



**CITY OF NORWALK
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Norwalk City Hall
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**TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
November 28, 2023**

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Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Dilene Byrd at dbyrd@norwalkct.gov to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

Attendance: Erica Kipp, Chairperson
Peter Viteretto
Cindy Cossuto

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

Others: Jeff Scherr, President, Norwalk Tree Alliance
Gay MacLeod, Tree Liaison
Bret Holzwarth, Redniss & Mead

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Kipp called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.

2. PUBLIC INPUT - GUESTS AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS MAY SPEAK TO ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA. (COMMENTS SHALL BE LIMITED TO NO MORE THAN THREE (3) MINUTES PER SPEAKER.)

There were no public comments this evening.

3. APPROVE MINUTES OF THE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF OCTOBER 24, 2023

**** CHAIRPERSON KIPP MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** MR. VITERETTO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. REFERRAL FROM P&Z COMMISSION- APPROVAL OF STREET TREE SPECIES SPECIFIED FOR USE ON THE WALL STREET PLACE NORTH LANDSCAPE PLAN L1 DATED OCTOBER 11, 2023- PRESENTED BY BRET HOLZWARTH, P.E. - REDNISS & MEAD

Mr. Holzwarth introduced himself and said that he is with Redniss & Mead and he is representing Wall Street Place, which is the partially constructed property on Wall Street and Isaac Street. He said they are pushing forward towards construction and have submitted an application for a building permit and one of the conditions of the zoning approval was to get the approval from the Tree Advisory Committee for the street trees that they are proposing along the frontage of the property.

Mr. Holzwarth presented the proposed plan and provided an overview of the project and said there are two components of the project which consists of the partially constructed building on Wall Street that is called Wall Street Place North, and the new building they are proposing to construct next year is Wall Street Place East which was the former site of the Garden Cinema. He said they have worked with the City to develop a typical streetscape along the frontage of the property on Wall Street with four trees on that section and then will continue with all new frontage along Isaac Street. He said on the other side of the street there is not a lot of frontages, but were able to fit two trees along the small section of the road and there will also be some green areas along the back where there will be Arborvitae trees for screening along with a sitting garden with shrubs and more Arborvitae trees. He said they have provided two species from the tree planting list for along the frontages that include October Glory Red Maple trees for along Wall Street and a small section of Isaac Street and the rest will be American Linden trees for along the other side of Isaac Street that will continue around the corner to the end of the street. Chairperson Kipp asked what the total number of trees planted will be. Mr. Holzwarth said there will be twenty-five (25) deciduous trees planted along the frontage and thirteen (13) evergreen trees. Chairperson Kipp asked when the trees are expected to be planted. Mr. Holzwarth

said the construction project will probably begin in the Spring of 2024, and there is a lot of work that will need to go into the buildings and the frontage will be done towards the later end of construction and the entire duration of the projection is approximately eighteen (18) months so they will probably be planted either in the spring or Fall of 2025.

Mr. Viteretto asked what the rationale was to make the decision to use the Red Maple Trees on Wall Street. Mr. Holzwarth said that species was on the approved planting list and are nice blooming trees, but he could not say specifically why they were selected. Mr. Viteretto said there are currently two (2) Princeton Sentry Ginkgo trees in front of the building and the street is lined with Princeton Sentry Ginkgo trees and asked why there would be a change in tree species. Mr. Holzwarth said they would be happy to change the species of tree to match what is in the area today. Mr. Viteretto asked if the two (2) Princeton Sentry Ginkgo trees that are currently there will be retained, or will they be removed and replaced. Mr. Holzwarth said in order to reconfigure the bump out the geometry is changing on the intersection and will be expanding on the curb and pedestrian ramps and the alignment of the existing trees weren't conducive to the proposed bus stop. Mr. Viteretto said the Red Maple trees are a very heavily canopied tree for that street and the American Linden trees are a great tree for streets, but there are multiple varieties of Linden trees and there needs to be specificity. Chairperson Kipp asked Mr. Viteretto if he was willing to email Mr. Holzwarth with a couple of his suggestions.

Mr. Viteretto asked what the details are in the tree planter pits and asked that Mr. Sotnik request them so that the Tree Advisory Committee could look at them independently of this discussion. Mr. Sotnik requested that the tree pits be shown on the drawing, so the details for planting are there so that the trees get planted properly. Mr. Viteretto said there is usually insufficient soil depth for trees on streets and given the volume and cost of this project there should be no reason why there can't be quality soil installed to the proper depth under the sidewalks as well. Mr. Viteretto stated that he is curious on what is being planned in terms of details for those trees. He also asked if there is a water supply and if there will be irrigation in the tree pits. Mr. Holzwarth said he does not recall there being any specification for irrigation. Mr. Viteretto said that trees typically would like approximately 1,400 cubic foot of soil, so the magnitude and importance of the soil is to be noted and requested that Mr. Sotnik share the details from the Waypoint project where he believes the planters are shared.

Mr. Sotnik said that Mr. Viteretto had chosen the Princeton Sentry Ginkgo tree for Wall Street due to their columnar shape so they would be above the business signage so people would not cut the branches. He asked if there will be signage on the first floor of the building. Mr. Holzwarth said "Yes" and that there will be retail along the entire frontage and shared the rendering with the Committee. Mr. Sotnik suggested planting a species of tree where there will be no issues with the branches down the road. Mr. Viteretto said the Linden trees allow themselves to get pruned up and in the planting list specified on the drawing, it may need to be specified that the trees lowest branch is 5' to 7'.

Chairperson Kipp asked if there is some way that Mr. Holzwarth can submit this plan as it was submitted to zoning so that the Tree Advisory Committee can take a closer look so that the suggestions that were made can be incorporated into one email to Mr. Holzwarth.

Chairperson Kipp stated that Mr. Viteretto will be one of the best people to give direction on the type of trees because of his background and familiarity with the area and he knows what species would do very well in that area and thrive. Mr. Holzwarth said his team is willing to work with the Tree Advisory Committee and wants the trees to thrive. Chairperson Kipp said that the Committee will send all of their comments to Mr. Sotnik and will set a deadline so that he can put them into one email and send them to Mr. Holzwarth.

Mr. Viteretto requested that the Committee members look at the Red Maple Trees in front of Waypoint.

Chairperson Kipp requested that the comments from the Committee members for the Wall Street North landscaping plan be sent to Mr. Sotnik by the end of the year. Mr. Viteretto said the comments should also be sent to the zoning and building departments. Mr. Sotnik said that he will copy them in the email because the Planning Commission referred him to the Tree Advisory Committee for a review of the species as a condition of approval. Mr. Viteretto requested that Mr. Sotnik contact the zoning department to inquire about what they require in terms of comment response.

Ms. Cossuto asked who would be responsible for the cost of the trees. Mr. Viteretto said it will be part of the project cost.

5. ANNUAL UPDATE - OAK HILLS AUTHORITY

There was no discussion concerning this item, so it was tabled.

6. UPDATE - TREE PLANTING PROGRAM - FALL 2023 PLANTING LIST

New Plantings

Planting Locations	Number of Trees	Planted/Ordered - Notes
151 Ely Avenue	6	Planted
Norwalk River Valley Trail - South of Casatelli Marble & Tile - Grant	57	Planted – NRV Grant
Norwalk River Valley Trail - South of Casatelli Marble & Tile - ARPA	3	Planted
Lincoln Avenue and Burritt Avenue	33	Planted
Norwalk River Valley Trail - Union Park South To Arch Street	18	Planted
13 First Street, 82 Gregory Boulevard and 1A Staples Court	3	Planted
Spring Hill Avenue (#18 – #89)	29	Planted
Morton Street and Avenue C	13	Planted
4 Senga Road	3	Planted

10 Pond Ridge Road and 7 Cottontail Road	3	Planted
143 Richards Avenue	15	Planted
227 Richards Avenue	6	Planted
275 Richards Avenue	7	Planted
Tarone Drive	14	Planted
152 Gregory Boulevard	1	Planted
42 First Street and 19 Fourth Street	3	Planted
349 and 360 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive	9	Planted
181 and 188 Richards Avenue	4	Planted
TOTAL	227	

Mr. Sotnik said that there are 10-15 trees that still need to be planted by Minutemen Land Services.

Replacements:

- a. Various Locations - Working with Almstead and Minutemen.

Mr. Sotnik said that 227 trees will be planted in the Fall 2023 planting cycle for a total of \$166,334.00, 294 trees were planted in the Spring 2023 planting cycle for a total of \$233,322.25, and for 2023 a total of 521 trees were planted at a cost of 399,656.25.

7. UPDATE - ALMSTEAD TREE WATERING/MAINTENANCE SCHEULE

Mr. Sotnik stated that due to the weather and the amount of precipitation that we have received, there has not been a need for supplemental watering. He also stated that this will be the last report given until April 2024 for both Almstead Tree and Minuteman Land Services, per the terms of their contracts.

8. UPDATE – MINUTEMEN LAND SERVICES TREE WATERING/MAINTENANCE SCHEULE

This was discussed under item 7 of the agenda.

9. TREE LIAISON(S) UPDATES

Ms. MacLeod said that trees have been planted for the Jewish cemeteries on Richards Avenue and asked if special permissions have been granted to dig within the bushes that are lining the road for the Temple Beth El Memorial Park Cemetery at 220 Richards Avenue to plant the Tulip Trees. Mr. Sotnik said it is still being discussed within the Department of Public Works.

Chairperson Kipp asked if the trees have been planted at Norwalk Community College. Mr.

Sotnik said that he had requested that Almstead Tree let him know when the trees will be planted so that they can coordinate with Chairperson Kipp on the planting, but by the following day the trees were already planted. Chairperson Kipp asked how many trees have been planted and if there are pictures of them. Mr. Sotnik said that four trees were planted, but that he does not have pictures at this time. Chairperson Kipp requested that pictures be taken because this is a great opportunity to get publicity through CT State.

10. UPDATE – 2024 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION LOCATION

Mr. Sotnik said that he is working with the principal of Silvermine Elementary School, and they are interested in hosting the Arbor Day celebration and the planning meetings will begin in late January. Mr. Scheer requested that the Tree Alliance also be included in the planning process.

11. REPORT - NTA ACTIVITIES

Chairperson Kipp said the second annual holiday party will be held on Sunday, December 10, 2023 at Fodor Farm from 4:30 P.M. to 6:30 P.M.

Mr. Scheer reported and said they are at the end of the planting season and that the combined effort to plant trees along Martin Luther King Drive went well.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business discussed this evening.

13. ADJOURNMENT

**** CHAIRPERSON KIPP MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MS. COSSUTO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Dilene Byrd