

ROLL CALL:

Members Present - Robert Amadon
Evelyn Hicks
Ryan Taylor

Absent - Cynn timer Gaasch, Chairperson
Danielle Bagley
Jacqueline Balikowski
Michael Beltz
Ryan Harrington
Tracy Skalski

Associate members present: Leane Schultz, Brittany Hernon and Alex Goodwin

A quorum was not met and the following minutes reflect discussions by those present.

Vice Chairperson Hicks led the meeting and announced the remaining 2023 Environmental Commission meetings will be held at the Community Center meeting room and not be moved to the Burchfield Nature and Art Center as previously discussed.

MINUTES APPROVAL

The approval of the meeting minutes from June 12, 2023, will be held until the following meeting.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Vice Chairperson Hicks referred to a document Chairperson Gaasch forwarded to commission members with goals the Environmental Commission would like to achieve and will forward the emails to new member Ryan Taylor. The list includes:

- Reviewing items in the Comprehensive Plan that align with the Environmental Commission's responsibilities
- Previous presentation regarding the SEQRA process by NYSDEC Regional Director Julie Barrett O'Neill
- Opportunity for the town to become a Climate Smart Community and scheduling a guest speaker to provide information
- Ongoing collaboration with the Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper on the stream bank stabilization project on the Buffalo Creek
- Scheduling a government representative to speak on environmental issues
- Public strategy initiatives
- Collaborating with Go Bike and West Seneca Bikes
- A stormwater coalition including impact timelines and costs– Mr. Amadon stated he has performed some research on stormwater impact and added information to the document. Vice Chairperson Hicks stated she will see that Mr. Amadon receives emails from Erie County Stormwater and Mr. Amadon should also utilize LEWPA, Lake Erie Water Protection Alliance, as a resource. Mr. Amadon stated he has reviewed the stormdrain medallions in his neighborhood and found that 69% are still in place and he will review additional streets. Vice Chairperson Hicks would like a budgetary request added to the October 16, 2023, meeting for stormdrain medallions and supplies. Ms. Schultz volunteered to provide addresses for missing

medallions, also. Vice Chairperson Hicks stated Mr. Amadon and Highway Superintendent Adams should be copied on the locations.

- Deer impact items

ONGOING COMMISSION PROJECTS

Mr. Amadon stated this past June the town applied for a grant in the amount of \$75,000 from the NYSDEC to perform a townwide tree inventory on town lands and rights-of-way and advised an arborist would be hired to perform the inventory. The inventory will include the number, location, type, and condition of the trees as well as identify any invasive species and potential locations to plant new trees. If the town is awarded the grant, the next step after the tree inventory is creating an urban forestry management program. The town is currently waiting to learn if they will be awarded the grant. Vice Chairperson Hicks requested Mr. Amadon follow up with the town grant writer on the status.

Vice Chairperson Hicks provided an update on the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant to look at stream bank stabilization and water overflow on Buffalo Creek near Lexington Green for flood remediation purposes. The goal is to build a flood bench on the north side of the creek between Union Road and Harlem Road. The most recent update from Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper is that the initial part of the grant is done, and the second part is submitted, and the town should move forward with contacting National Grid and property owners impacted by the flood bench.

Vice Chairperson Hicks referred to a request Supervisor Dickson has made of the Environmental Commission to review and update the town's list of acceptable trees for planting in the rights-of-way list per the attached letter and noted the list only includes six trees. Ms. Hernon advised the Japanese Tree Lilac is potentially invasive. Vice Chairperson Hicks questioned if it was safe to plant ash trees again. Ms. Hernon stated it is not and genetic testing is being performed. Chairperson Hicks stated she would also like to add a stipulation where no more than two of any five trees can be the same species to prevent all trees in a neighborhood from being affected by something like the emerald ash borer and diversity is more environmentally friendly.

OLD BUSINESS

Young Development

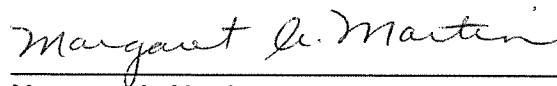
Chairperson Hicks recounted the incident with Young Development clear cutting trees without permission from the town. As a result of a lawsuit brought by the town, Young Development was required to donate trees to the town to be planted at three locations including Harlem Road Park, Knox Road Park, and the Burchfield Nature and Art Center Park. Despite many conversations regarding the timeframe for the planting, the developer did not follow the guidance of the Environmental Commission to plant the trees in the fall which would allow the trees to acclimate and have adequate hydration and nutrition but instead the trees were planted in the spring and some need to be replaced.

Vice Chairperson Hicks read the attached email from Chris Kloch, a landscape designer from Seasonal Nursery, a subdivision of Young Development. Vice Chairperson Hicks stated this was unacceptable, the Environmental Commission had specifically asked the trees to be planted in the fall and warranted for two years and relayed this to Supervisor Dickson, Councilmember Piekarec, Chairperson Gaasch, and Ms. Bagley.

National Night Out

Chairperson Hicks stated the Environmental Commissions table was well received, and the taxidermy exhibit is always a popular attraction at outreach events. The taxidermy specimens need to be cleaned and repaired and donations of other animals are always welcome.

Ms. Schultz referred to the food waste recycling program introduced at the Farmer's Market, Farmer Pirates Compost. Ms. Herson stated a survey regarding residents' interest in continuing to participate for a fee was provided.



Margaret A. Martin

Deputy Town Clerk/Secretary to the Environmental Commission

TOWN OF WEST SENECA



Gary A. Dickson
Supervisor's Office

TOWN SUPERVISOR
Gary A. Dickson
TOWN COUNCIL
Joseph J. Cantafio
Jeffrey A. Piekarec
Susan K. Kims
Robert J. Breidenstein

August 31, 2023

Cynn timer Gaasch
Chair, West Seneca Environmental Commission

Dear Ms. Gaasch,

Recently a resident brought to my attention that the town's list of trees that are acceptable for planting next to the street may be out of date. He mentioned there are only a few trees on the list, none of them are native, and at least one, the Crimson King Maple, is classified as invasive. Having only a handful of trees on the list impacts the visual diversity and reduces resiliency to insect infestation. The current list of approved replacement trees is as follows:

1. Little Leaf Linden: *Tilia Cordata* 'Greenspire'
2. Red Sunset Maple: *Acer Rebrum* 'Red Sunset'
3. Japanese Tree Lilac: *Syringa Reticulate* 'Ivory Silk'
4. Crimson King Maple: *Acer Platanoides* 'Crimson King'
5. Skyline Honeylocust: *Gleditsia triacanthos inermis* 'Skyline'
6. Shademaster Locust: *Gleditsia t.i.* 'Shademaster'

Some possible starting points for this project might be:

- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- The Western New York Native Plant Collaborative
- The City of Buffalo and the Town of Cheektowaga, both of which have researched this issue
- NYS DEC

Two issues that are important for any tree planted next to the street is that it should impact sidewalks and sewer lines as little as possible and not drop sap on parked cars. Please coordinate with the Highway Superintendent as necessary.

Sincerely yours,

Molly Martin

From: Evelyn Hicks
Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 11:43 PM
To: Molly Martin
Subject: Fwd: West Seneca Tree

The tree memo you requested.

Thank you and best regards, Evelyn Hicks

Begin forwarded message:

From: danielle bagley <[redacted]>
Date: September 18, 2023 at 1:24:32 PM EDT
To: Amelia Greenan <agreenan@twsny.org>, Gary Dickson <gdickson@twsny.org>, Jeffrey Piekarec <jpiekarec@twsny.org>, Brian Adams <badams@twsny.org>, Evelyn Hicks <[redacted]>, Robert Amadon <[redacted]>, Tracy Skalski <[redacted]>, Cynn timer Gaasch <[redacted]>, > Jacqueline Balikowski <[redacted]>
Subject: Fwd: West Seneca Tree

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Chris Kloch <[redacted]>
Date: Mon, Sep 18, 2023, 1:19 PM
Subject: West Seneca Tree
To: [DBAGLEY](#) <[redacted]> n>

Good Afternoon Danielle,

I have conducted a thorough examination of all three properties to assess the presence of deceased trees. Here are my findings:

Harlem Park:

Dead Trees Found: 1

Suggested Replacement: 1 Acer rubrum 'Armstrong' with a trunk diameter of 1.75 inches.

Burchfield Park:

Dead Trees Found: 3

Suggested Replacement: 3 Acer rubrum 'Armstrong' trees with a trunk diameter of 1.75 inches.

Note: We are currently out of Oak trees and will substitute Maple trees instead.

Knox Park:

No dead trees were identified during the inspection.

Following the initial tree installation, our crews diligently watered the trees for the first couple of weeks. However, upon inspecting the trees, it is evident that there was a lack of follow-up watering for the remainder of the 2022 season. It is crucial to emphasize that newly planted trees require consistent watering for a minimum of two years to facilitate proper root development and ensure their long-term health. The initial inspection reveals signs of dieback due to inadequate watering.

I strongly recommend a comprehensive watering regimen for all trees planted last year, especially as we transition into the Fall season. Particular attention should be given to the River Birch at Burchfield Park. It's worth noting that the trees at Knox Park thrived, which can be attributed to the presence of ample standing water during the planting process.

Please be aware that any replacement trees required due to this issue will not fall under warranty coverage. The cost for new trees, including installation, will be \$550 each.

Any trees planted this year will require watering for the next years during drought situations as well.

Thank You,

Chris Kloch

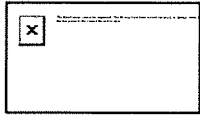
Landscape Designer

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Elma, NY 14059



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