

Westport Tree Board Meeting Sept 18, 2019

Attendees: Dick Fincher, Dick Stein, Peter Kolbrenner, Ed Picard, Bruce Lindsay, Monica Buesser, Alice Ely, Marci Caporizzo, Eileen Flug,

Approval of Minutes 7/17/19

Westport Tree Ordinance:

Assistant Town Attorney Eileen Flug reviewed the Tree Ordinance draft. It is modeled on Greenwich's ordinance. It is similar to and restates some of the language of the Connecticut state statute. It has been sent to Jennifer Fava and Peter Ratkiewich for their review. It explains the responsibilities of the Tree Warden and the purpose and duties of the Tree Board. One provision in state statute not in draft (posting on tree before removal) will be added to draft.

Bruce Lindsay stated that a \$200 fine is not adequate for the removal of a tree. The Tree Warden would like to use an appraisal process to determine worth of a tree. Replacement cost could be in the thousands of dollars depending on the size and health of the tree. Planting in the right of way without permission is also a violation but not as costly. Bruce Lindsay needs language in ordinance to stop developers from destroying trees during construction, a true tree protection ordinance. It may be possible to utilize municipal fines. He does note that most developers are responsible and respect the trees. We need to figure out the value of a tree to the town. Sometimes fines are per day.

Eileen Flug concerned that Westport Ordinance could be outdated if the state changes laws pertaining to the Tree Warden.

The draft will be attached to the minutes. The final draft will be presented to the RTM sponsor members.

LWA Signage:

Signs are approved. John Broadband given photos by Ed Picard of locations.

Post Road East Safety Project:

Alice Ely utilized the town GIS system to get the private property owners names that are in the vicinity of the project (Stop & Shop and Fresh Market areas). The Tree Board will contact the owners and ask that they plant trees where possible.

Dick Stein spoke to Greens Farms Association at their recent board meeting. They were very concerned about the removal of trees during construction. The meeting was well attended with several elected state officials present. The project is now being reviewed.

Tree Warden Report

Currently looking at trees around town

Would like Tree Protection ordinance.

Stump removal project: 20-30 to be removed. Only remove stumps if they are a hazard. Homeowner can only remove stump with permission from Bruce Lindsay. This information should be included in website as a FAQ.

Tree Planting program: Will plant 50-75 in late Oct/Nov, each tree costs \$500 to \$1000, 2-3 inch caliper

LWA Volunteer Work

10/5/19 9am-12noon, Builders Beyond Borders will work on the Eloise A Ray trail from Stonybrook to the Earthplace bridge. They will be mulching the area to reestablish the path.

10/8/19 2pm-6pm, Gault volunteers will help with the weeding and planting of the 1st section of LWA (to first rockwall)

Notable Trees

Dick Stein stated that there are 5 upright Copper Beech trees in the back of Saugatuck Elementary, another Copper Beech is located at 35 Jenny Lane. Alice Ely suggested Dick look at Butternut on Old Hill.

P & Z

P & Z has required developer to replace screening trees/shrubs that were too small. This makes all developers take notice that Tree Board recommendations on landscaping are important.

Mercury Gas station will remodel. They have agreed to put in appropriate screening.

Grants

Masonic Lodge – Luncheon in December to receive grant. Letter has been written to Jim Marpe.

Other Business:

Marci will work with Bruce on new LWA brochure.

Greening of Post Road in 1972/1973 – Pam Klomberg has a copy of the original map of the Greening of Post Road. It was found at the Historical Society in Westport.

Audience: Becky Newman, Pam Klomberg