting locations to the watering and maintenance list. Mr. Viteretto said it will be interesting to see what the success rate is with the watering and maintenance program.

8. TREE CITY USA PREPARATION

Professor Kipp said that Norwalk Community College will also be applying for Tree Campus USA for the third year in a row.

Mr. Sotnik said he is starting to put the application together for Tree City USA recertification and asked if anyone on the Committee has any information that can be used for the application to please send it to him. Mr. Whitehead suggested that the Tree Liaison training be included. Professor Kipp said that grants can also be included, and

she will provide him the information for the one grant that was applied for that was not received, as well as the information on the two grants that we did receive.

Mr. Viteretto suggested including the update to the Tree Ordinance on the Tree City USA application.

9. DISCUSSION - 2022 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION/LOCATION - CRANBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mr. Sotnik said the next school on the list is Cranbury Elementary School and this will be the third attempt to have them host an Arbor Day Celebration due to the Pandemic and asked the Committee if they would like to try and do something at a city park and invite the members of the Board of Education as was done last year as a result of Covid-19 when many of the participants were not in the office and could get to a Park. Mr. Viteretto said this year more people are in the office making that more difficult, so a school is likely a better choice. Professor Kipp agreed and said school is back in full session and suggested the Arbor Day celebration be held at Cranbury School. The Committee members also agreed. Professor Kipp added they do not need to be mutually exclusive so if there is an opportunity to do something like was done at Oak Hills Park, and both can be done suggested that both a park and a school be done.

10. REPORT - NTA ACTIVITIES

Mr. Sotnik said that the Norwalk Tree Alliance will be having their monthly meeting this Thursday and the election of officers is on the agenda.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Viteretto asked the status of the tree pruning on North Water Street at the Maritime Aquarium. Mr. Torre said he has not yet spoken to them about it, but he does not think the trees were removed maliciously and suggested working with their director and use this as an educational opportunity. Mr. Viteretto agreed but felt we should first find out why it was done. Mr. Sotnik suggested a display at the entrance to the Maritime Aquarium of the relationship between maritime life and trees.

Mr. Viteretto suggested that the Committee members look at the Carpinus trees on Cedar Street because he thinks that species of tree will be used more and more for smaller streetscapes where their lower branching habit may not be suitable. The trees are grown for their low branching and screening value, and they do not trim up well and other small trees should begin to be considered.

Mr. Torre added that we still plan on having the Tree Summit with more of the stakeholders and would like the members of the Committee as a group, to put together a PowerPoint of what the Committee does, and that he would help anyway he could.

Professor Kipp said she is writing a grant that is due this Friday for a pollinator garden at Roodner Court for the Children's Learning Center and she was able to gather all the information that she needed, and she will let the Committee members know when it has officially been submitted.

12. ADJOURNMENT

**** PROFESSOR KIPP MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MS. OLIVER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Dilene Byrd