

Attending Committee Members: Mary Hogue (Chair), Jeff Minder (Tree Warden), Joe File, Tom Corell, Dave McMahan, and Nan Nelson.

Administrative

Minutes - The Minutes of the March 20, 2018 meeting were unanimously approved.

Tree Warden Report

Utility Enhanced Tree Trimming (ETT) Program

Jeff Minder, Town Tree Warden, noted that 2017 ETT work is complete and UI is currently on Congress near Aran Hill. He also noted he has a meeting scheduled for tomorrow about this work and a review of post storm clean-up work. (NB: Jeff subsequently got a message that the meeting is postponed to May 7.)

Storm Damage

Jeff noted there was minimal damage in the ETT program area. The committee discussed the problems related to the current policy, per PURA, to have only one “Make Safe” crew per town (see March 20 minutes for more info on this). It was decided that Geoff Steadman would get the technical definition of a “Make Safe” crew. Mary Hogue noted that she would look into the discussion of possible penalty to the Electric Distribution Companies for power restoration delay in CT and NY from Sandy, 2012.

Tree Planting Program (TPP)

- Joe File, normally an integral, active member of the TPP program will be traveling June & July. The Committee needs to reconsider how they will run the program this year. Tom Corell cannot do all that is required during these months but there is a requirement of tree species and tree health knowledge that is required to do the work that Joe has been doing.
- Over 30 trees from over 20 customers thus far have been ordered. The TPP committee is current with orders that have come in thus far.
- There are not regulations on the amount of salt that is applied to roads to de-ice them during the winter... BUT the amount of salt is extremely important to the health and longevity of the roadside trees. Some areas in town that are in constant shade are salted repeatedly for safety reasons. The Committee discussed how we can work with TPZ, DPW, PURA (not sure who) to research and discuss possible regulations / less salt application while still maintaining public safety. Committee needs to look into rules / regs on application of salt.

2018 Tree List

- Joe File asked for comments to his tree lists that will be posted on the website. The Committee praised his work. Tree lists will be posted ASAP by Mary Hogue.
- It was noted that Kousa dogwoods would be available throughout town but *Cornus florida* dogwoods would only be available to people in the Greenfield Hill area and therefore will not be included on the list posted on the town website.
The decision to do this is because after carefully reviewing success/failure rate of trees planned in 2017 – 50% of the recently planted dogwoods failed to thrive in the first season. Because Greenfield Hill is in the Dogwood Festival area of town we will honor those requests if necessary; we will do our best to encourage folks, with the data, to not waste their and town's money by planting a tree that is most likely not going to thrive.

2018 Neighborhood foci

Veres Park

- This program “Let’s ReTree Fairfield, Help us have shady streets again!” is based on neighbor request. NB: the request is from individuals, there is no neighborhood association in this area.
- 549 personalized letters from the FFC announcing and endorsing or supporting the effort were mailed using the Tax Assessor’s data. The number of returned letters is disconcerting and will be investigated and reviewed with the Tax Assessor Office.
- Tonight there is a meeting with the Street Captains who will meet with each homeowner or tenant.
- A GoFundMe site has been created by the neighbors and they are being encouraged by the neighborhood group to donate. If less than \$150 (the cost of a tree) is donated it is attributed to a “community bank” to be used for tree planting in Veres Park and / or to help neighbors that cannot afford the full amount. If \$150 is donated it will be verified that this is for a tree in a specific location. The neighbor group is in charge of this as this is totally their program.
- An email blast, from the neighborhood group about the program will be sent out announcing the Street Captains upcoming visit. They will be hand delivering a leave behind letter. FFC members will follow up with interested property owners regarding tree selection and planting location.
- Mary Hogue and Tom Corell have done a windshield review of the designated area and have assigned 1-2-3 planting priority sites (1=top, 2=OK, 3=unnecessary) in hopes this will help the captains and home owners understand the appropriateness for their roadside area for a Town tree and the priority for the captains in working with neighbors on planting a tree.
- Dave McMahon will help with documenting the program with photos and videos.
- Joe File, who does a lot of work for the TPP program, will not be available June-July. Mary Hogue will work to fill in and help with the TPP program during that time.

Fairfield Residents Beach Association (FBRA)

- After over a year of promoting the FBRA 50% subsidy of the tree planting cost, i.e. instead of \$150, residents would pay \$75 and FBRA would pay \$75 for every tree their neighbors wanted to plant along the roadside right-of-way of their property, it was determined this was not a

compelling incentive. We got extremely few FBRA members taking advantage of this program so it has been discontinued.

- The FBRA will be using the same verbiage as used by the Veress Park promotion.

Stratfield Neighborhood

- Outstanding – awaiting response from neighborhood group head

Other

- Oakwood area – houses built 1940's-1960's have trees that are starting to die out

Commemorative Tree Planting Program

We are still on track for planting a tree in honor of the late Judge Dan Caruso in the Burr Gardens for the Town Arbor Day celebration on 4/27/2018 at 11am. It should be noted that it is highly unusual to plant a tree in the Burr Gardens and all future requests will be encouraged to find alternate locations. As with this planting for Judge Caruso, we will work with the Burr Garden Advisory Committee to not allow commemorative plaques to be installed.

Old Business

New Business