

Report- Membership Committee

31 May, 2019

Edith Pestana & Tom Swarr

The Membership Committee met on May 31 at The Kitchen, Hartford Public Library. The purpose was to kick off development of a recruitment plan for ACOTE. Based on discussions we have had with potential recruits, there is a general reluctance to serving as a commissioner due to concerns about the time commitment. However, they did express a willingness to help with specific topics or tasks. For example, if we had a meeting focused on a specific topic of interest, they would be willing to attend and provide input. Or if we had a work group focused on a particular objective (with defined end point), they might be willing to volunteer for that level of effort. Thus, our recruitment efforts should be open to such short- term commitments, in addition to seeking additional commissioners. It also recognized that we should strive for better connections to the neighborhoods through the NRZs, both to solicit resident input on their concerns and to help communicate our goals and objectives.

We have contacted Hartford 2000, Clay Arsenal, Northeast, and Upper Albany NRZs to introduce ACOTE and solicit volunteers. Kerri Provost had thrown together a flyer for the recent Commissioners' training day that was modified to eliminate any time specific information that could be used as a handout for recruiting. These can be printed two to a page and will be distributed to all ACOTE members for their use after approval by the full commission.



We also discussed preparing a more extensive handout that described our mission and key priorities for the coming year. We will need to agree on action plan for the coming year before such a brochure could be finalized, but we can begin to storyboard what we want in the brochure. We will also need to agree on a basic description of ACOTE that we can all use in recruitment activities, so we are communicating a consistent story. This description should give a general introduction to ACOTE's purpose and objectives. A strawman proposal is offered below to get that process started.

ACOTE description:

ACOTE's mission is to ensure the City does everything possible to minimize or eliminate potential environmental health hazards, and to work with the City to chart a course to a clean and healthy environment that promotes public health, economic development, and social equity. ACOTE will seek input from the community on issues affecting the environment and that impact their quality of life. ACOTE works with other

board and commissions to encourage them to include environmental concerns in their decision making. We will make specific recommendations to the Mayor, the Court of Common Council, and other city boards and commissions concerning policies and procedures that promote these objectives. Where the City is constrained by state or federal regulations, we will advocate for environmental reforms. We will also conduct education and outreach programs to promote environmentally friendly policies, practices, and behaviors that help ensure all residents have access to healthy homes, work places, and open spaces.

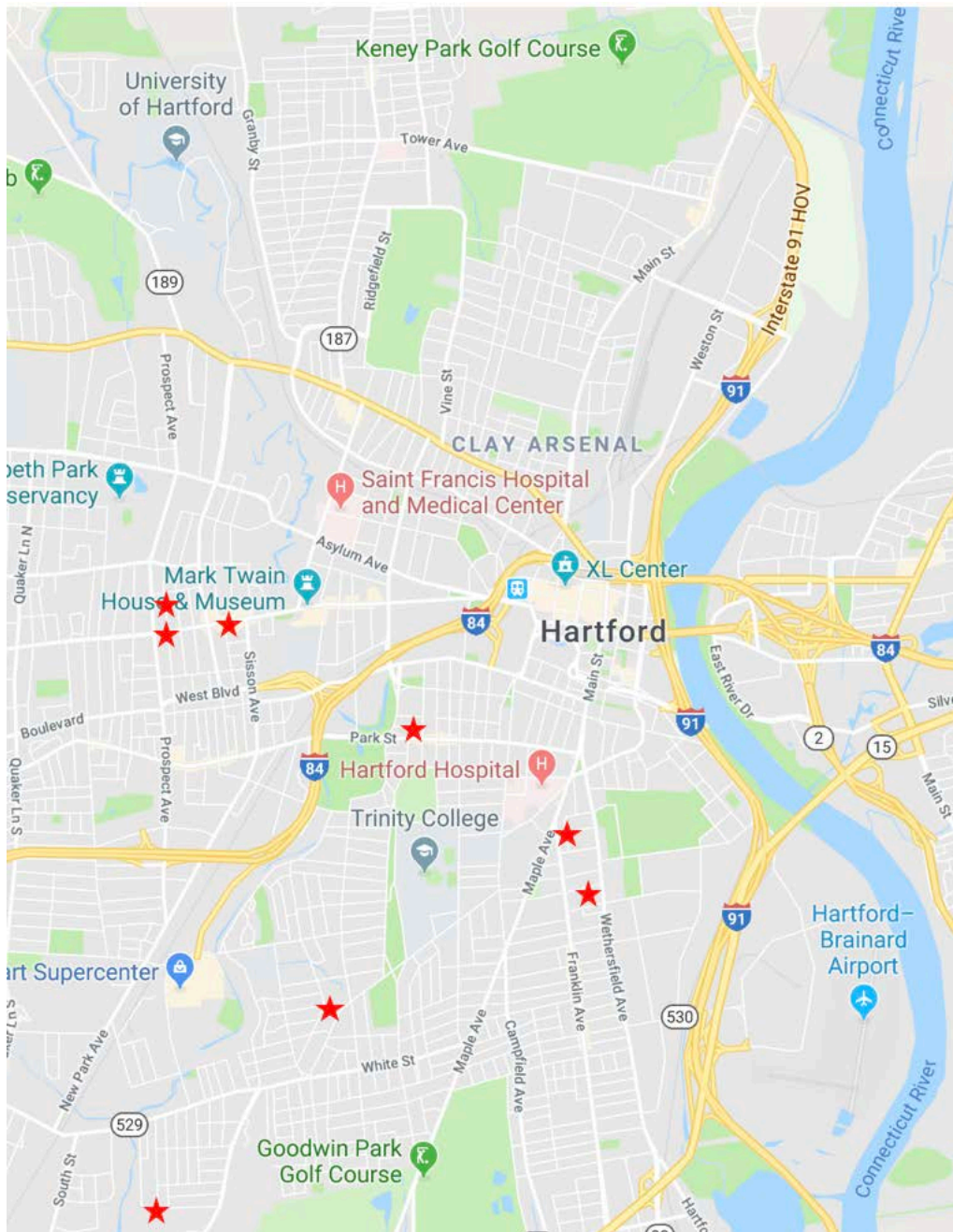
A lesson learned from the Tree Commission is that overly prescriptive qualifications to serve as a commissioner can impede recruitment efforts. ACOTE should not require any specific subject matter expertise in order to enable any interested and motivated resident to serve. We do want to ensure a broad diversity of experiences, neighborhoods, and interests in order to address the range of issues associated with climate action and social justice. Our goal should be to engage residents that have specific interests and willingness to “put some skin in the game.” To guide recruitment efforts and ensure an adequate diversity of perspectives, it is proposed that ACOTE Commissioners complete the attached table indicating their interests against the Climate Action Plan focus areas and core values. This will help identify any gaps that we will need to target in our recruitment efforts. In addition, it is important to ensure we have commissioners from all neighborhoods. The attached map shows the geographic distribution of current commissioners.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Swarr

Please identify areas of interest. Interest does not demand subject matter expertise. It simply indicates those areas you would be willing to work on outside regular monthly meetings- e.g. reading reports, making phone calls, drafting recommendations for the full commission to consider.

	Economic Development	Public Health	Social Justice	Energy	Food	Landscape	Waste	Water
JoAnne Bauer								
Sam King								
Mark Mitchell								
Edith Pestana								
Kerri Provost								
Alex Rodriguez								
Tom Swarr								
Russell Williams								



Stars indicate home address of current ACOTE commissioners.