

MINUTES SUBJECT TO CORRECTION BY THE ESSEX JUNCTION TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE. CHANGES, IF ANY, WILL BE RECORDED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE.

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
FEBRUARY 18, 2014**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nick Meyer, Rich Boyers, Paula DeMichele, Warren Spinner

ADMINISTRATION: Darby Mayville, Community Relations and Economic Development Assistant

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM by Nick.

2. ADDITIONS OR AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

Nick suggested adding the following to the agenda:

- Discussion regarding potential articles to the Essex Reporter;
- Adding language to the municipal plan on agriculture and forestry;
- Planning for tree planting in 2014;
- New business.

MOTION by PAULA, SECOND by WARREN, to amend the agenda. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

3. MINUTES REVIEW

Warren suggested that Rich become Vice-Chair, rather than Interim Vice-Chair, as noted in the minutes. Rich agreed to this change.

MOTION by WARREN, SECOND by PAULA, to approve the minutes as amended. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

4. DISCUSSION ON POTENTIAL ARTICLES TO ESSEX REPORTER

Nick mentioned that a tree care workshop has been scheduled. Warren will be staffing this workshop, and has performed similar workshops in the past. While this workshop will only cover basic tree care and pruning, there are many other topics that could be covered at future workshops. The workshop will be held at Brownell Library, and is anticipated to last two hours. Warren mentioned that he hopes to take participants outside, weather permitting.

Paula expressed some concerns that the Brownell Library meeting room might be too small to accommodate all of the participants. Warren said that he did not anticipate a huge crowd.

Warren asked some questions about the type of AV equipment available for use at the meeting. Darby said that she would check into this for him.

Nick asked the group what the best way of publicizing the event would be. He mentioned that the Essex Reporter has given permission to the Tree Advisory Committee to have three articles in the paper throughout the spring, and that this might be a good avenue for publicizing the workshop.

Warren suggested that the March article should cover some basic information about the committee, and information on the workshop. He said that it would also be nice to have a picture of himself, Nick, and Darby receiving the Tree Steward award in the paper.

Rich asked if the Essex Reporter has printed any information on the tree inventory completion in the past. Nick said yes, but that it might be good to mention it again.

Warren also said that the article should include the committee's mission statement. He said that this does not have to be long, but should state their role as advocates for trees, and the assistance that they could provide to various groups.

Warren asked who was responsible for speaking on behalf of the group. Nick said that it was generally the committee chair.

Paula asked if the developers for the former People's United Bank site had chosen what types of trees to plant. Nick said that they were still working with the Village Planning Department on this.

Paula mentioned that she used to be a reporter, and would be happy to assist with writing the articles. Nick said that he would send her the information that she would need in order to write the articles.

Darby said that she would ask management for approval for the committee to submit these articles. It was decided that Nick and Darby would edit the articles.

Rich suggested the idea of planting a tree at Summit Street School in honor of principal Mary Hughes's retirement. He said that it might be possible to get families to contribute to this cause so that a larger tree can be purchased. Warren mentioned that he had successfully done planting projects with schools before. He suggested the possibility of creating a theme or nickname for the tree in order to get the kids' attention. Warren also suggested getting additional publicity through the Summit Street School newsletter.

In the end, it was tentatively decided that the following topics would be written about:

- 3/26: Intro to the committee and information on workshop and the basics of tree survival.
- 4/16: Green Up Day
- 4/26: History of Arbor Day, tree planting information.

The group then began to discuss plans for Arbor Day. Rich suggested giving out seedlings, and having students keep track of their development, either through a blog or journal. Warren expressed some concerns that not all kids live in places where they can plant trees, so some of the seedlings would get wasted if handed out to everyone.

Nick said that he could get in touch with Danie Fitzko from the Urban and Community Forestry Program to get the seedlings. He also offered to connect with local teachers about the idea.

Warren suggested encouraging students to monitor trees that are already in their yards, in order for them to track their growth.

Paula suggested posting information about Arbor Day on Front Porch Forum. Warren offered to do a write-up and send it to Darby.

5. TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Nick explained that this process has been put on hold. While he had earlier been told that the regional planning commission would be able to assist with this, it seems that they have not all been educated on the topic yet. Nick will give an update when more information is available.

6. MUNICIPAL PLAN: AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

Nick informed the committee that Essex Junction is currently in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan. In the current plan, there is no information about forestry or the benefits of trees. The committee thought that it would be important to include information on the tree inventory, and Tree Advisory Committee in this document.

Warren said that it is important to distinguish urban forestry from forestry, and he said that the plan should deal with both.

The committee decided to list several goals for Essex Junction that they felt should be listed in the plan:

- Establish a Tree Management Plan;
- Develop a plan for the Tree Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission to work together;
- Increase and maintain community tree population;
- Plan, plant, and maintain.

Warren said that he thought that a partnership with the Planning Commission was especially important, as it could be mutually beneficial. He asked Nick if he was aware about any current tree policies or regulations in the Village.

Nick said that only native species were allowed to be planted, and Darby gave Warren a copy of the section of the Land Development code that detailed acceptable species.

Warren said that the Urban & Community Forestry Program had also created their own list, which differed from the list in the Land Development Code. He felt that the committee should work to update the list in the LDC. Warren also noted that enforcement of this could be difficult.

Nick informed the committee that he and Darby would be getting a lesson on how to use the tree inventory system tomorrow. Paula asked how the inventory was done, and Nick explained the process. There was some discussion as to how this program could best be used to meet the community's needs.

7. TREE PLANTING 2014

There was not enough time to cover this issue. Nick asked all committee members to think of potential planting locations.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Paula wanted to discuss the opening that the committee currently has. There was some discussion about who might be a good person to approach to see if they were interested in joining. Nick said that he would approach local master gardeners and others who have completed the SOUL program. He said that the SOUL program runs bi-yearly, and is now open for registration, and as a result it is possible for the committee to benefit from this energy.

9. MEETING SCHEDULE

Next meeting

- March 18th at 6 PM

Agenda Items

- Minutes Review;
- Discussion and Input on Tree Planting Along Multi-Use Path;
- Workshop Planning;
- Arbor Day Planning;
- Mapping Update;
- Tree Planting 2014 Update;
- Comments from the Public.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by PAULA, SECOND by WARREN, to adjourn the meeting. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM.