

Minutes

TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING August 25, 2009

Attendance: Don Nelson, Chairman
Richard Whitehead
Christine Names
Peter Viteretto
Dave Tracy

Absent:

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

Norwalk Tree Alliance: Dick Aime

Neighborhood Liaisons: Gay Mac Leod, West Norwalk Association
Dianne Witkowsky, Spring Hill Association
Robert Frazier
Tia Sidey, Farm Creek Association

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nelson called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM

2. APPROVE MINUTES OF TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF JULY 28, 2009

**** MR. WHITEHEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. REPORT – INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL CUTTING

Mr. Sotnik had no illegal cuttings to report. He said he is waiting for the property owner at 79 Comstock Hill Road to have the contractor obtain the appropriate paperwork (bond) to do the work. He said once the paperwork is received he will be planting two replacement trees. Mr. Viteretto asked if staff will be approving the variety of trees that will be planted. Mr. Alvord said "yes."

4. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

- a. Van Buren and Stevens- Fall 2009
Mr. Sotnik said he is still waiting for the permit from the State and that this location will be scheduled for a fall planting. Mr. Nelson asked how many trees will be planted at this location. Mr. Alvord said eight maple trees.
- b. East Norwalk- Spring 2009
Mr. Sotnik said that nine of the 22 trees have been planted. He said that he has spoken with Mr. Bociek and the remaining 13 trees will be planted in the fall.
- c. Calf Pasture Beach Road, Phase II- Fall 2009
Mr. Alvord said this will be scheduled for a fall planting. He asked Mr. Whitehead and Mr. Viteretto to provide him with some dates of availability in September to stake the locations. Mr. Nelson asked how many trees will be planted at this location. Mr. Alvord said "15".
- d. Scribner and Richards- Spring 2009
Mr. Alvord said that he has followed up with Almstead Tree and they will be replacing the failing tree. He said that AJ Landscaping has requested to adopt that spot. He said that they have not yet submitted their landscaping plan so it is unknown at this time what their intentions are for this location. He said once he receives their plan it will be coordinated with the West Norwalk Association. Ms. Mac Leod asked if there are any city laws regarding signage at the Adopt-A- Spot locations. Mr. Alvord said there are no city laws, but there is an Adopt-A-Spot authorization. He said that there are only two signs that are very specifically authorized. Ms. Mac Leod asked when the tree will be replaced. Mr. Sotnik said in the fall.

5. INFORMATION COPIES

- a. Arbor Day, July/August 2009
Mr. Alvord distributed.

6. UPDATE- FAILING TREES

Mr. Sotnik said that the list has been provided to the Contractor which also includes the failing tree at Scribner and Richards Avenue.

7. PEPPERIDGE TREE PROGRAM

- a. Pepperidge Tree Program
Mr. Alvord distributed the flier that Ms. Mac Leod has developed for the Pepperidge Tree program. Ms. Sidey said that the Farm Creek Association is requesting 38 trees. Mr. Alvord asked where they will be planted. Ms. Sidey said on Roton and McKinley Avenues, and that they have chosen to plant shrubs rather than trees. Mr. Alvord asked

if shrubs were available in the program. Ms. Sidey said “yes” and that she has contacted the RPM and discussed with them what would be suitable for the area. She said that she has the volunteers to plant the shrubs. Mr. Sotnik said that he has spoken to Ellen Passero of Pepperidge Farm and she said that as of now they have sold 30 of the Pepperidge Trees to their employees, and expects to sell between 40 and 50 of the trees/shrubs. Ms. Sidey said that she also spoke to RPM Inc. regarding tree gators. She said that once the trees are planted they have a walk a way policy, but said once the trees are planted they water them and install biomats. She said they are biodegradable and also keep the weeds out. She said that the cost of the biomats is \$2.50 per mat which is a lot cheaper than the tree gators. She said that is what will be used for the shrubs and that the Farm Creek Association will pay for them. Mr. Tracy asked if the donation of trees is a one time offer. Ms. Sidey said “yes,” but when she spoke to the RPM they are hoping to encourage other companies to do this. Mr. Viteretto suggested taking photographs of the areas before and after the trees or shrubs have been planted. Mr. Alvord agreed and suggested presenting the photos to the NRG Resources Inc. because at the Tree Festival they had expressed interest in getting more involved with the tree planting program. Mr. Alvord said that staff will follow up with Pepperidge Farm on the numbers and assuming they are ready to provide 30 trees, start making the arrangements for the Farm Creek Association to receive the trees. Ms. Sidey said that she had e-mailed her wish list to the RPM. Mr. Sotnik said that he will follow up with Pepperidge Farm once a week to see what their numbers are over the next month. Mr. Alvord said that that the delivery of the trees also needs to be discussed with them. Ms. Sidey said that Pepperidge Farm will pay for the freight and will arrange for the donated trees to be delivered. Mr. Alvord said that he will work with Ms. MacLeod on the flier so that the program is not oversold and disappoint a group of people.

b. Tree Liaison Recruitment

Mr. Alvord distributed the draft flyer for recruiting tree liaisons that Ms. Names had developed. He said that the flier is ready with the exception of himself, Mr. Nelson, and Mr. Sotnik being added for points of contact. He said that he has received a list of contacts on neighborhood associations from Dave Shockley and that he will work with Ms. Names on the distribution group. He said that Ms. Names will present the flier at the Mayor’s Neighborhood Preservation Task Force meeting on September 1, 2009.

8. DISCUSSION- “MILE-A-MINUTE” VINE

Mr. Tracy said that he had received a lot of responses with questions regarding the Mile-A-Minute vine following the article in the newspaper. Mr. Sotnik said that Customer Service had received 14 reports and that after asking a series of questions that 10 of the reports were found to be negative, and that four are possible and need to be checked to confirm. Ms. Names asked if they were all in one area. Mr. Sotnik said “no.” Ms. Names asked if there is a website with the information for the Mile-A-Minute vine. Mr. Alvord asked Mr. Sotnik to forward the information he has to the committee members and they can forward the information to their neighborhood associations. Mr. Alvord asked Ms. Names to hand out the information at the Mayor’s Neighborhood Preservation Task Force meeting. Mr. Tracy asked if any clarity was received on the infestations that were found in Norwalk. Mr. Sotnik said that on August 21, 2009, that CL&P did an herbicide application

at the site of their East Rocks Road substation. Mr. Tracy said that he has received a request from the Garden Club for a speaker regarding invasive plants in general. Mr. Sotink said that he will contact Mr. Senack who is the Connecticut Invasive Plant Coordinator. He asked Mr. Tracy to e-mail him a time and date of when they would like the speaker to attend and he will schedule it with Mr. Senack.

9. UPDATE- URBAN FORESTRY GRANT APPLICATION

Mr. Whitehead said that he had met with Mr. Alvord and Mr. Sotnik and has received all the information he needed to start the grant application. He said that he will be requesting a follow up meeting for the cost information. He said that for the grants in the past that the title has always been "General Urban Forestry Project" and on this grant suggested using "Calf Pasture Beach Road Canopy Restoration- Phase II". He said that he also suggests incorporating the cost of the basin work and the road raising work that has just been completed into the application because it shows a commitment to replanting the area. Mr. Whitehead said that the deadline for submission is September 30, 2009. Mr. Sotnik asked if a copy of the application should be sent to Ms. Pytleski. Mr. Alvord said "yes."

10. PUBLIC WORKS OPEN HOUSE

Mr. Alvord said that the open house is scheduled for October 3, 2009, at the Public Works Center.

11. DISCUSSION- NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES

Ms. Witkowsky said that the blight ordinance was discussed at last night's meeting and the group that had brought the issue up was not in attendance. She said that Amanda Brown had attended and presented the studies that have been done and the reasons they had not decided to do it. She said that Corporation Counsel Bob Maslin also attended and spoke on the process and how he is involved.

12. DISCUSSION- NTA ACTIVITIES

Mr. Tracy said that he had received quite a few responses for the article on the Asian Longhorn Beetle including one who had claimed to have found one on Highland Avenue. He said that he had gone out to the location and took some photos and sent them to the State. He said that he had received confirmation from the State that it was not an Asian Longhorn Beetle.

Mr. Tracy said that he had received 33 reports from people claiming to have sighted American Chestnuts in Norwalk.

13. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Viteretto said that there is an asphalt pile in a tree well in front of Norwalk Luggage on Wall Street. Mr. Viteretto said now that the paving has been completed on Wall Street asked if the Vinca's can be planted if he gets the volunteers. Mr. Alvord said "yes" Mr. Alvord asked if there is now an organized group in the Wall Street area. Mr. Viteretto said that it is a very casual group.

Mr. Viteretto circulated photos of the trees that were damaged while installing a sidewalk along Belden Avenue and suggested developing tree preservation criteria for use with permits and other projects. Mr. Whitehead said that he will be meeting with a representative from his company's tree preservation division and would mention it to him.

14. ADJOURNMENT

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

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM

