

**Minutes**  
**TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**May 28, 2013**

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Attendance: Rich Whitehead  
Gay MacLeod  
Christine Names  
Rob Frazier

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

Norwalk Tree Alliance: Dan Landau

Neighborhood Liaisons: Ron Muller  
John Jinishian

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Whitehead called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

**2. APPROVE MINUTES OF THE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF  
APRIL 23, 2013**

**\*\* MS. NAMES MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES**  
**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

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

Mr. Sotnik said that two trees were replanted at 1 Dawn Road, but that the property owner did not submit a planting plan for review and approval prior to planting the trees as they were instructed to do. Mr. Frazier asked if they have been fined. Mr. Sotnik said not at this time and that he is working with them to establish a reasonable replanting plan prior elevating the level of enforcement action to fines.

Mr. Sotnik said that after further investigation the tree at 38 Brooklawn Avenue was found to be a private tree.

Mr. Sotnik said that at 41 Bayne Street a contractor had done a clear cutting and that two of the trees were city trees. He said that he is working with the property owner on a planting restoration plan. Mr. Whitehead asked if there can be any fine given for erosion. Mr. Alvord said no because he has no jurisdiction on private property. Mr. Whitehead asked if any of the neighbors had called and complained about the clear cutting. Mr. Sotnik said "yes."

Mr. Sotnik said that he is investigating a tree removal at 4 Lisa Lane and is in the process of looking up the property lines and will have the results of whether or not the tree is a city or private tree at next month's meeting.

#### **4. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM**

- a. Main Street – 2 trees with planters  
Mr. Sotnik said that he has spoken to Ms. Fossella and she is checking on planting locations at 137 and 198 Main Street and at the corner of Main Street and Delaware Avenue. Mr. Whitehead asked if the trees will be in planters or planted in the ground. Mr. Sotnik said that these would all be planted in the ground.
- b. Highland Avenue  
Mr. Sotnik said that the locations have been identified and will be done as a fall planting due to the availability of funds.
- c. Fort Point Street  
Mr. Sotnik said that Michael Almstead has tagged 22 trees at the nursery for the planting and that he will stake the locations on May 30, 2013, and that Almstead Tree will do the planting the week of June 3, 2013. Mr. Frazier and Mr. Muller agreed to assist Mr. Sotnik with the staking of the tree locations.
- d. Rosa Parks Arboretum  
Mr. Sotnik said that the five replacement trees have been planted. Mr. Whitehead suggested that Parks and Recreation pay for the replacement trees since the arboretum is located on school grounds. Mr. Sotnik said that he will contact Mr. Moccia. Mr. Alvord said that the signage work still needs to be done.
- e. Village Creek- Dock Road at Outer Road  
Mr. Muller said that he will develop a planting plan. Mr. Sotnik asked that the plan include the species. He said that this will be done as a fall planting.
- f. Strawberry Hill Avenue at Rome  
Mr. Sotnik said that the two replacement trees have been planted.

- g. Marvin Beach  
Mr. Jinishian said that there is one planting left to do at 15 Elliott Street. Mr. Sotnik said that this will be done as a spring planting.

## **5. INFORMATION:**

- a. Arbor Day, May/June 2013  
Mr. Alvord distributed.

## **6. ROSA PARKS ARBORETUM**

Mr. Sotnik read the letter of recognition to Team Epic for donating and planting the Flowering Dogwood Tree and said that the letter will be signed by Mr. Alvord and Mr. Whitehead. He said that Team Epic has requested that they post a recognition sign on the existing tree identification sign post for the tree. After further discussion it was decided that there will be a standard format and design for recognition signs for organizations that want to donate a tree and that the cost of the sign will be incorporated into the cost of the donation for the tree. The cost of having a standard format sign made and installed will be investigated by Mr. Sotnik.

## **7. ARBOR DAY AT JEFFERSON MAGNET SCHOOL**

Mr. Alvord said that the event went very well and that there was good press coverage. He said that the location for next year's celebration needs to be determined and that all of the elementary schools have now hosted an Arbor Day celebration with the exception of Kendall School and Wolfpit School. After further discussion it was the consensus of the Committee to invite Wolfpit School to host the 2014 Arbor Day celebration and that Mr. Alvord would make the initial contact.

## **8. TREE FESTIVAL – MAY 11 CRANBURY PARK**

Mr. Alvord said that all the thank you letters have gone out with the exception of I Park and AT&T because he has not yet received their donation checks. He said that it will be helpful to get those checks because there were more expenses this year than in previous years. Mr. Whitehead said that he will follow up with I-Park and Mr. Alvord said that he will follow up with AT&T. Mr. Alvord said that he had also sent a letter to Michael Almstead because his support and cooperation for both the Arbor Day celebration and the Tree Festival went far above and beyond any type of contractual relationship requirements with the City.

Ms. MacLeod said that there are still improvements that can be made at the Tree Advisory Committee and D.P.W. tent in the future. She suggested that there be

summary sheets available stating the functions of the Tree Advisory Committee and to try to recruit new neighborhood tree liaisons. Mr. Frazier asked how many neighborhood associations there are. Mr. Alvord said at the last count there were 22 neighborhood associations in the city, but that only approximately 16 have activity to some degree. Mr. Alvord said that he will contact the leadership of various neighborhood associations and reintroduce the concept of tree liaisons, and he will send Ms. MacLeod the updated neighborhood association group list. Mr. Frazier suggested that there be a date set prior to the Tree Festival next year for a tree liaison training session. Mr. Alvord suggested that we use before and after pictures and plans of previous successful tree planting projects to display at the tent.

Mr. Alvord said that the lessons learned session will be held on June 19, 2013, in room 231 at City Hall at 9:30 A.M.

Mr. Alvord said that the 2014 Tree Festival is scheduled for May 17, 2014.

## **9. REPORT - STRATEGIC TREE CANOPY ENHANCEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE**

Mr. Frazier said that the focus now is on the East Avenue Project and that they have had preliminary conversations with a few of the property owners and that they would like to meet with the First Taxing District regarding the green as well as the owners of the Funeral Home. He stated that he will have a full report at next month's meeting.

## **10. DISCUSSION - NTA ACTIVITIES AND RECRUITING**

Mr. Landau said that there was good participation for the photo contest for the Tree Festival and that it will be done again next year.

Mr. Landau said that Almstead Tree has spread the woodchips at the Tree Farm and that all of the rain barrels have been installed. He said that there are over 100 potted plants that will be planted and that they are just waiting for the irrigation system to be installed which should be done in the next two to three weeks.

Mr. Landau said the grass at the Tree Farm has been planted by Team Epic.

Mr. Landau said that in the fall of 2013 that an evaluation and repair session will be required due to the condition of several of the tents after the Tree Festival, and that it may be necessary to purchase additional tents prior to the 2014 Tree Festival.

Mr. Landau said that REI has given a grant to the Norwalk River Watershed Association to plant 9 trees along the bike trail. He stated that the trees have been staked and that the stakes for 3 of them will need to be moved away from the fence. He stated that this will be done tomorrow morning. Mr. Alvord asked Mr. Landau if has received any feedback from Ken Hughes. Mr. Landau said "no". Mr. Sotnik said that he will follow up

with him.

## **11. NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Whitehead asked if the sample Flexi-Pavers have been evaluated. Mr. Alvord said “no” not yet, but that there will be a couple of spot locations that will be evaluated. He asked what the impact of the freeze thaw will be as well as vehicle traffic/tracks. Mr. Whitehead said that they are currently being used at the jogging trails in a park in New Canaan and that he will contact them to see if there have been any issues.

Ms. MacLeod said that between all the storms and the deceased trees that have had to be removed that the area around the road at Fox Run School is looking sparse and asked if there are funds available to do a tree planting program in that area. Mr. Alvord suggested that she develop a tree planting plan and he will contact Parks and Recreation about funding the project from their tree planting budget.

## **12. ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. FRAZIER MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 P.M.