

Minutes

TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING September 23, 2008

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

Absent: Peter Viteretto

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/Hospital Area
Gay Mac Leod, West Norwalk Association

Others: Diane Lauricella

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF AUGUST 26, 2008

Ms. Witkowsky said on Item 14, Paragraph 2, Line 1, to change "Witkowsy" to "Witkowsky"

Ms. Witkowsky said on Item 14, Paragraph 3, Line 1, to change "Witkowsy" to "Witkowsky"

**** MR. WHITEHEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES WITH
CORRECTIONS**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. REPORT- INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL CUTTING

Mr. Sotnik had no illegal cuttings to report.

4. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

- a. East Avenue/East Norwalk
Mr. Alvord said that he will contact Mr. Overall to stake the locations and will then place the order with Almstead Tree. He said that this does not include any locations on East Avenue because the 2 property owners did not like the locations that had been staked and they do not want the trees. Chairman Nelson asked how many trees will be planted. Mr. Alvord said there will be nine. Chairman Nelson asked when the trees will be planted. Mr. Alvord said once Mr. Overall stakes the area and they are checked to ensure they are marked with the correct species the order will be placed with Almstead Tree.
- b. Van Buren and Stevens
Mr. Sotnik said that he had placed a follow up telephone call to Delois Barnes at the Department of Transportation, and she is in the process of trying to get answers from the people above her as to whether or not they will do the planting if the trees are provided to them. Chairman Nelson asked how many trees will be planted. Mr. Sotnik said there will be eight.
- c. Maple Street
Mr. Alvord said that he is in the process of arranging a luncheon with Mr. Hiscock and assuming he could do that within the next week or so, there will be plenty of time to plant the two additional trees in the fall.
- d. Calf Pasture Beach Road
Mr. Alvord said that there was a Public Hearing and that DPW will begin the removals next week and have the stumps ground as quickly as possible. He said that he will request that Mr. Bociek begin looking for stock and that a decision still needs to be made for which location will get which species of tree. Ms. Witkowsky asked once the trees are planted if Almstead would be responsible for caring for the trees. Mr. Alvord said that the contract requires Almstead to ensure their survivability and health for one year. Ms. Witkowsky asked about the status of the trees on Broad Street and said they all appear to be in pretty bad shape. Mr. Sotnik said that he had contacted Mr. Bociek to check those trees and if the trees have already lost their leaves he will give it time and will document that he will owe the City a tree but if he sees that they are already dead he will replace them. Ms. Witkowsky asked who is responsible for watering the trees. Mr. Alvord said

within the one-year period it is Almstead's responsibility to ensure that they get watered and if it's beyond that one-year period, it is the responsibility of the City. Ms. Witkowsky asked if the City had planted the trees further down Broad Street near the river. Mr. Alvord said "yes". Ms. Witkowsky said they should also be looked at because they are not well either. Mr. Sotnik said that he had mentioned that to Mr. Bociek as well.

5. INFORMATION COPIES

Mr. Alvord distributed a letter that Mayor Moccia had received from the Arbor Day Foundation congratulating Norwalk for having been a Tree City USA for the fourth consecutive year.

6. PROJECT UPDATE- WICKET FENCE FOR WALL STREET TREE PITS

Chairman Nelson asked if Mr. Viteretto has been in contact with anyone regarding the wicket fences. Mr. Alvord said he will follow up with the Redevelopment Agency to see what kind of discussions have taken place.

7. DISCUSSION- AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL GRANT 2008

Mr. Alvord said that he had received a letter from Mr. Donnelly stating that he had appreciated receiving the application but has received applications for approximately \$153,000 and only had \$52,000 so they will not be able to provide any funding for the project. Mr. Sotnik said that he had spoken to Mr. Donnelly and had asked him what the criteria was and Mr. Donnelly said that the application was a good sound one and if there was more money the application would have been granted, but had decided to try and put it towards programs that are just trying to get established rather than programs that have already been established and are further along, such as Norwalk's program.

8. DISCUSSION- URBAN FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PLANNING WORKSHOP

Mr. Tracy said that he had come up with a lot of new ideas for Management Plans. Chairman Nelson said that he learned that what Norwalk is doing now is considered Phase I, and once completed would move onto a Phase II. He also said that there is a webinar on October 16, 2008, and invited all members of the committee who would like to attend.

9. DISCUSSION – TREE LINE USA PROGRAM

Mr. Alvord asked since there has been no criteria found anywhere for the Tree Line USA program if this item should be removed from the agenda. Chairman Nelson suggested waiting until after next month's meeting to see if Mr. Aime has come up with anything.

10. REMINDER- TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr. Alvord said he has completed the long-term goals and once he completes the funding piece, he will be e-mailing it to the Committee members. By next month's meeting he would like to have a draft completed and would like to present the final plan to the Public Works Committee and the Common Council for approval in December.

11. REMINDER- DPW OPEN HOUSE- SEPTEMBER 27, 2008.

Mr. Alvord said that there will be a walk-thru scheduled for Friday, September 26, 2008, at 10:00AM at the Public Works Center for those who will be participating in the Open House.

12. DISCUSSION- NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES

Ms. Becker said that the CNNA met last night and that the Crime Committee had presented their findings. Mr. Alvord asked how more neighborhood associations could be encouraged to have tree liaisons. Ms. Witkowsky suggested more publicity of the tree program. Ms. Mac Leod said it needs to be clearly stated what the time factor is on a monthly basis and what can be accomplished. Chairman Nelson suggested having Mr. Moss do a follow up piece on tree liaisons. He also suggested doing some plantings in areas that currently don't have a neighborhood association. Mr. Alvord said the real success with the tree planting program has been working through neighborhood associations because there tends to be a sense of ownership and has some concerns about planting a tree in the middle of nowhere that no one is concerned about. Chairman Nelson also suggested finding volunteers who may be willing to take a group of streets and find a place to plant some trees. Ms. Witkowsky also suggested presenting before and after pictures of locations where trees have been planted.

Mr. Alvord asked about the status of the group formation in the Wall Street area. Ms. Becker said it's currently there, but is loosely organized. Mr. Alvord said

there could also be some real value for an active business association in SONO, Wall Street, and Eastern Norwalk.

13. DISCUSSION- NTA ACTIVITES

Mr. Tracy said there is a Connecticut Tree Protective Association meeting scheduled in Wallingford and that the Tree Alliance will have a display. He said that he has been trying to get the signs done for the Rosa Parks Arboretum and he needs assistance on the specific names for the additional trees. He also said that he was contacted by the Wilton Garden Club and they have reiterated their interest in working on the 2009 Tree Festival. Mr. Alvord said that he would be contacting Mr. Mocciae and scheduling a site visit to Cranbury Park. He also said that a courtesy site visit still needs to be scheduled with Emily Lopez, the Principal of Columbus School.

14. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Lauricella distributed a letter that she had drafted for some positive ways to interface with the public. Chairman Nelson asked the members of the Committee to review the letter and get back to him with their suggestions and feedback and he will arrange a meeting with Ms. Lauricella. She said when she was preparing for an appeal on a removal of a City tree that it was not a citizen or user-friendly system. She said that she had come up with some thoughts and ideas on how to change the process. Chairman Nelson asked if that was included in her letter. Ms. Lauricella said "yes". She also said she will forward her ideas on how to get the public more involved in becoming Tree Liaisons.

Mr. Whitehead said that he had spoken with Tom Vorio, the Superintendent of Oak Hills Golf Course, and they will be attending the October Tree Advisory Committee Meeting with their Tree Management Plan. They would like to review what they have done over the course of the past year, and what they plan to do moving forward.

Mr. Alvord said that he had received an e-mail from Chairman Nelson which originated from Dave Shockley regarding someone wanting to donate a red maple tree and asked the status of that. Chairman Nelson said that Mr. Shockley was going to take a look at the tree, but he has not heard back from him yet. Mr. Whitehead said that they are very valuable trees, but getting it out of the location where it currently exists will cause a lot of disturbance.

15. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. NELSON MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 P.M.