

**City of Essex Junction
Tree Advisory Committee
Minutes of Meeting
August 16, 2023**

Members Present: Nick Meyer, Warren Spinner, Rich Boyers
Also present: Max Seaton

I. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:23 pm by Warren, second by Nick.

II. Additions or Amendments to Agenda

No additions or amendments.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the July 2023 meeting minutes was made by Warren, 2nd by Nicole.

IV. Tree Contest

Rich and Nicole have been meeting since the last week of July. They have met with Ashley regarding PR for the contest and have reviewed the concept for the Essex Junction Greatest Tree Contest to be a single category this year. Participants will identify the greatest tree in Essex Junction and share what makes it great. It could be its size, shape, location, use along with a story of connection.

Participants will submit their entries through a Google form that includes a link to a photo, location, a brief description of the tree, and an explanation of what makes it great. A hard copy will be available to be inclusive and will be available at municipal offices, the library and EJRP.

Rich and Nicole have created the flier and digital and hard form. Have secured a sponsor with Northfield Bank and other prizes collaborating with Brownell and the receipt of a birdhouse.

The TAC and a guest judge, possibly Marsha, Warren's wife for a "civilian" perspective will meet in October to judge at a date (A date for the first week in October will be set at the September meeting) and then awards at October's meeting and forward to the City Council.

V. Planting 2024

Warren has plans for 2024 tree needs after visiting the nursery. Quite a diverse selection of species will come out of nursery for use from past years planning and planting.

Warren placed an order for new trees and has 30 total trees requested. Trees have to be graded and then the vendor will follow up with what is available.

Nick reported things are going well at the nursery with areas weeded and tended to. Not much of a need for watering.

There are still areas to plant trees including finishing up on Old Colchester Rd and Brickyard and look into developments for spots including areas hit hard with Ash trees at Lavoie and Cushing.

Nick has a list of what has been planted since 2013 by TAC. The committee feels the work has reached the goal of being impactful and is changing the city landscape positively.

VII. Meeting with Chris Yuen: enforcement and review of development applications

Nick has a meeting with the planning director for EJ. Getting feedback in role in land development code for TAC. Discussions about follow through with commercial development including on Pearl Street, upkeep, and review of original agreements with planning commission and responsibilities even with change of ownership. Hiring an enforcement officer eventually but for now wondering how enforcement will work including for applications that have not lived up to monetary commitment to planting/trees in developments. City could establish a separate fund for improvement of streetscape/planting for instance. Meeting occurs on August 21st.

VIII. Work Days

One more work day in September at nursery. There are some birches on Educational Drive and other trees that might need trimming in the Junction. May get a pruning group together.

IX. Other Business

Next meeting discussed an Essex High School group's proposal about the Maple Street Park walk and Nicole's details on QR code discussion with Ashley.

X. Date for Next Meeting

The Committee will meet on September 19 at 5:00 p.m

Adjournment

Warren made a motion to adjourn at 6:42 p.m. 2nd Rich.

January -Planning Calendar
February -Public Education around Tree Work/Trimming (Winter is the time to reach out to arborist)-HOLD for 2024
March -Public Education around Thinking about planting a tree?
April - Potential Tree Keeper Training/Dip and Bag 28th and Tree Sale 29th/National Arbor Day 28th
May -Tree Planting 6th/VT Arbor Day 5th/Hiawatha
June -Tree Walk 3rd

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