

Minutes

TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING April 28, 2009

Attendance: Don Nelson, Chairman
Peter Viteretto
Rich Whitehead
Dave Tracy
Maribeth Becker

Staff: Hal Alvord, Tree Warden
Paul Sotnik, 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

Guest: Robert Frasier

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nelson called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 24, 2009

**** MR. TRACY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF MARCH 24, 2009

**** MR. WHITEHEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. APPROVE THE PLANTING OF A MEMORIAL TREE IN HONOR OF DON REID

Mr. Alvord said that Don Reid has passed away and that he was the City's Corporation Council for approximately 10 years under Mayor Esposito's administration, and for the last 1½ years had served as the Assistant Corporation Council. He said that the Corporation Counsel's office had contacted him to plant a memorial tree at City Hall with a brass plaque. He said that he had provided them with a copy of the guidebook, and that they will be meeting with Mr. Reid's wife and that she will select the species of tree to be planted in his honor. He said that he will be meeting with Mr. Mocciae to select a location at City Hall to plant the tree. Mr. Tracy said that Parks and Recreation has a memorial tree program and suggested that Mr. Alvord inquire with Mr. Mocciae regarding obtaining the brass plaque.

**** MR. TRACY MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

5. REPORT- INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL CUTTING

Mr. Sotnik had no illegal cuttings to report.

6. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

- a. Van Buren and Stevens
Mr. Sotnik said that he had sent the permit application up to the State last month and has made several follow up telephone calls and has not yet received a response back. He said that while at the Arbor Day celebration, he talked with Mr. Donnelly and asked if he could make a telephone call to the State on our behalf, and he has agreed to do so. Mr. Nelson asked who the contact person at the State is. Mr. Sotnik said Jim Barnes.
- b. East Norwalk-Spring 2009
Mr. Sotnik said that he and Mr. Overall will be meeting tomorrow to stake the 30 locations.
- c. Calf Pasture Beach Road, Phase II-Fall 2009
Mr. Alvord said the pipe work is done and that the new head walls are in and that the road work is now being done. He said that the road should be paved in the next couple of weeks. He said at the June meeting the plans should be viewed to confirm the species and the numbers so that the order can be placed with Mr. Bociek. Mr. Whitehead asked if Mr. Bociek had

checked the trees that were planted on Broad Street. Mr. Alvord asked Mr. Sotnik to follow up with Mr. Bociek regarding this matter.

7. INFORMATION COPIES:

- a. Tree City USA Bulletin No.22
Mr. Alvord distributed
- b. Arbor Day Foundation Letter/Press Release
Mr. Alvord distributed
- c. Mayor Press Release
Mr. Alvord distributed

8. REPORT- TREE CITY USA AND GROWTH AWARD

Mr. Alvord said that the Mayor had received official notification from the National Arbor Day Foundation on March 16, 2009, that for the 5th year in a row (calendar year 2008), Norwalk has earned the Tree City USA designation and Growth Award. He said that the Mayor has done a press release and that a trophy was received and has been placed in the trophy case in the DPW office.

9. REPORT- CABLEVISION SHOOT WITH NICK OVERALL

Mr. Alvord said that Cablevision started the interview with Mr. Overall at Gregory Blvd & Ludlow Manor and moved to Calf Pasture Beach Road. He said that he and Mr. Sotnik spoke about the broader tree programs and about the Calf Pasture Beach Road project. He said that Cablevision will provide Mr. Overall with a DVD of the interview, and that it will be aired prior to the Tree Festival. He said that Mr. Overall did a great job. Mr. Whitehead asked if Cablevision had given any commitment to attend the Tree Festival. Mr. Alvord said "Yes."

10. ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION EXECUTION

Mr. Nelson said that Arbor Day ceremony at Cranbury School went very well and that the kids did a great job on the posters and presentations. He said that Mr. Tracy spoke and that Mr. Donnelly announced the award for the Tree City USA. Mr. Alvord said that the Mayor was out of town, but Ms. Bolden, the President of the Common Council had filled in for the Mayor, and presented the proclamation. He also said that Senator Duff had attended.

11. UPDATE- TREE FESTIVAL 2009

Mr. Nelson said that the Tree Festival will be held on May 16, 2009, and that terrific progress is being made. Mr. Alvord said that working with Wilton has been both interesting and enjoyable to work with, and that they have brought a lot of new ideas to the project. He said this year there will be more kid's activities, and that 2 trees will be planted. He said 1 of the trees is sponsored by NEON and the other by the Connecticut River Forest Council through a donation from NRG Energy. He said this year Mr. Whitehead has arranged for a portable saw mill operation demonstration to be on site. Mr. Nelson said that he had spoken to representatives of Pepperidge Farm, and they will be donating the hamburger and hotdog rolls, and will be giving a presentation of the history on the Pepperidge tree. Ms. Mac Cleod asked if any marketing would be allowed. Mr. Alvord said "No," but the exhibitors and sponsors will be recognized both during and after the Tree Festival. Mr. Alvord said that the next meeting for the Tree Festival will be held on Thursday in Wilton. He said the set up for the Tree Festival will be held on Friday, May 15, 2009, at 1:00PM and that the Boy Scouts will be camping out at Cranbury Park to watch the tents. Ms. Mac Cleod asked when the signs will be put out. Mr. Alvord said that the banners will go out 2 weeks in advance of the festival and following that the signs will go out. Mr. Sotnik coordinating the printing and distribution of the flyers for the Tree Festival. Mr. Alvord said that the flyers will be going to all of the public elementary schools in both Norwalk and Wilton. Mr. Tracy said that the paperwork for the health permit still needs to be completed. Mr. Whitehead said that he would contact Mr. Oman and have him contact Mr. Tracy regarding this item.

12. UPDATE- PROPOSED REVISIONS TO CITY CODE CHAPTER 112, TREES

Mr. Alvord said that the revisions that this Committee proposed were forwarded and approved by the Public Works Committee, and have been forwarded to the Ordinance Committee of the Common Council. He said that it will be put on the agenda of the Ordinance Committee for discussion and then a public hearing will be scheduled. He said following the public hearing, it will be sent to the Common Council for approval.

13. REPORT- TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN PRESENTED TO COUNCIL

Mr. Alvord said that the plan was presented to the Public Works Committee at their last meeting, was sent to the Common Council, and was approved.

14. NEIGHBORHOOLD ACTIVITIES

No discussion, no one attended the meeting.

15. DISCUSSION- NTA ACTIVITIES

Mr. Tracy said that they have been working on the planning for the Tree Festival and that 2 major tent building sessions were held. He also said that the Treasurer of the Tree Alliance, Jean Mc Andrew was honored by the Volunteer Action Center as volunteer of the year, and that a ceremony was held last week.

16. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Alvord said that a decision needs to be made on the species of tree to be planted on the location that Ms. Mac Cleod had identified at the intersection of Scriber and Richards Avenue. Ms. Mac Cleod provided a list of species she thought could be planted. Mr. Whitehead suggested a Kousa Dogwood tree be planted at that location.

Mr. Frasier said that a lot of trees on Highland Avenue have been removed and asked if a planting plan can be established to plant trees on Highland Avenue from Roton School to McKinley Avenue. Mr. Nelson asked how many trees will be needed to cover that area. Mr. Frasier said approximately 25-30 trees. Mr. Frasier asked if trees can be planted on the on the 6th Taxing District's property, which is adjacent to the City's right of way. Mr. Alvord said "yes" and in the City's tree planting program states that if there is insufficient room on the City's right of way, the City will plant trees that will contribute to the tree scape and there is an ownership agreement that they will need to sign so that they will take some sense of ownership, and care for the tree. He said if they are willing to execute an ownership agreement, a tree can be planted on their property. Mr. Whitehead asked if some of that area is a State road. Mr. Alvord said "yes". Mr. Frasier asked what constitutes state property. Mr. Alvord said it depends upon where the property lines are indicated on the map. Mr. Alvord suggested that Mr. Frasier schedule a meeting with Mr. Sotnik to look at the property maps. Mr. Whitehead suggested that the trees at the community center in that area be assessed. Mr. Frasier asked if trees can be removed as part of the tree planting program. Mr. Alvord said "Yes," but not if they are on private or state property. Mr. Frasier asked what if the trees are a safety risk or a public hazard. Mr. Alvord said that the City's customer service center will notify either the state or the property owner by a letter encouraging them to deal with the tree, and if they don't they could be held liable if the tree causes any damage. Mr. Frasier asked in terms of time, if the trees could be planted in this year's budget. Mr. Alvord said they probably won't be planted this calendar year because there are limited funds in

the tree planting account, and there are 45 trees scheduled for planting, and that only \$25,000 a year is received in the tree planting budget. Mr. Nelson asked Mr. Alvord to send the 6th Taxing District the ownership agreement. Mr. Frasier asked if any "Specimen" or "Special" trees can be planted under the tree planting program. Mr. Alvord said "Yes" if they are in the City planting contract. Mr. Frasier asked if trees that are donated, that are not in the contract, can be planted. Mr. Alvord said "Yes."

Mr. Viteretto said that volunteers are available on May 9, 2009, to plant Vinca Minor in the tree wells on Wall Street. Ms. Becker said that will also be the date of the Wall Street clean up. Mr. Alvord said that Wall Street is scheduled to be paved at the end of May, and suggested waiting until the paving is completed. Mr. Viteretto asked what will be done to protect the Ginkgo trees during the paving process. Mr. Alvord said that there will be an inspector on site, and that traffic barricades can be placed around the trees. Mr. Viteretto asked if 4 stakes and orange fencing can be placed around the trees instead of the barricades. Mr. Alvord said "Yes." Ms. Becker asked if all the construction debris will be picked up after the paving is completed. Mr. Alvord said "Yes." Mr. Whitehead said that the exhaust from the reclamation machine discharges on 1 side, and that they get extremely hot and suggested that they drive the opposite way of traffic so that the exhaust discharges in the center of the road, so that no damage is done to the trees or the tree pits. Mr. Whitehead asked if the reclaiming will be done at night. Mr. Alvord said "No" because of all of the structures in that road. Ms. Becker asked if there are beginning and ending dates for the paving. Mr. Alvord said "No" and that the Contractor is now working on paving Rowayton Avenue, and will be completed in 8 working days, and then he will be going to another municipality for 2 weeks, and after that, will begin the paving on Wall Street. Ms. Becker asked how long the paving on Wall Street will take to complete. Mr. Alvord said it will take awhile due to the structures that are in the road.

Mr. Viteretto said that the Redevelopment Agency is changing the island in front of the library at Belden and Wall Street, and asked if that will be completed before Wall Street is paved. Mr. Alvord said that he is unaware of that, and that no one can change the road alignment without the approval of the Public Works Department. Ms. Witkowsky said she thought that was part of the POKO development project. Mr. Alvord said that the paving on Wall Street that is being done is not going to impact or be impacted by the POKO development. Ms. Becker asked if everything POKO needs for building has been dealt with. Mr. Alvord said "Yes."

Mr. Alvord said the elementary school needs to be selected to work with for Arbor Day next year. After further discussion the Committee members agreed to work with Silvermine School. Mr. Viteretto said that he will e-mail the Principal. Mr. Alvord suggested that he stop in the school rather than just sending an e-mail.

Ms. Becker asked once the yellow signs are installed by CL&P how long before the trimming will begin. Mr. Sotnik said usually within a couple of weeks. Mr. Nelson asked if there is a contact at CL&P to give an exact date of when they will be in the area. Mr. Sotnik said "Yes." Mr. Alvord said he encourages people to check the information that is put on the website.

Ms. Witkowsky said on the last 2 plantings that were done on the Second District Water Departments property that 1 of the trees was planted inside the fence on the Maple Street side, and the other tree was planted on Magnolia Street and asked what the reasoning was for that. Mr. Sotnik said it was a better location because of the steep sloping grade near the fence, and was a larger area for the tree to grow. Ms. Witkowsky asked who installed the tree gators on those trees. Mr. Alvord said Almstead Tree.

17. ADJOURNMENT

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

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 P.M.

