

## Minutes

### TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING March 24, 2009

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Attendance: Don Nelson, Chairman  
Maribeth Becker

Absent: Peter Viteretto  
Dave Tracy  
Richard Whitehead

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

Norwalk Tree Alliance: Dick Aime

Neighborhood Liaisons: Gay Mac Leod, West Norwalk Association  
Diane Witkowsky, Spring Hill Association

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

Chairman Nelson called the meeting to order at 6:10PM

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

The approval of the meeting minutes was tabled until the April meeting due to a lack of a quorum.

#### **3. APPROVE PROPOSED REVISIONS TO CITY CODE CHAPTER 112, TREES, AND FORWARDED TO THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL**

Mr. Alvord said that the principal changes are to remove specific dollar values from the ordinance, and in section 112-5, replace the Traffic and Parking Division with the Department of Public Works. Committee member Whitehead was contacted by phone and said that when the utility company removes a tree, or if they so severely mutilate a tree during trimming operations, they be accountable to replace the tree. Mr. Alvord said that in section 112-4, C.1.E states a tree replacement commitment. Ms. Witkowsky said that the language is vague. Mr. Whitehead said it should be more specific. Mr. Whitehead also suggested that the utility companies need to make more of a

commitment when they are changing the power grid, and do directional trimming, that they replace the trees that they damage. After further discussion it was decided to change the language in section 112-4, C.1.E to tree replacement commitment shall be at the discretion of the Tree Warden.

**\*\* CHAIRMAN NELSON ELECTED TO FORWARD THE PROPOSED REVISED ORDINANCE TO THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**

**4. REPORT – INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL CUTTING**

Mr. Sotnik had no illegal cuttings to report.

**5. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM**

- a. Van Buren and Stevens- Spring 2009  
Mr. Sotnik said that the permit has been sent to the State, and once he receives the permit back he will be placing the order with Almstead Tree. He presented a copy of the permit application package for the Committee Members to review.
- b. East Norwalk- Spring 2009  
Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Overall has given him the paper work for the 18 trees to be planted at a variety of locations in the East Norwalk area. He said that a tree staking now needs to be scheduled. Chairman Nelson said that Mr. Overall has been elected the Tree Advocate of the year. Mr. Alvord said that Wilton is also naming a Tree Advocate of the year, and they will both be at the Tree Festival and be recognized by the Mayor and the First Selectman. Chairman Nelson suggested that Mr. Overall be included in the tree staking.
- c. Calf Pasture Beach Road, Phase II- Fall 2009  
Mr. Alvord said that the bids are in for the drainage project and the Contractor has been selected. He said this will be scheduled for a fall planting.

**6. INFORMATION COPIES**

- a. Arbor Day, March/April 2009  
Mr. Alvord distributed.

**7. UPDATE- ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION PLANNING**

Chairman Nelson said that he and Mr. Alvord had met with the Principal and the Assistant Principal of Cranbury Elementary School, and gave them an outline of the agenda. He said they are making good progress. Mr. Alvord said that he has spoken with the President of the Care Committee of Double Tree Hotel and she has linked up with the school on the class room portion, but they will also be doing all the same

participation as they did last year. He said there is a planning meeting scheduled with the school on April 3, 2009.

#### **8. UPDATE- TREE FESTIVAL 2009**

Chairman Nelson said that the planning progress is well on track and there are people signed up for every category. Mr. Alvord said that the next planning meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2009, at 9:00 AM at Cranbury Park. He said there will be a walkthrough and the meeting will be conducted at the Gallagher Mansion.

#### **9. STATUS- TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Mr. Alvord said that he has finalized the plan and the only change he has made is that he has eliminated the public participation section. He said as things develop exhibits or appendices to the plan would be developed and attached to the plan. He said those appendices would be up to the Tree Advisory Committee to develop and approve for enclosure in the plan.

**\*\* CHAIRMAN NELSON ELECTED TO FORWARD THE PROPOSED TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN TO THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**

#### **10. CL&P ANNUAL PERMIT**

Mr. Sotnik said that he had met with Doug Pistawka of CL&P on March 5, 2009, and he presented a map of where they will be working this year. Mr. Sotnik circulated the map to Committee members. Ms. Becker asked what the timing span will be. Mr. Alvord said the areas are described on the website by street boundaries. Ms. Becker asked how often CL&P visits certain areas. Mr. Alvord said they try to do it every 5 to 8 years.

#### **11. DISCUSSION- NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVIES**

Ms. Becker said that the main topic of discussion was the Green Dream proposal for Ryan Park. Ms. Witkowsky said that the plan proposed to get neighborhood involvement of all ages. She said the proposal will be presented to Mr. Mocciae.

#### **12. DISCUSSION- NTA ACTIVITIES**

Mr. Aime said most of the attention has been given to the planning of the Tree Festival.

### **13. NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Witkowsky asked if the grass area between the curb and the sidewalks on Wilton Avenue could be considered for a planting location. Mr. Alvord said “no” because that is a “snow shelf” and as the trees mature there is no where for the roots to grow, and it can also potentially create a sight line issue.

Mr. Alvord distributed an e-mail from Chris Donnelly and said that NRG Energy owns and operates the Manresa Power Plant and is celebrating 10 years in Connecticut. He said they made a donation of \$10,000 to the DEP for planting trees. He said they would also like to donate a tree for planting at the Tree Festival. He said that Mr. Mocciae is fine with that and has stated where his preferred locations would be.

Ms. Mac Leod said she had sent an e-mail to Committee members regarding a complaint that she had received from a resident on Fox Run Road. He stated that his neighbor is cutting down all the trees around his house. Mr. Alvord said that he had visited that location and determined that they are all private trees and there is nothing the City can do about that. Mr. Aime asked if a permit needs to be taken out to remove private trees. Mr. Alvord said “no.” Ms. Witkowsky asked if there is damage to a tree that is caused by excavation if that is covered in the City ordinance. Mr. Alvord said “yes” it is under Chapter 97, Excavation and Fill, and it applies whether the tree is on public or private property and the fill/excavation quantity is greater than 50 cubic yards.

Mr. Alvord said that he received a letter from Chris Donnelly informing him that Norwalk’s application for Tree City USA has been approved by the State.

Mr. Alvord said that he received a letter from a resident on Burritt Avenue requesting that a tree be planted. He said this may be an opportunity to generate a neighborhood association in that area.

### **14. ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* CHAIRMAN NELSON MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM