

**City of Essex Junction
Tree Advisory Committee
Minutes of Meeting
January 16, 2024**

Members Present: Nick Meyer, Rich Boyers
City Representative: Ashley Snellenberger
In attendance virtually Warren Spinner, Nicole Klett, Steve Rivard

I. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:36 pm by Warren, second by Rich.

II. Additions or Amendments to Agenda

Cascade Park. Tree City USA update.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the December 2023 meeting minutes was made by Rich, second by Warren.

IV. Tree Planting 2024

Nick sent out locations that he and Warren looked at as potential new sites. Nick started knocking on doors for planting trees in neighborhoods after the Ash Borer information was shared. Preparing neighborhood residents for the invasion and loss of ash trees. Nick would like a more official ID when speaking with the public. Ashley can get cards for TAC.

Warren and Nick worked with Jen on an EAB grant to plant 18-20 trees. Matching of funds with Public Works tree removal labor and oversight through Jennifer Marbl. This is separate from trees TAC has in the nursery. This grant goes into October of 2025. Should know by 2/1/24. Public Works can start doing removals this winter. The grant request is for \$18,357 with an equal match from the city.

V. Tree City USA

Warren and Ashley got together to update our Arbor Day Foundation account and fill out this year's Tree City USA application. TAC members were all involved in gathering information for the application. Regina signed the cover page and Ashley submitted it. This will be the city's 9th year receiving Tree City USA recognition. Also we need to remember to get next year's Arbor Day proclamation prepared and signed.

VI. Maple Street Park Tree Walk Improvements

Nicole reported that outside Map for EJRP could be done in collaboration with CTE Design & Creative Media group with instructor Deanna Vaida after specific questions like when needed, what verbiage, what visual. Come in with a QR code with a map and highlight each tree reminded by Nick.

3 X 3 QR code needed from 7.5 feet apart calculated by Nick. Warren reminds that vandalism should be expected on tags on anything around 8 feet off the ground. Wanting to make the walk more impactful and accessible by decreasing the number of trees suggested by Warren. Nick will recommend a smaller more central walk and get tree information over to Nicole to try to share with CTE Design and Media Group for signage design.

Arbor Day timeline is not likely a realistic goal. Likely need to have this as a subcommittee or organized by one member as there are many moving parts. Will try to take steps piecemeal for now and revisit how best to approach this project.

Aspects of this project needing attention are:

1. Budget for project
2. New vision of walk
3. Outdoor sign design and creation
4. Signs on trees and purchasing
5. QR codes on main map and trees
6. The information to be accessed through the QR codes/websites
7. New printed maps
8. Audio version
9. Miscellaneous

VII. Storm Damage

Nick reports not much damage to Village owned trees luckily. This would be a good time to do a PSA on tree cutting in case the public wants to cut down more trees than necessary. Article on getting an arborist and basic pruning. Rich will put together a blurb that we can link to our website. Warren will also help with information.

VIII. Max Seaton

TAC is interested in honoring the loss of Max's daughter with the planting of a tree. Rich wants to know the correct way to collect money for that. Cascade Park is near the family and is on EJRP land. EJRP does not want trees there. TAC could donate one of our trees and a bench. Lindsay, Max's other daughter, was very touched by the idea and in favor of an honor in any form by the TAC.

IX. 2024 TAC Calendar

Nicole put a folder together to capture info for PSAs.

January -Planning Calendar and setting up folder
February -Public Education around Tree Work/Trimming (Winter is the time to reach out to arborist)-
March -Public Education around Thinking about planting a tree

April- Tree Sale /National Arbor Day
May- Tree Planting /VT Arbor Day @ named school
June- Tree Walk 2nd annual!
July- Public Education around Tree Planting/Maintenance/Watering
August- Advertise Tree Contest
September- Form Submission for Tree Contest open after Labor Day
October- Judging and Announcement of Tree Contest Winner
November- Public Education around Trees in Fall (Best Handling of Leaves, etc)
December- Public Education around Tree Decorating/Tradition of Cutting down Christmas Tree

IX. Budget

Nothing new information per Nick.

X. Other Business

None

XI. Date for Next Meeting

The Committee will meet on February 20, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.

Adjournment

Nick made a motion to adjourn at 5:30 pm, 2nd by Warren.