

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
APRIL 22, 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 PM by Nick.

2. ADDITIONS OR AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

None.

3. MINUTES REVIEW

Nick asked that the minutes be changed to state that VHB will approach a landscape architect, and then will discuss with the committee species ideas for the multi-use safety path.

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

4. ARBOR DAY UPDATE

Rich told the committee that Summit Street School will be hosting an Arbor Day event that will take place at 1 PM on Friday, May 2nd. He informed the Essex Reporter about the event, and hopes that they will be able to make it. Rich and Nick will pick up the donated tree later this week from Cobble Creek Nursery.

5. TREE PLANTING 2014

Last Saturday, Rich and Nick took a walk around the downtown area to find an appropriate planting location for street trees. They noticed that some of the trees in the Main Street cemetery have died, and that this may be a good location for future plantings. Warren offered to work with the cemetery association to facilitate future planting in this area. They also identified three other locations on Main Street that may be hospitable for planting. Warren suggested to the committee planting in the median near West Street Extension in the future.

Nick talked to Rick Jones, Public Works Superintendent, who said that Public Works would be willing to dig the holes to plant the trees. This would allow the Village to purchase more trees

with this grant money, due to the fact that we will not have to pay for the cost of planting. Public Works has also done well with watering in the past, and would also be willing to water the new trees in the mornings.

Warren informed the committee that he would be going to a tree nursery, and would be willing to tag healthy looking trees for the committee. He plans to price out two or two and a half inch trees, and is able to get them at the wholesale price. Tagging the trees allows him to hand pick the healthiest looking trees. Elms, sugar maples, and autumn blaze were all suggested.

Warren asked if the Village Public Works Department would be able to help transport the trees? Nick said that he thought that they could, and stated that he thought that they could be stored at the Public Works garage until it was time to plant them.

Paula asked what the committee's budget was? Nick said that it is \$10,000 for the next fiscal year, but that most of this money will be spent on pruning, the development of a management plan, and mapping.

Warren encouraged the committee to consider other sites for future planting. Nick said that he thought that outside the FairPoint building might be a nice place for some shade trees. This would help to anchor the Farmer's Market. Rich suggested that planting three trees, creating a sharrow, might be even better than two. Nick said that he would talk to FairPoint about these ideas, and also suggested that they grind the stump in front of the building. Warren mentioned that there was also a stump in the right of way on Main Street that should be ground down. Nick suggested that the costs associated with stump grinding could be a part of the pruning budget.

Paula asked when the best time to plant would be? Warren said as soon as possible.

Paula asked what species options are available for the Village? Warren said that it varies based on location.

6. MULTI USE SAFETY PATH

Warren mentioned that he had gone out to look at the location of the proposed multi-use path. He said that it was a very tight space, and that there are currently not very many significant sized trees there. The grade is also very steep, and he thought that retaining walls might be necessary.

Paula asked who owned the green strip near the train station on Railroad Avenue. Warren told her that the Village owned it, and that trees have been planted in this area in the past.

Nick said the he would check out the space, and encouraged all of the other committee members to do the same. He asked Darby for a status update on the progress of VHB in finding appropriate vegetation for the area. She said that she would check in with them and report back.

7. CARING FOR CANOPY GRANT PROGRESS

Nick said that the Canopy for Canopy Grant is moving in the right direction. Nick has worked with Public Works Superintendent, Rick Jones, to develop a pruning priority list. The Village recently applied for a Caring for Canopy Mini-Grant, and if received, will be used to complete a Village street tree inventory.

Warren mentioned that beautification is another important aspect to keeping the urban canopy healthy. He thought that it is important to get more people involved in Village beautification, and mentioned that he thought that the current planters should be replaced with something more attractive. This is especially needed in the downtown area.

Nick said that Public Works is currently training two of their employees on best practices in tree care and gardening.

The committee started to discuss the idea of handing out educational material to homeowners who live in areas that would be hospitable to street trees. Warren said that Branch Out Burlington had similar materials that they could share. He said that Branch Out Burlington would put door hangers at certain properties to see if they wanted a tree planted on their property, and also would enclose flyer with the Burlington Electric bills.

Warren also informed the committee about a TD Bank North grant that Burlington received. This is only open to towns and cities that are designated as a "Tree City USA." He suggested that this should be a future goal for Essex Junction.

Nick and Warren mentioned that Development Director Robin Pierce had e-mailed them to get the Tree Advisory Committee's input on potential plantings on Post Office Square. Warren is familiar with some of the issues with the area, and said that he would contact the owner to discuss them further.

8. PUBLIC INPUT

None.

10. MEETING SCHEDULE

Next meeting

- May 20th at 6 PM

Agenda Items

- Agenda Additions;
- Minutes Review;
- Tree Planting 2014;
- Caring for Canopy Grant;
- Multi Use Safety Path;
- Work Plan for 2014;
- Public Input.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by NICK, SECOND by RICH, to adjourn the meeting. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 PM.