

TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes

TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

June 24, 2008

Attendance: Don Nelson, Chairman

Peter Viteretto

Rich Whitehead

Dave Tracy

Absent: Maribeth Becker

Staff: 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

Marcia Powell, Village Creek Association

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF APRIL 22, 2008

Ms. Mac Leod said on Page 1 to change "McLeod" to "Mac Leod"

Mr. Aime said on Page 2, Item 4a, 7th Line, to change "departments" to "department's"

Mr. Aime said on Page 2, Item 4c, 9th Line, to change "rational" to "rationale"

Mr. Aime said on Page 6, Item 13, Line 1, to change "nonprofit's" to "nonprofits"

Mr. Aime said on Page 6, Item 13, Paragraph 2, to change "department's" to "departments"

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF MAY 27, 2008

Mr. Aime said on Page 3, Item 10, Paragraph 2, Line 1, to change "Meiges" "Meigas"

Chairman Nelson said on Page 3, Item 10, to change "two dead trees" to "one dead tree"

Ms. Witkowsky said on Page 4, Item 14, Paragraph 2, to change "Witkowsy" to "Witkowsky"

** MR. TRACY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL AND MAY WITH CORRECTIONS
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

4. REPORT- INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL CUTTING

Mr. Sotnik had no illegal cuttings to report.

5. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

a. East Avenue

Mr. Sotnik said that he will contact Mr. Overall to see if he has staked the areas for the plantings. He said if the areas have been staked that he would schedule a field visit with Mr. Overall and Mr. Alvord, and then the next step would be to place an order with Almstead Tree. Ms. Witkowsky asked if Mr. Overall had received enough orders to proceed with the plantings. Mr. Sotnik said “yes” and that Mr. Overall had received approximately 8 orders.

b. East Avenue

No further discussion.

c. Van Buren and Stevens

Mr. Sotnik said that this is an area that could use some trees, but said the area is within the State of Connecticut’s right-of-way. He said that he has placed calls to District 3 to see if they have any issues with the City installing trees in that area, and is waiting on return telephone calls.

d. Maple Street

Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Alvord has spoken with John Hiscock of the Water Department and they are in the process of discussing when access to the site can be obtained. Once that has been established as well as the locations staked, an order will be placed with Almstead Tree for 2 Red Maples.

Ms. Powell left at 6:30PM

e. Tree Planting Contract

Mr. Sotnik said that Almstead Tree has been chosen as the tree planting contractor for the City. He said that the other three bidders mis-bid the project and clearly did not understand the intent of the tree program. Mr. Nelson said they did not understand that trees are planted based on the requests received from neighborhoods and were under the

impression they would be planting 40-50 trees at one time. Mr. Sotnik said that Almstead Tree is a better fit for the City's tree program. Almstead's business is the maintenance of trees as well as the planting of trees. The other companies did landscaping, snow plowing, etc. as their primary business, and as a side business, they also planted trees. Planting and maintaining trees is not their primary business, as is the case with Almstead. Mr. Nelson said that the contract is for a period of 2 years with a 1 year option to extend.

Mr. Whitehead said that at Ben Franklin School during one of the storms a Bradford Pear tree that was inside the playground was destroyed and they have requested to have a tree planted to replace it. He said that the program they have requires the children to have outdoor activity and there are only two trees in the playground for shade. The Bradford Pear that was destroyed was one of the two trees. Mr. Sotnik said that he would speak with Mike Mocciae of Parks and Recreation regarding that because school grounds are maintained by them and replacement trees would fall under their planting contract. Mr. Sotnik asked if the tree should be replaced with another Bradford Pear tree. Mr. Whitehead said "no" and suggested a stronger tree such as a London Plain tree or a Tupelo tree.

Ms. Witkowsky asked if anyone had looked at the trees on Broad Street. Mr. Whitehead said that he had and they appear to be weak which is partly due to the soil that was used when they had been planted. Mr. Sotnik said that he would contact Bob Bociek because the trees are still under warranty.

6. INFORMATION COPIES

a. Tree City USA Bulletin No. 18

Mr. Sotnik distributed.

7. UPDATE-TREE REPLACEMENTS ON CALF PASTURE BEACH ROAD

Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Alvord has gotten no response back from the President of the Charles Cove Condominium Association and said that now we will probably be looking at a fall planting rather than a spring planting. Mr. Sotnik said that the culvert replacement project at the south end of Calf Pasture Beach Road will be moving ahead this coming winter and said the City has received the permit from the DEP. He said if a fall planting is going to be done, there will be no planting south of the north side of the pond. Mr. Viteretto distributed a plan of where the 29 trees could be planted and requested a better aerial map from DPW. Mr. Sotnik said that he would provide him with aerial photographs. Mr. Viteretto said that he and Mr. Whitehead have been discussing which species to plant but said that prior to the trees being installed there is some trimming and removal work that needs to be done. Mr. Sotnik said he would schedule a walkthrough with Mr. Viteretto, Mr. Whitehead, Mr. Alvord, and Mr. Torre to post the trees.

8. DISCUSSION- LESSONS LEARNED FROM 2008 TREE FESTIVAL

Mr. Nelson said that Mr. Tracy had put together an agenda to address several of the items and issues that developed at this year's tree festival. Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Alvord is still interested in getting a small group together with members of staff, the Tree Advisory Committee and the Norwalk Tree Alliance to discuss the lessons learned from the Tree Festival. Mr. Whitehead suggested that Mr. Alvord send an e-mail with a date of availability to meet. Mr. Nelson asked Mr. Tracy to forward the agenda to the members of the Tree Advisory Committee and to City staff.

9. DISCUSSION - TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr. Sotnik said that to date Mr. Alvord has still not received any volunteers to work on the Tree Management Plan. Mr. Tracy said he would volunteer to do section 5b, Mr. Whitehead said he would volunteer to do sections 5c,5d, and 5f, Mr. Nelson said he would volunteer do to section 5e and Mr. Viteretto said he would volunteer to do sections 7a and 7b. Mr. Aime also volunteered to do one section.

Mr. Tracy said that there is an upcoming Urban Forest Management Plan one day course scheduled for the fall. He said it will be held in Delaware on August 20, 2008, and in Massachusetts on September 16, 2008. He said that the registration is due by July 14, 2008, and said he would e-mail the registration form to anyone who is interested in attending.

10. DISCUSSION- TREE LINE USA PROGRAM

Mr. Aime said he will try and have this completed by next month's meeting.

11. DISCUSSION - WICKET FENCE FOR WALL STREET TREE PITS

Mr. Viteretto said that he had sent an e-mail to the Redevelopment Agency to pursue funding for the wicket fence and also requested that it be instituted that the use of tree wickets are required for any redevelopment efforts that go on.

12. LOOK-AHEAD

a. DPW Open House- September 27th.

Mr. Nelson said that the open house is scheduled on September 27, 2008 at the DPW Garage.

b. Arbor Day 2009- April 24th Cranbury Elementary School

Mr. Nelson said that Arbor Day will be held at Cranbury Elementary School.

c. Third Annual Tree Festival

Mr. Nelson said that a date has not yet been chosen for the Tree Festival, but said it will be held at Cranbury Park.

13. DISCUSSION - NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES

No discussion.

14. DISCUSSION - NTA ACTIVITIES

Mr. Aime said that members of the NTA had gone to Milford to see their City's tree nursery. Mr. Nelson asked how big the nursery was and how many trees there were. Mr. Tracy said it is approximately three acres and they have several hundred trees which are all in pots.

Mr. Tracy said that the tree inventory work has started and a crew had gone out last Saturday to finish one of the maps that had been previously started.

15. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Mac Leod distributed a layout of the Adopt-A-Spot which is located between Fox Run Road and Fallow Street. She said the biggest concern there is the lack of water and said there is grass in the spot and there is no way to get water there. She said she is looking for advice on alternative ground cover that would still look nice but would be low maintenance. Mr. Whitehead suggested installing additional trees to provide more shade to the area. Mr. Viteretto suggested Dogwood Trees. Mr. Nelson also suggested expanding the flower beds. Mr. Whitehead and Mr. Viteretto said that they would look at the Adopt-A-Spot and contact Ms. Mac Leod with additional suggestions.

Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Alvord had received another mailing from the DEP asking about applications for the 2008 America the Beautiful grants. Mr. Sotnik said to date they are still working on finishing the final work on the 2007 grant. He said that he and Mr. Alvord had met and had no ideas to submit for the 2008 grant and said that if any of the committee members had any ideas to contact either himself or Mr. Alvord. He said someone would also be needed to volunteer to work on the application. Mr. Nelson asked why the tree planting program would not qualify for the grant. Mr. Sotnik said because it has to be based on a specific project. Mr. Whitehead said the plantings on Calf Pasture

Beach Road should qualify. Mr. Viteretto said that the maintenance work in Taylor Farm could also be included.

Mr. Sotnik said that requests have been received for plantings in the Rowayton area and they are asking for the status. He said that he had gone through and looked at requests for the area from Devils Garden Road to the Long Island Sound and from Wilson Avenue to Darien and had received seven requests over five different locations and that the most they had requested were two trees for one location. He said that he and Mr. Alvord had decided it did not meet with the neighborhood approach. Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Alvord would contact Julie Burton of the CNNA to see if she could help in getting a tree liaison for that area and also to find a volunteer to work on a neighborhood plan.

16. ADJOURNMENT

** CHAIRMAN NELSON MOVED TO ADJOURN

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 P.M.

