



TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

October 25, 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
 Cindy Cossuto
 Sonja Oliver

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

Others: Jeff Scheer, President, Norwalk Tree Alliance

1. CALL TO ORDER

Professor Kipp called the meeting to order at 6:02 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 THE MINUTES OF THE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 27, 2022.

**** MR. WHITEHEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** MS. OLIVER SECONDED MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. APPROVE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2023

Professor Kipp suggested cancelling the July meeting as has been done in the past. The members of the Committee all agreed.

**** MR. WHITEHEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEETING CALENDAR FOR 2023 AS AMENDED.**

**** MS. OLIVER SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION SECONDED THE MOTION.**

5. TREE PLANTING PROGRAM – FALL 2022

New Plantings:

- a. List of Potential Locations.
 - a. TAC/DPW Plantings
 - Housing Authority Complexes

- Schools – Fox Run, Ponus
- Hunters Lane
- Elmwood Avenue
- Woodward Avenue
- Plymouth Avenue
- East Avenue
- Arnold Lane
- Flax Hill Road

Mr. Sotnik said that 120 trees have been planted out of the 150 that have been ordered to date, but he will be staking additional locations and will be planting approximately 200 trees for the Fall 2022 planting season. Professor Kipp asked what the deadline is for fall plantings. Mr. Sotnik said he would like to have all of the orders placed by the first week of November so they can all be planted by the middle of November before the heavy frost.

b. TMP/Health Dept. Grant Funded Planting – Wilton Avenue

Mr. Sotnik said that the TMP/Health Department grant funded planting was done on Wilton Avenue, and 38 total trees (10 as part of the grant and 28 by DPW) were planted at various locations and the ribbon cutting ceremony was held a few weeks ago.

c. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive Corridor Initiative – DECD Grant – Program Continuation

Mr. Sotnik said that additional locations have not yet been staked for the Fall 2022 planting cycle and it has been put on hold until after the meeting with the Martin Luther King JR. Drive Corridor Initiative Grant Committee. He said the grant was for \$250,000 and is specifically for trees. There is also an additional \$50,000 of GGP funds for South Norwalk, all in addition to the ARPA funding that was received and set aside for trees.

Replacements:

a. Various Locations – Working with Almstead.

Mr. Sotnik stated that he is working with Almstead to generate a list of trees that have to be replaced and that they will be starting that work this fall.

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

Mr. Sotnik said that Ms. Vonashek would like to meet with the residents of the South Norwalk and the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Corridor Initiative Grant Committee to review potential planting locations. That event will be held on Thursday, November 3, from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. at the South Norwalk Public Library in the community room. Professor Kipp said that an internal reminder will be sent out. Ms. Oliver said that Ms.

Vonashek will also be attending the District B meeting in November to go through the presentation again for anyone who was not able to attend the meeting at the library.

7. UPDATE – EVERSOURCE REVISED PLANTING PLAN AT OAK HILLS PARK

Mr. Sotnik said that Eversource has come back with a counteroffer to Mr. Viteretto's request, and he will meet with him to discuss the plan and if he approves it, he will sign the documents so that the plantings can be done. Professor Kipp said that the Committee agrees that Mr. Viteretto should sign off on the plan since he prepared the plan being used for the TAC request. Mr. Whitehead said the sooner the plantings are done the better.

8. UPDATE – ALMSTEAD TREE WATERING/MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

Professor Kipp asked if there are any concerns that need to be discussed. Mr. Sotnik said "no" and they are continuing to do the watering work.

9. TREE CITY USA PREPARATION

Mr. Sotnik said the submission deadline is January 13, 2023, and he will begin to put the package together and would like to include some of the highlights from the Spring planting program and the mapping that was done related to it.

10. UPDATE - NORWALK PUBLIC SAFETY OPEN HOUSE – OCTOBER 1, 2022

Mr. Sotnik said that the Norwalk Public Safety Open House was held on October 1st from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. and that approximately 400 people had attended. He said that the Tree Advisory Committee, Almstead Tree, Minutemen Landscaping and the Norwalk Tree Alliance all had tables and they received approximately six requests for new trees which are now being incorporated into the planting list.

11. UPDATE - 2023 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION LOCATION

Mr. Sotnik said he make contact with the principal of Rowayton Elementary School, and she will get back to him after she speaks to her staff. Professor Kipp asked what the next school is if they decline. Mr. Sotnik said Silvermine and then Fox Run. Professor Kipp suggested giving them a deadline so if they decline there is time to move onto the next school. Mr. Sotnik said he was going to give them a week and he doesn't hear back will contact the principal of Silvermine School.

12. REPORT – NTA ACTIVITIES

Mr. Scheer reported and said they have had a busy fall and have planted 53 trees and 12 of them went to the First Congregational Church, 16 at Autumn Lake Healthcare and two at Fodor Farm in the tree farm that were donated by the Church of Latter Day Saints. He said that they are thinking about potentially digging some of the trees out and doing some root trimming to prepare some of the existing trees that were planted over 15 years ago and extending the program by planting some saplings. He also said that 4 trees were planted with the donation for SNEW, 8 trees were planted with the donation from the Third Taxing District and 11 trees were planted at Pine Island cemetery. He said there is also a potential to plant 4 trees at St. Mary's Church and 9 at Ponus Ridge Middle School and they are potentially interested in starting an arboretum and would like to involve the students in the design.

Mr. Scheer said the second educational walk was held at Calf Pasture Beach to teach interested people how trees are important for our water quality and that the first walk was through the Norwalk River Valley Trail with Mr. Viteretto.

Mr. Scheer said the First Congregational Church seemed interested in education related to trees and are looking to teach about tree equity and why trees are important to different communities. He stated that they also have a farmers' market regularly and thought the Tree Alliance may get involved in that.

Mr. Scheer said parking day usually happens around September 16th and they did not do it this year, but it is a cool event to get the community involved and get some buy in from the community as a whole and to share why trees are important.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Oliver said she had mentioned at a previous meeting that a lot of trees that were planted had died and asked when they will be replanted. Mr. Sotnik said he has been working with Mr. Norman since Almstead Tree had planted those particular trees and he is currently putting a list together of all of the replacements that need to be done for him to review and approve, and it was determined that the Arborvitaes would need to be replaced first. They will be doing that this fall and will evaluate the deciduous trees and if they have buds on them they will wait until the spring to reevaluate them, otherwise if they know they are dead now, they will also be replaced in the fall.

Mr. Whitehead said that Ms. Cossuto had recommended her brother to replace her on the Committee when she steps down and suggested he be invited to attend an upcoming Committee meeting.

14. ADJOURNMENT

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

**** MS. OLIVER SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Dilene Byrd