



CITY OF NORWALK
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Norwalk City Hall
125 East Avenue, PO Box 5125
Room 225

TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

October 22, 2024

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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, Chair
Peter Viteretto

Staff: Sarah Cruz, Arborist/ Horticulturalist

Paul Sotnik, Deputy Tree Warden
Chris Torre, Tree Warden

Others: Jeff Scherr, President, Norwalk Tree Alliance
Gay MacLeod, Tree Liaison

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Kipp called the meeting to order at 6:08 PM.

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 SEPTEMBER 24, 2024.

The approval of the minutes was tabled due to a lack of a quorum.

4. CAPTIAL GRANT FUNDED TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

A. Fall planting

i. 109 trees ordered

Ms. Cruz said that 109 trees have been ordered, and another 40 more tree requests should be coming by the end of this week. She said there has been a lull in staking locations, but the goal is to stake 300 locations by the end of the fall.

ii. Private plantings (Adopt-a-Tree) vs. City right-of-way

Ms. Cruz said that they had received a lot of requests and/or questions regarding private tree plantings and said the right of way is not always clear and there have been some areas where people have been concerned that we are planting on private property. She clarified that unless a request was received to plant on private property and have an agreement with them any other trees that are planted are always within the city's right of way.

Ms. Kipp asked how far into the fall the watering program goes. Ms. Cruz said there is no contract requirement to water on a weekly or monthly and it is temperature dependent. Ms. Kipp said the slender trees that were planted at the east campus parking lot of CT State Norwalk need to be looked at in terms of watering. Ms. Cruz said we are in a difficult time with the drought and that a lot of trees have not even started turning and she had to notify the contractor for some areas that the trees needed watering.

5. TREE PLANTING CONTRACTS: WATERING REPORTS

- a. Minutemen Land Services
- b. Almstead Tree & Shrub Care Company

Ms. Cruz reported on the watering and said that both contractors have fulfilled their contract requirements with watering and submitting their schedules.

6. TREE LAISON UPDATES

Ms. MacLeod provided an update and said so far that she met with 25 residents at their homes but, not all residents want trees, however, we will be planting 29 trees including plantings at Marvin Elementary School, and she will be submitting another five locations this week. Ms. Kipp asked if they were in a concentrated location. Ms. McLeod said they are scattered around the city, but Ms. Cruz did try to organize it by street. Mr Viteretto said he will share the 2009 plantings on Calf Pasture Beach Road which is a street where there should not be flowering trees and should all be high canopy deciduous trees due to the islands and the span of the road.

Ms. McLeod said there has been a request for evergreen trees within cul-de-sac medians with the number one request being a “Christmas tree” and those trees that are not on the list and asked if there is a tree that can be recommended and is in stock. Ms. Cruz said the number one issue will be overhead wires. Ms. MacLeod said she does not recommend planting in the areas with overhead wires. Mr. Viteretto said the closest tree that is on the list is a Norway Spruce tree. Ms. Kipp also recommended a Douglas Fir Tree or a Juniper Tree. Mr Viteretto said the CT DOT is using both white and black spruce trees now instead of white pine and they are stronger wooded trees. He said that Picea Abies trees are on the list as evergreen which means that would qualify under the current contract. He also said a Colorado Spruce Tree is ornamental and if that is put on the list, we are at risk of being “ornamentally landscaping” which we don’t want to do but the white and black spruce trees would be okay. Ms. Kipp suggested the determining factor of which species could be availability and pricing.

7. REPORT- NTA ACTIVITIES

Mr. Scherr provided an update and said they will be planting until mid-November. He said they can also plant on private property if any locations are needed. Ms. Kipp said that they can also plant on private property. Ms. Cruz clarified that the City can only plant on the street side of private property and have not accommodated backyard plantings due to the requirements of the grant funding. Mr. Scherr said they can plant in backyards but are trying to focus on the canopy whenever there is a benefit of shading a house or pavement and there is a better location in the backyard to enhance the canopy, they can plant there but try to adhere to the public spaces as much as possible.

Mr. Scherr said there is an open house scheduled for December 1, 2024, and details on that will follow, and the next Tree Alliance meeting will be held on Thursday.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Sotnik provided an update on the DPW open house and said that almost 1300 people had attended, and Ms. Cruz had a table set up for the tree programs and provided handouts.

Mr. Sotnik said they are beginning to prepare for the Tree City USA certifications and will need information from the Norwalk Tree Alliance regarding the budgets and quantity of trees planted from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

Mr. Viteretto asked if there is a target of what has been planted in the past and which plantings were successful and which were not and the reasons. Ms. Cruz said the plantings that were done by the City could be a starting point.

Ms. Cruz said the Norwalk Garden Club is donating a Red Bud tree to the city which will be planted at Calf Pasture Beach at 11:00 AM tomorrow and thanked them for their donation and time. She said that some daffodil bulbs will also be planted on Calf Pasture Beach Road to add some color in the spring.

9. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. KIPP MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd