

**City of Essex Junction
Tree Advisory Committee
Minutes of Meeting
July 18, 2023**

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

I. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:06 pm by Rich, second by Nick.

II. Additions or Amendments to Agenda

No additions or amendments.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

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

IV. Planting 2024

Nick and Warren were out at the UVM/BOB nursery and identified 23 to 26 trees for 2024 planting. They shared that the trees are thriving but need attention. They spent time pruning and staking. The trees are growing tall. Warren topped a number of them. Warren will need to get in touch with Kyle Albee of Branch Out Burlington for replacement trees to plant at the nursery. TAC will need to identify locations within the Junction for planting.

TAC still would like to offer, V.J. 's crew a pizza lunch to thank them for helping with our tree planting.

V. Tree Historic Walk-PR

Tree Walk was very very successful. About 25 people attended and gave very positive feedback. The walk was about 2+ hours. Warren shared that he is exploring a possible tree walk at St. Michael's College.

VII. Derelict Commercial Planting

Nick raised the question of what position should the TAC take on commercial sites that are not being well maintained. TAC discussed the two shopping complexes on Pearl Street. The Land Development Code indicates that the landscape should be maintained for in perpetuity and that extends to new owners. Nick expressed whether Warren might write a letter about safety concerns and the potential for trees falling in the public right of way. Warren suggested that the city attorney might send a letter sharing concerns. Nick shared that presently the city has not hired an enforcement officer. A safety officer was hired by the city but she does not appear to have an enforcement role. Nick noted that a number of commercial property owners in Burlington take pride in their properties. Warren suggested that the city should focus on those trees that are a threat to the public right of way. Warren wondered whether in the code there is a timeline for property owners to respond to a letter. Steve suggested that there should be a record of what was done to maintain a property, so information gets passed along to new property owners. Nick plans to speak with Chris and Terry to determine how to proceed and more clearly define the role of TAC in the process.

VIII. Monthly PSAs

Up to this point, PSAs from TAC have been limited. There has not been a need for a PSA on summer watering.

IX. Tree Contest

Rich reviewed the concept for the Essex Junction Greatest Tree Contest. Participants will identify the greatest tree in Essex Junction and share what makes it great. It could be its size, shape, location, use, story, or anything else that speaks to them.

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.

Rich and Nicole will arrange a meeting with Ashely. Steve will get information from BOB on their Awesome Tree Contest. TAC discussed the timing for the contest, potential sponsors, judging, celebration of winners, and thanking of sponsors.

X. Work Day

Nick suggested that we plan a pruning and mulching day to take care of the trees we planted in the city. Nick asked what are the priorities. Would we want to make the workday into a pruning workshop? Warren suggested that the first workday should focus on those trees that were recently planted.

XI. Date for Next Meeting

The Committee will meet on August 15 at 5:00 p.m

Adjournment

Rich made a motion to adjourn at 6:22 p.m. 2nd Nick.

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| 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