



CITY OF HARTFORD

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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Hon. Luke A. Bronin, Mayor



City of Hartford Tree Advisor Commission **Minutes of Meeting – August 4, 2021**

In attendance (at 50 Jennings Road): Jack Hale (chair), Charmaine Craig (vice-chair), Greg Secord (commissioner), Heather Dionne (City Forester)

Guests in attendance (via Teams): Donna Swarr, Jim del Visco, Edith Pestana, Grace Yi, Evan Johnson

Guests in attendance (via phone): Patrick Doyle

1. Because the phone link to the meeting did not work, review of minutes of the June meeting was postponed until the next meeting.

2. City Forester's report – Heather Dionne presented written report. Discussion focused on tree planting. Patrick Doyle summarized spring and early summer planting by Knox totalling 245 trees, including:

- a. 19 in South Green
- b. 100 in Goodwin Park
- c. 20 in Keney Park
- d. 15 at fire stations
- e. 80 in other locations

Plans are being developed to plant trees in Parkville, South Green, CSS/CON, Asylum Hill, and Clay Arsenal this fall. Knox is also working on other grants, one for planting in Lozada Park and another from Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for the Clay Arsenal neighborhood. Knox has already started doing outreach in Clay Arsenal. Hale said planting should focus on neighborhoods and locations identified in the Davey Inventory and the Tree Canopy Action Plan. Dionne agreed but said that some locations identified in the inventory were actually not feasible and some of the priority neighborhoods have limited planting locations.

Greg Secord reported that there has been tree planting around the new roundabout at Park Terrace and Russ Street and that there is a plan to plant an orchard nearby. Charmaine Craig expressed concern about the viability of an orchard in that location.

3. Evan Johnson joined the meeting. He is Director of Central Grants Administration for the City of Hartford. He expressed willingness to seek grant funding for forestry functions and indicated he has looked into U.S. Forest Service funding. He sought suggestions for needs. Suggestions included:

- a. Tree planting
- b. Community outreach
- c. Education about trees
- d. School programming
- e. An organizer – particularly aimed at earning trust in neighborhoods of color
- f. Tree maintenance

Johnson suggested that commissioners discuss opportunities with other groups doing streetscape improvements.

Doyle suggested focus on planting and education in schools. He also said that if outreach and education are to be done, there needs to be ongoing commitment from the City for funding planting. Secord underscored need for sustained commitment

Donna Swarr brought up the a fine owed by the MDC for environmental violations, wondering whether those funds could be directed toward park tree plans and planting. Johnson said he would pay attention to that.

4. Hale reported attending a recent meeting of the planning and Zoning Commission where he gave brief mention of proposed tree-related changes to the zoning regulations. That topic will be taken up at a later meeting.
5. There was no news regarding Eversource's intention to remove trees under power lines at Charter Oak Landing.
6. Hale reported on communication from Rich Cowles regarding EAB. Cowles has suspended his research project since some trees in the study had died and been removed and because others had been treated by other people. He suggested that remaining healthy Ash trees be treated with soil injections. He offered to provide training and use of his equipment if the City could purchase chemicals and allocate staff time.
7. Hale reported a meeting in Wethersfield discussing closing of Brainard Airport and a well-attended City Council committee hearing on a closing resolution.
8. It was decided that for the foreseeable future commission meetings will be held via Zoom or other virtual platform.
9. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Hale