

## Minutes

### TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING January 26, 2010

---

Attendance: Don Nelson, Chairman  
Peter Viteretto  
Rich Whitehead  
Christine Names

Absent: Dave Tracy

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

Norwalk Tree Alliance: Dick Aime (Absent)

Neighborhood Liaisons: Dianne Witkowsky, Spring Hill Association  
Gay Mac Leod, West Norwalk Association  
Mike Mushak, Golden Hill Association  
Jim McLoughlin  
Rob Frazier

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Nelson called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.

#### **2. APPROVE MINUTES OF TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF DECEMBER 22, 2009**

**\*\* MS. NAMES MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **3. REPORT – INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL CUTTING**

Mr. Sotnik said that there was one possible illegal cutting at 258 Grumman Avenue, but after further investigation the trees were determined to be on private property. He said that he has had a problem getting the people to come in meet from 30 Oakhill Avenue and that he has an appointment scheduled with them on Tuesday. He said that he had told them if they don't come in that he will be fining them. Ms. Witkowsky asked if any complaints have been received for the trimming of the trees at the old Seaman's building on Connecticut Avenue. Mr. Alvord said "no" and that it is on private property,

and that the only jurisdiction that is possible would be if there is a zoning permit for whatever was constructed there that required them to have certain trees. Ms. Witkowsky asked if the Conservation Commission has jurisdiction over trees. Mr. Alvord said they do if they are in a delineated wetland or in the buffer zone.

#### **4. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM**

- a. East Norwalk- 4 plantings left for Spring 2010  
Mr. Sotnik said that the four Sweet Gum trees to be planted in the two islands on Strawberry Hill Avenue will be planted in the spring. Mr. Bociek was unable to obtain quality stock this past fall.
- b. Wall Street  
Mr. Whitehead said that he had originally gone out to measure the tree pit dimensions and in doing so had found seven areas that either had vacant pits or trees that need to be removed and replaced. He said that he had submitted the list to Mr. Alvord. Mr. Alvord asked Mr. Whitehead if he had included the trees in front of Meigas Restaurant. Mr. Whitehead said “no” because they were new installations. Mr. Alvord asked what species of tree they had planted. Mr. Whitehead said Zelkova trees. Mr. Alvord said that the trees that need to be removed will be done by in house staff, and once completed will start looking for the male Gingko trees so that they can be ordered.
- c. Look-ahead to CY 2010  
Mr. Alvord and Mr. Sotnik will be meeting with Mr. Frazier and Mr. Robson of the Sixth Taxing District on February 5, 2010 to discuss the proposed planting plans for Highland Avenue. Mr. Alvord said that there are still no solid leads for the parts of the city that are not covered by active neighborhood associations. He said that he is still working with Ms. Becker to schedule a meeting with the merchants on Wall Street. Mr. Nelson suggested the he and Mr. Alvord follow up with RDA, and CNNA on additional areas.

#### **5. INFORMATION COPIES**

- a. Donnelly 11-20-09 letter re: Urban Forestry grant  
Mr. Alvord distributed.
- b. Arbor Day January/February 2010  
Mr. Alvord distributed.
- c. NRG grant opportunity through CUFC  
Mr. Alvord distributed and said that the NRG is offering urban forestry grants to every community in the state that is interested. He said that the grants are \$1500 and they are looking to plant trees that can provide shading for buildings for energy savings. He said that he has received some feedback from Nick Overall who is

working with Marvin School and he has expressed some interest in doing some plantings there.

- d. Donnelly email re: Tree City USA recertification  
Mr. Alvord Distributed
- e. Tree City USA Bulletin No. 26  
Mr. Alvord distributed
- f. Latest Donnelly email re: Tree City/Growth Award  
Mr. Alvord read

## **6. UPDATE – TREE FESTIVAL 2010**

Mr. Alvord said that he would like to schedule the first planning meeting at the end of this week and that he had also offered some dates for next week. He said that the first meeting will be held in Norwalk either at City Hall or at the Public Works Center. He said if anyone is interested in being involved in the planning effort to let him know. Mr. Sotnik said that the Cub Scouts have agreed to guard the tents the night before the Tree Festival again this year. Mr. Whitehead said that he has spoken to the Norwalk Exchange Club and they are interested in attending some of the planning meetings. Mr. Alvord said that Mr. Moss has met with them and they are committed to cooking the food again this year.

## **7. DISCUSSION - NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES**

Ms. Witkowsky said that Tom Hamilton had attended the CNNA meeting and had given a preview on the budget plan. She said that the Comstock development plan was also discussed. Mr. Alvord asked if there are any other neighborhood associations that routinely attend the CNNA meetings. Ms. Witkowsky said “no”. Ms. Names said that Heather Dunn will be joining the CNNA.

## **8. DISCUSSION - NTA ACTIVITIES**

Mr. Nelson said that the American Chestnut Tree identification has been completed and that two were found and samples have been sent to a specialist for identification.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Mr. Alvord stated that an item for planning the Arbor Day Celebration at the Silvermine Elementary School will be added to the agenda through April.
- b. Mr. Alvord said that CL&P was supposed to construct seven tree pits in the sidewalks along a portion of Main Avenue when they rebuilt the sidewalks. He said

that the Contractor never installed the tree pits, and he said that he had agreed to accept planters as opposed to making them cut into the new sidewalks. He said that Mr. Whitehead had done some research and selected the planters. Mr. Mushak asked who will be providing the maintenance on the trees. Mr. Alvord said that the Department of Public Works will, but that they will also try and convince the local merchants to water them.

- c. Mr. Mushak distributed and discussed handouts titled Stop Topping Trees and the 22 benefits of Urban Street Trees. He said that most cities have Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) that take care of trees, and distributed a handout about BIDs. He stated that he would like to discuss the maintenance of the trees on Main Avenue with the local merchants.
- d. Mr. Sotnik said that in October, 2009, Mr. Vorio of Oak Hills golf course had attended the Tree Advisory Committee meeting to discuss their planned maintenance activities for the next year, and as part of that plan, five trees were posted for removal on January 19, 2010. Mr. Whitehead said that during the last storm two of the trees had come down.

#### **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. WHITEHEAD MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 7: 20 P.M.