

WESTPORT TREE BOARD MEETING APRIL 21 2021

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

1. WELCOME

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 3/17/2021

1. Minutes were approved.

3. TREE WARDEN REPORT

1. Arbor Day Tree Planting:

1. Bruce Lindsay planned to purchase trees for planting at the Police Dept. and the Greens Farms Fire Dept. to commemorate Arbor Day and show appreciation for the role Westport first responders have played over the last year of Covid-related challenges.
2. At the recommendation of the Tree Board, an effort would be made to source native trees for these new tree locations, such as a pin oak or pagoda dogwood or similar species.
3. Planting was scheduled for on or about Monday April 26.
2. **Arbor Day Tree Giveaway** was deferred this year as Eversource was unable to partner with us in providing saplings.
3. **LWA:** Bruce has requested clean up of fallen trees/hangers to make safer for workdays
 1. Several organizations have been asked by Parks & Rec to submit plans for the LWA; Bruce will be involved in the review of the 3 finalist proposals when that stage is reached.
4. **Town Tree Plantings:** With an increase of \$50K to the Tree Warden's budget in the new fiscal year, Bruce will be able to be more proactive in addressing tree maintenance and replacement.
5. **Tree City Designation:** Bruce followed up with Danica Doroski, the Urban Forestry Coordinator for CT DEEP, to finalize the official documentation for Westport's new Tree City USA designation. The signage should arrive soon.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

1. **Available spot on Tree Board – interested individuals invited to attend meeting**

2. **Story Walk installed at Arboretum** – Through the efforts of the Westport Library, Dick Stein and Monica Buesser, a new children’s story walk has been installed along the Lillian Wadsworth arboretum paths in time for Arbor Day
3. Clear cutting – an investigation into best practices/ordinances in other towns revealed that only Hartford has a Tree Protection Ordinance which applies to the cutting of trees by homeowners https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/forestry/urban_forestry/Hartford_Tree_Ordinance.pdf

Hartford Zoning Regulations Trees

1. <https://www.hartfordct.gov/files/assets/public/development-services/planning-zoning/pz-documents/zoning-regulations/zoning-regulations-06052020.pdf>

5. **P & Z ACTIVITY – Dick Stein**

1. Dick Stein reported that no applications from P&Z have been given to the Tree Board for review in recent months. Monica Buesser will be in touch with the P&Z to facilitate a return to this process

6. **TEEN VOLUNTEER GROUPS – Alice Ely**

1. SLOBS – LWA May 2 – The tree board members able to attend agreed to be on hand to guide the SLOBS volunteers in their cleanup activities at the Arboretum.
2. Dick Stein promised to perform some preliminary clearing/cutting of large branches to facilitate the volunteers’ work; Bruce Lindsay arranged for wood chips to be delivered.

7. **NOTABLE TREES – Dick Stein**

1. It was noted by Dick that addresses for Notable Trees on private land are not publicized for reasons of owner privacy

8. **CONTACT WITH OTHER RELEVANT COMMITTEES**

1. Monica Buesser had contacted Mary Hogue of the Fairfield Tree Board to explore synergies and best practices. Fairfield has a program in which 200 trees are planted a year with homeowners co-paying \$200 to participate.

9. **EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH – Marci Caporizzo**

1. Marci discussed various educational initiatives which could be undertaken involving schools, and also inquired as to the feasibility of a more robust website for the tree board to disseminate information. She suggested an educational screening of Call of the Forest in collaboration with another town entity. Becky Newman of Earthplace, who attended the meeting, suggested that Earthplace might be able to facilitate such a screening. Marci was to explore further.

10. New Business

1. It was agreed that a Westport event which drew attention to the environmental importance of trees would be desirable, and that the Tree Board should initiate a giveaway of trees in support of an Oaktober theme, thereby reinforcing not only that the fall is prime tree planting time but the important role oaks play in the ecosystem.
2. Next meeting May 19.

11. ADJOURNMENT.