

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2018 AT 5:30 PM
LINCOLN HALL**

AGENDA

1. Minutes Review;
2. Crescent Connector Planting;
3. Land Development Code Review;
 4. Planting 2018;
5. PR Event & Public Engagement;
 6. Budget Review;
 7. Public Input.

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 16, 2018**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nick Meyer, Tim Kemerer Mary Jo Engel, Warren Spinner, and Rich Boyers

OTHERS PRESENT: Diane Clemens (Village Planning Commission), Steve Rivard

ADMIN PRESENT: Darby Mayville, Community Relations/Economic Development Assistant

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Nick.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS

Nick asked to add discussion of a joint project with Branch Out Burlington and a letter regarding landscaping funds to the agenda. All agreed.

2. MINUTES REVIEW

MOTION BY WARREN, SECOND BY RICH TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION PASSED.

3. LANDSCAPING FUNDS

Mary Jo informed the committee that she had drafted a letter asking for information on the Village landscaping fund. This letter would be sent to the Municipal Manager, Finance Director, Board of Trustees, and Planning Commission. A landscaping fund is referenced in Section 719, Section D of the Land Development Code (see below).

D. Landscaping. There shall be a sufficient amount of landscaping and screening, as may be reasonably determined by the Planning Commission, to insure protection of and enhance the quality of the project in question and adjacent properties. The landscape plan must be drawn by a landscape architect, landscape designer, or competent landscape professional, and the landscaping requirement will be a minimum of three (3) percent of the total construction cost for new construction up to \$250,000. For new construction projects above \$250,000, the landscape requirement shall be a minimum of two (2) percent of the total construction cost. In the case of construction projects above \$1,000,000, a landscape architect, licensed by the State of Vermont's Office of Professional Regulation, will be required to prepare a landscape plan. This may be waived in unusual circumstances. The Commission may permit or require improvements to the public right-of-way in part or in lieu of on-site landscaping to be used to improve the pedestrian environment including street trees, plantings, stormwater retention and pedestrian amenities. With a new use on existing development or renovation on existing property, the applicant must provide landscaping adequate to provide screening and environmental enhancement to the satisfaction of the Planning Commission.

Nick noted that this letter needed to say that the committee would like to ensure that these funds are being earmarked and spent on landscaping improvements.

Mary Jo said that she wanted to make sure that the money was being properly accounted for. She said that she had reviewed the previous years budget and did not see a line item for this fund.

Nick suggested adding an element to the letter stating that the committee would like to encourage all applicants to use the money for landscaping improvements on their own property, rather than contributing to the fund.

Diane Clemens, Planning Commission member, stated that she had talked to Finance Director Lauren Morrisseau after reading the December Tree Advisory Committee meeting minutes. Lauren said that there was not an earmarked fund in the Village budget for this purpose, and suggested that the Planning Commission develop a process for collecting and using this money. Diane said that there would be a Planning Commission meeting later this week, and that she would be bringing up the issue at that time.

Diane noted that she had reviewed her 2016 and 2017 files for projects brought in front of the Planning Commission. Six applications during this time period had been approved on the condition that they contribute to the landscaping fund. It is possible that there are additional projects that have had this condition but that it was not noted in the minutes. She noted that many of these projects are not complete, so payment can still be collected.

Nick noted that there were two projects that were approved at the last Planning Commission meeting that need to pay into this fund.

Mary Jo noted that Village developer Gabe Handy has indicated that he would be willing attend a TAC meeting to discuss plantings on his properties in the Village.

Diane noted that Gabe was encouraged by the Planning Commission to plant quick growing trees around his senior living development on Park Street.

Tim noted that there was no formal process for the TAC to give input to the Planning Commission. Input can currently be given upon the request of the Planning Commission only. Nick noted that the Town Conservation & Trails Committee reviews projects for the Town Planning Commission.

Tim said that it would be helpful for a process to be written stating when the TAC's input would be requested. He also suggested having a joint meeting with the Planning Commission at some point.

4. CRESCENT CONNECTOR PLANTING

Mary Jo asked if the Village would be responsible for funding any landscaping for the Crescent Connector project. Nick and Warren said yes.

Diane said that Community Development Director Robin Pierce plans to allocate funds for landscaping at this project.

Darby brought a proposed site drawing of the Crescent Connector project on the main screen.

Nick noted that the Planning Commission did not have a role in the landscaping or general development of this project. Warren said that there seemed to be limited room for plantings on this project.

Nick asked Darby to bring the engineering plans for this project to the next meeting. Warren also asked her to find out what engineering firm is working on this project, and what percentage of completion the plans were at.

Nick noted that there would be a public meeting on January 22 to review a Bicycle and Pedestrian Study for Route 15. It is possible that some of the recently planted trees in this area could be impacted by changes to this area.

5. LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE REVIEW

Not discussed.

6. PLANTING 2018

Nick said that he had recently met with Rick to discuss public plantings. It will be difficult to make any decisions until the snow melts. Steve will be contacting Holy Family to see if they would be amenable to plantings near the cemetery.

The committee discussed the 2018 Arbor Day celebration. Nick suggested going back to doing a planting event at one of the elementary schools. He said that it was possible for one of the teachers to work the event into their curriculum. Tim will reach out to local principals to see if any of them would be interested in having a tree planted at their school.

7. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & PR

Not discussed.

8. BRANCH OUT BURLINGTON COLLABORATION

Warren said that Branch Out Burlington (BOB) has a nursery at the UVM Horticulture Farm. UVM would like hire a company to clear additional land near where BOB plants. This will give BOB additional space, more than they will be able to use. As a result, they have offered the TAC space to raise trees in this location. There will be no cost to use this space.

Warren said that the committee would collaborate with BOB to select tree species, and it is possible that the TAC might receive free plantings.

Mary Jo asked how this project would fit in with the existing tree nursery at CTE?

Nick said that he was unsure of the progress of this project. He would contact CTE for a project status report. He noted that the BOB planting location would already be irrigated and has planting tools available.

Warren noted that it might be possible to bring CTE students to this planting location to help teach them about tree care and growth. It is possible that the committee could offer trainings to Village residents at this location as well.

All members indicated that they are interested in exploring the idea further. Warren will find out additional information and bring it back to the committee. Should they decide that this is something they would like to pursue, the TAC will approach the Trustees for approval prior to making a commitment.

Tim asked if there was a possibility to use the old state property on West Street as a planting location? Warren noted that the location was good, but that it might be difficult to irrigate and bring in all the necessary materials to plant.

9. BUDGET REVIEW

Mary Jo showed the committee the most recent budget printout. She asked Darby to check to see if a recent purchase was appearing in the correct line item.

10. PUBLIC INPUT

None.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by MARY JO, SECOND by RICH to adjourn. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted: Darby Mayville