

**TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**Minutes**

TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

**July 22, 2008**

Attendance: Don Nelson, Chairman

Peter Viteretto, Rich Whitehead

Dave Tracy

Absent: Maribeth Becker

Staff: Hal Alvord, Tree Warden

Paul Sotnik, Deputy Tree Warden

Dilene Byrd, Secretary

Norwalk Tree Alliance: Dick Aime

Neighborhood Liaisons: Dianne Witkowsky, Spring Hill/Hospital Area

Gay Mac Leod, West Norwalk

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Nelson called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM

1. **APPROVE THE MINUTES OF TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF JUNE 24, 2008**

Mr. Aime said on Page 3, Item 7, Line to change “plating” to “planting”

Mr. Whitehead said on Page 4, Item 9, Line 3, to delete his name for section 5 A.

**\*\* MR. WHITEHEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM WITH CORRECTIONS**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIOUMSLY\_**

**3. REPORT- INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL CUTTING**

Mr. Sotnik had no illegal cuttings to report.

**4. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM**

1. East Avenue/East Norwalk

Mr. Alvord said that he, Mr. Sotnik and Mr. Overall went out to the two properties on East Avenue and had staked the locations. He said that since the stakings were done both of the property owners contacted Mr. Overall stating they did not like the area that had been staked and did not want the trees. Mr. Alvord said they had looked at 11 locations in East Norwalk and, with one exception, they were all fine. Mr. Nelson asked if they will be scheduled for a fall planting. Mr. Alvord said “yes.”

1. Van Buren and Stevens

Mr. Sotnik said that he had received a call back from the Department of Transportation stating that a full encroachment permit would be required. The permit would also require a maintenance agreement between the City and the State, permission from the adjoining property owners, and a list of exactly what type of trees would be planted. Completion of all of these items would be required prior to a permit being issued. He said rather than going through that entire process, he will contact the Department of Transportation and inquire if there is any way to get them to plant the trees in that area.

1. Maple Street

No discussion.

1. Calf Pasture Beach Road

Mr. Viteretto said that he has received the aerial photographs from the City and that Mr. Sotnik had spoken with Mr. Bociek regarding the tree selection for the plantings. He said the target is to get as many of the 29 trees planted this fall as possible and that he recommends 60% of them be Pin Oaks. He said that it still needs to be discussed as to how to address the homeowners on the west side of Calf Pasture Beach Road. Mr. Alvord asked if any of the plantings will be on private property. Mr. Whitehead said “no” and that they are all City trees. Mr. Viteretto said that there would still need to be some public information. Mr. Alvord said that Mr. Overall should be contacted for that. He said that a site visit also needs to be scheduled for the tree removals that will need to be done and if possible Mr. Overall should attend. Ms. Witkowsky said that she has received numerous inquiries regarding the plantings and asked if there is a copy of the map showing which trees will be removed. Mr. Viteretto said that any inquiries she receives should be directed to himself or Mr. Alvord. Mr. Alvord said once the trees are posted for removal that people have 10 days to request a public hearing. He also said that he is not suggesting that people have to go through the formal process and if they want to see the plan they are welcome to attend a Tree Advisory Committee meeting. Mr. Alvord told Ms. Witkowsky that she can tell people with absolute confidence that no healthy tree will be removed. Mr. Nelson asked if once the plan has been finalized a press release can be done. Mr. Alvord said “yes”. Mr. Sotnik requested that Mr. Whitehead and Mr. Viteretto e-mail him with some dates of availability for the site visit. Mr. Alvord said that he would contact Mr. Overall for his availability.

## 1. Tree Planting Contract

Mr. Alvord said that the tree planting contract has been drafted and that he has reviewed it and that it has now been sent to Almstead Tree for their signature.

### 1. PROJECT UPDATE- AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL GRANT 2007

Mr. Sotnik said that a site visit was done with Mr. Donnelly last Friday and that Mr. Donnelly was very pleased. He said that he has now issued a letter to him requesting that the check for \$6,000 be sent. He said that Mr. Donnelly will do his final report and that a check should be received in approximately 6 weeks.

### 1. PROJECT UPDATE - WICKET FENCE FOR WALL STREET TREE PITS

Mr. Alvord suggested that Mr. Viteretto contact the Redevelopment agency to follow up on the e-mail that he sent. He said if Mr. Moore is uncomfortable making the decision then a letter should be sent to Mr. Sheehan.

### 1. DISCUSSION- AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL GRANT 2008

Mr. Alvord said that there is clearly some value to applying for the grant and if the application is going to be done he will need some volunteers to complete the application. Mr. Nelson asked what the deadline is for submitting the application. Mr. Alvord said August 8, 2008. Mr. Whitehead requested that the application be sent to him to review. Mr. Sotnik suggested that Mr. Whitehead go to the DPW office to review the application and that he would provide him with copies of the 2007 Grant application.

### 1. DISCUSSION – CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF ROSA PARKS ARBORETUM

Mr. Alvord said that the frequency of site visits to the arboretum needs to be determined. He said that the Parks and Recreation Department maintains the grounds at Columbus School and that during the site visit it should be established what Parks and Recreation will be responsible for and what Public Works will be responsible for so that the arboretum is being kept in a proper manor. Mr. Nelson said that during maintenance, the trees are being hit with weed wackers and they are being damaged, and asked if there is anything that can be purchased to protect the trees. Mr. Whitehead suggested HDPE tubing. Mr. Viteretto asked if there is a designated Parks and Recreation staff performing the maintenance at the arboretum. Mr. Alvord said “no”. Mr. Viteretto suggested contacting Mike Mocciaie requesting there be a designated staff. Mr. Alvord said that he does not think they will be able to make that commitment. Mr. Viteretto suggested posting signs in the garage for the proper weed wacking procedures around trees. Mr. Alvord said he would discuss that with Mike Mocciaie. Mr. Tracy said some of the trees

at the arboretum are also in need of trimming. Mr. Alvord said that he would have a work order created for Almstead to inspect and trim the trees. He also said if they can perform the work fairly quickly he will also request they use their water truck to do the watering around the trees and if not, a work order will be issued to Public Works for the watering. Mr. Tracy offered to have the Norwalk Tree Alliance place the plastic tubing around the tree trunks to protect them from damage by weed whackers.

Mr. Alvord said that the principal of Columbus School has retired and she was a huge supporter of the arboretum and he suggests paying a courtesy call to the new principal to introduce themselves and to explain how the arboretum came to be.

#### 1. **DISCUSSION- TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Mr. Alvord said he invites any comments on the parts of the plan that are completed. He also said he would volunteer to do section 5a of the plan. He said that a time frame for the completion of the plan needs to be determined for those who volunteered to do parts of the plan and also see if there are any volunteers to take on the parts of the plan that are left. He suggested that the plan be completed by the end of this calendar year and although not required, present the plan to the Common Council for their approval. Mr. Sotnik said there still needs to be a volunteer for Item 6 of the plan. Mr. Viteretto said that Item 6 should be a subheading of Item 7. Mr. Sontik asked Mr. Aime which section he would like to volunteer for. Mr. Aime said he would do the public participation section. Mr. Alvord said that he would also volunteer to complete section 9 of the plan.

#### 1. **DISCUSSION – TREE LINE USA PROGRAM**

Mr. Viteretto asked if a vendor would recognize that they have to meet the criteria put forth for the program of quality tree care as defined by the Arbor Day Foundation. Mr. Aime said “yes”. Mr. Alvord said after reading the article it was not clear to him that this is a program sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation and they are the ones that certify the utilities as a Tree Line USA. He said that the next step may be to speak with Doug Pistawka of CL&P and ask him if they are aware of or interested in the program. Mr. Alvord asked Mr. Aime to contact the Arbor Day Foundation to inquire if there are any forms that the utilities need to complete.

#### 1. **DISCUSSION - NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES**

Ms. Witkowsky said that the Guardian Angels would be attending the next CNNA meeting.

#### 1. **DISCUSSION - NTA ACTIVITIES**

No discussion.

#### 1. **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Tracy said that there is a seminar being held for the Urban Forestry Management Plan that he and Mr. Nelson would be attending and that there are also 3 webinars that go along with that seminar. He said one of the webinars was held last week and he will be able to download the PowerPoint presentation as well as the audio and distribute them. Mr. Alvord said he will also be scheduling a webinar that is offered by the Public Works Association that is also called the Urban Forestry Management Plan and invited any committee member wishing to attend. He said he would e-mail the date once scheduled.

Mr. Nelson asked the status of the new intern position. Mr. Alvord said there is no change at this time.

Mr. Nelson said he would like to schedule a meeting to discuss the Tree Festival. Mr. Alvord said that he would e-mail some dates of availability.

Mr. Alvord said that both Chairman Nelson and Mr. Whitehead have been reappointed to the Tree Advisory Committee.

Ms. Witkowsky said that she has received numerous complaints regarding the removal of the tennis courts at Jefferson School. She said that someone had suggested to her that, since the parking lot is not being used for parking in the summer, if it would be possible to install portable tennis or basketball courts. Mr. Alvord said that he would discuss that with Mr. Mocciae.

1. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 P.M.