



TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

November 22, 2022

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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.org to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

Attendance: Professor Kipp, Chair
Richard Whitehead, Vice Chair
Peter Viteretto – Joined meeting at 6:10 P.M.
Cindy Cossuto – Joined meeting at 6:08 P.M.

Staff: Paul Sotnik, Deputy Tree Warden

Dilene Byrd, Secretary

Others: Jeff Scherr, President, Norwalk Tree Alliance
Jim Schell, Oak Hills Authority – Joined meeting at 6:17 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Professor Kipp called the meeting to order at 6:07 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 25, 2022.

On page 5, Item 12, change "Scheer" to Scherr"

**** PROFESSOR KIPP MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.**

**** MR. WHITEHEAD SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. ANNUAL UPDATE – OAK HILLS AUTHORITY

Mr. Schell provided an annual update and said they had submitted a replanting plan and a desirable list of tree removals that they would like to make and so far, this year have replanted 10 trees and are on schedule to continue with their replanting plan as needed and hopefully in lieu of completing this replanting plan they will be able to do some removals in order to improve the playing conditions on the golf course. He said there are several trees on the property that are nearly dead and some that have storm damage and should be removed. Professor Kipp suggested that Mr. Schell reach out to Mr. Torre regarding the tree removals. Mr. Scherr asked if Eversource is working on a replanting plan at Oak Hills Park. Mr. Schell said he believes that is still being negotiated. Mr. Sotnik said that he and Mr. Viteretto have gone over the plan that Mr. Viteretto had prepared and that it had been submitted to Eversource. They have come back with a counteroffer to that plan. Mr. Viteretto said that Eversource has not made much movement from the original plan that they had submitted for comment. He had expected that they would have at least changed the species, because there is not a major cost difference compared to the plan that he had prepared, versus some of the things they are willing to plant because they were more ornamental, and we are looking to move more towards a native pallet. He stated that it was a little annoying that they

hadn't made that minor change. Mr. Sotnik said he has reached back out to Eversource to see if they can provide a better offer.

5. UPDATE - TREE PLANTING PROGRAM – FALL 2022 PLANTING LIST

Professor Kipp said that 221 trees were planted this Fall. Mr. Sotnik said that more trees have been ordered and will be planted by early next week, which will bring the total to 230 trees planted this Fall.

Replacements:

- a. Various Locations – Working with Almstead.

Mr. Sotnik said that Almstead Tree has been replacing some of the trees that can be done at this time. Professor Kipp asked if the replacement trees will be planted this fall. Mr. Sotnik said "Yes."

6. UPDATE – ALMSTEAD TREE WATERING/MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE.

Mr. Sotnik provided an update on the watering schedule and said the watering is being done according to schedule.

7. UPDATE - MEETINGS WITH SOUTH NORWALK RESIDENTS AND DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DRIVE CORRIDOR INITIATIVE COMMITTEE – POTENTIAL TREE PLANTING LOCATIONS

Mr. Whitehead said that he had attended the meeting and that the maps were great, and there were groups of people that located areas on the map that were in need of trees and the areas were consolidated and given to Mr Sotnik. Mr. Sotnik said that both City employees and people that are on the Dr. Martin Luther King Drive Corridor Initiative Committee had attended and there were five groups of people that put locations on the maps. He stated that he will now take those maps and have them scanned and consolidated into one map so that we can start to gradually work on the list of requested locations. He said that he met with Ms. Vonashek and the IT Department to see if it can be put on the website for the public to be able to view and select where they would like the trees planted and work off that. Professor Kipp asked when a final map of where the trees to be planted will be done. Mr. Sotnik said the goal is to have the map on the website and have the trees planted in the Spring of 2023.

8. UPDATE - 2023 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION LOCATION

Mr. Sotnik said that he has made contact with the Principal of Rowayton Elementary School, and she said they would be honored to host the 2023 Arbor Day celebration.

9. REPORT – NTA ACTIVITIES

Mr. Scherr reported and said that he and Mr. Sotnik staked nine planting locations at Ponus Ridge Middle School and there will also be one potential planting in the Spring based on a design from a sixth-grade teacher who will work with the Tree Advisory Committee to have the tree planted.

Mr. Scherr said that on December 11, 2022, from 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. the Annual Open House fundraiser will be held at Fodor Farm.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

Professor Kipp said that the DEEP grant that the Tree Advisory Committee has earned is being approved by the Common Council for the Mayor to sign. She said they have already met with key people at the Norwalk Housing Authority and shared the vision and everyone is excited to work together on it. She also said that the Norwalk Library will join and will work together on placing a book box outside of the Children's Learning Center at Roodner Court where the trees related to the grant will be planted.

There was a discussion that ensued regarding the tree tags and Mr. Viteretto asked what graphics will be put on the tree tags. Professor Kipp said "Tree Planted by The City of Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee" and should include a link to the website. Mr. Viteretto asked what logo will be used. Professor Kipp said the logo that was approved for the newsletter and would like to have them ready for the Spring of 2023. Mr. Scherr said that the Norwalk Tree Alliance has been working on a similar process and they use a QR code that links to their website with the information about the tree.

Mr. Viteretto said he drove by the Norwalk Inn and Conference Center and noticed that they improperly pruned the Elm Trees and the Committee needs to decide how much effort and what action should be taken. Professor Kipp suggested that Mr. Sotnik send an email to Mr. Torre and copy Mr. Viteretto and that it should be taken seriously especially with the new tree ordinance that was approved. Mr. Sotnik said it will first need to be determined whether they are City or Private trees, and that determination will dictate if any action can be taken under the jurisdiction of the ordinance, and that he will send an email letting Committee members know if they are City or Private trees.

Mr. Viteretto said that Wall Street is getting its first Christmas Tree that he has seen in over 17 years and that it will be at the plaza on the corner of Riverview Street and Wall Street to celebrate the Holiday season. There will be a ceremony on November 29, 2022. He also said that the First District Water Department has put a grove of Christmas Trees on the island in front of the Library and is quite nice and is sophisticated in a way that the City deserves.

11. ADJOURNMENT

- ** PROFESSOR KIPP MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MR. WHITEHEAD SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Dilene Byrd