

[NOTE: These minutes are made available to the public prior to Shade Tree Commission acceptance.]

MINUTES OF SHADE TREE COMMISSION MEETING WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairman Bruce Graver.

Present were: Phil Cashman, John Winiarski, Bruce Graver, Mark Alpert and Tree Warden, John Lepper. One Commission position remains vacant.

ITEM 1 - Public Comments

Robert Gary, President of the Wethersfield Village Improvement Association, addressed the Commission. He reported that he had spoke with Kathy Bagley and Bonnie Therrien about planting an Arbor Day Tree on the Park Avenue Green. The event is to take place April 26, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. They would also like to place trees on Main Street from Hartford Avenue to State Street, as well as in front of the Board of Education Building on Hartford Avenue. They are also looking for zero tree loss.

The Tree Warden reminded Mr. Gary that there is a committee working on plans for the appearance of old Wethersfield and before we move forward with any planting, we should wait for the Committee's Report. He also pointed out that planting at the Board of Education Building was done by a contracted landscaper using plans drawn up by the Landscape Architect for the project. Hearings and comment periods were held during the planning process for the project. It was also pointed out to Mr. Gary that this is a late date to discuss Arbor Day plans with the Commission as there are competing interests for planting on the green. As it turns out, another space can be made available.

ITEM 2 - Minutes

Upon a motion made by Winiarski, seconded by Cashman, [the minutes of the December 5, 2007 meeting](#) were approved unanimously.

ITEM 3 - Communications

- A. Call from Pandolf, 177 Roebeth Lane, complaining about a tree in front of 122 Roebeth.
- B. Call concerning branches falling on Maple Street.
- C. Letter from Ed Richardson, Re: Notable Trees.
- D. E-mail from Loreen Canter, 21 Harmund Place, claiming that a limb fell from a tree and damaged her car.
- E. Letter from Connecticut DOT Re: Intent to do work on bridge over Wolcott Hill.
- F. E-mail to Mike Turner from 68 Clearfield Road concerning a neighbor's tree.
- G. Phone call concerning removal of tree, possibly owned by the Town, at 162 Wolcott Hill Road.
- H. Request from resident at 67 Park Avenue for verification that a tree in the yard is not a Town tree.
- I. Call from 720 ridge Road for verification of ownership.
- J. Call from a resident of Albert Avenue with a complaint about a neighbor's tree.
- K. Request from Davey Tree for permission to do line clearing.
- L. Call from 55 Pawtucket Avenue concerning storm damaged trees.
- M. Call from parent of a student at Highcrest School expressing concern over downed trees at the school.
- N. Notification from Jim Sheehan that he is leaving Town employment.
- O. Call from CL&P concerning a complaint from Housing Authority.
- P. Bob Allen, CL&P, has made an offer to speak to school children about trees as an Arbor Day observance.

ITEM 5 - Tree Warden's Report

- A. Responded to D. Szlachetka's complaint about a neighbor's tree.
- B. Investigated complaint at 123 Roebeth Lane and ordered crown cleaning.
- C. Examined trees for Town Planner at a proposed building site.
- D. Worked with Bill Holler to finish up tree sample survey for Tree Storm Damage Assessment.
- E. Assessed Windmill Hill resident with an ownership issue.
- F. Spoke with David Ambrose Jr. concerning trees between his property and Webb School.
- G. Posted declining Maples on Wolcott Hill Road for removal.
- H. Investigated complaint on Pawtucket and posted a Cherry and White Pine for removal.
 - I. Approved CL&P line cleaning plan.
 - J. Posted tree for removal on Main Street in front of the Stevens House.
- K. Investigated a complaint of a hazardous tree at 38 Dale Road.
- L. Marked off area of downed trees at Highcrest School with "Caution" tape.
- M. Referred falling branches on Maple Street to Connecticut DOT.
- N. Investigated complaint of limb hitting a car on Harmund Place, but could not find evidence to substantiate the claim.
- O. Responded to resident with neighbor complaint at 68 Clearfield Road.
- P. Investigated alleged removal of Town tree on Wolcott Hill Road. Tree was Town's. Advised the crew leader of his responsibility to verify ownership.
- Q. Provided homeowner at 67 Park Avenue with verification that the tree in question was hers.
- R. Contacted Doug Shipman, Historical Society to secure permission for parking Davey Tree trucks.
- S. Posted storm damaged Pine at Millwoods for removal.
- T. Attended Connecticut Tree Protective Association Annual meeting and Conference.

ITEM 6 - Old Business.

- A. Deadline for tree planting plans remains tabled.
- B. Spring planting plans were discussed. So far, plans call for (5) Karpick Red Maples at Emerson-Williams School and (2) Austrian Pines at Webb School. Request for (1) Weeping European Beech at Standish Park; (1) Tulip Tree and (1) Sweetgum Tree for the Park Avenue Green; (1) tree at the Keeney Center, species to be determined. Mark Alpert submitted a list of potential planting sites for discussion. Alpert also mentioned the possibility of landscaping a new sign at Charles Wright School with shrubbery. He will investigate this further.

The Commission approved planting an Arbor Day tree on the Park Avenue Green.

- C. Tree Warden reported that the current storm proofing of rights of way is working. Over the last couple of years, we have made a concerted effort to prevent power outages, road closures, and property damage due to falling trees. We had only two property damage claims, both on Hartford Avenue. This is a main artery that had not been storm proofed at the time. Neighboring towns of Berlin, Newington, Rocky Hill, Glastonbury and East Hartford have all sustained power outages due to storm damaged trees.
- D. Tree Warden reviewed some points to be considered in planning for street tree planting:
 - 1. Breaking up streets and curbs.
 - 2. Utility rights of way. Numbers of trees along CL&P ROW are more than twice the national average. 90% of outages caused by trees and tree limbs.
 - 3. Damage from trash pick-up trucks.
 - 4. Cars and trucks parked on snow shelf.
 - 5. Unauthorized pruning.
 - 6. Sidewalk damage. Town now requires residence to pay for walks; therefore, they are less tolerant of tree damage.
 - 7. Research done by Dr. R. Thomas Smiley, Bartlett Tree Research, shows that 25% of street trees are involved with sidewalk damage.
 - 8. Guidance from Federal Highway administration recommends increasing space along ROW's.

ITEM 7 - New Business

- A. The Connecticut Botanical Society has added two more Town trees to its list of Notable Trees. A Dawyck Beech is the largest of its species in Connecticut and is located at the Standish House on Main Street. At the same site is an English Oak that is the third largest in the state.

Having no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

John C. Lepper, CTW
Tree Warden/ Secretary Pro-Tem