

DRAFT

Town of Red Hook

Tree Preservation Commission

Minutes: June 21, 2011

Attendance: Chairperson Nancy Guski, Eleanor Friery, Rosemarie Zengen, Marcy Appell and Linda Keeling, secretary Micki Strawinski, town council liaison (arrived 7:35 pm)

Absent: Karen Cadorette

Guest: none

Location: Town Hall, Red Hook

Purpose: Regular monthly meeting of the Commission is held on the third Tuesday of every month at the Town Hall.

Call to Order: Chairperson Nancy Guski called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm as a quorum was met. She handed out the agenda.

Minutes: The minutes from May 17, 2011 were reviewed and corrected. Eleanor pointed out that 22 students received prizes of books. Students on the Nature Trail got bookmarks, certificates and stickers. 100 seedlings were only planted by Steve Hart. Linda Keeling noted that Joe Tobin got a free white spruce tree.

MOTION: Rosemarie Zengen motioned to accept the minutes as corrected and Marcy Appell seconded. All agreed.

Discussions:

1. **Budget:** Chairman Nancy Guski spoke with Debbie Marks and confirmed the Tree Commission has \$257. The upcoming Conference will cost \$100 with the hope that a Zoning or Planning representative might attend as it is a “Two-for-One” event. Credits can be earned. Rosemarie Zengen suggested contacting Trilby Sieverding as she is on the ZBA as an alternate and she might like to attend. Nancy will have to monitor one of the workshops.

Marcy Appell brought to the attention of the Chairman that the group’s name is not “Trees and Rural Road Program” which might cause confusion. Chairman Guski said that was a good point and will act on it.

Eleanor Friery presented all her receipts amounting to \$202.07 for the 19 books, stickers, top soil, certificates, etc. Chairman Guski, who donated 3 books, encouraged her to get reimbursed but Eleanor insisted on donating this amount. Everyone was grateful for her continued generosity with our school related program. Nancy will include this donation in the budget so it is recorded.

She indicated that the Arbor Day event donations amounted to well over \$2,000 from the community and local businesses. So with donations, our group has had access to nearly three times its allotted budget.

2. Update on Trees and Shrubs Planted: The plantings are doing fine. Although we lost some of the Tribes for Trees plantings, most are surviving. She checked the trail and the ilex bushes are doing better. The Hannaford tree replacement is doing better and is a nicer tree than the first one. Rosemarie Zengen noted that Paula Schoonmaker misplaced the Hannaford tree sign and Rosemarie would like to get a replacement. She is willing to pay for it. She is requesting permission from the group. A bronze plate would have cost \$125. Marsha Graham of Hannaford attributed her store's increase in sales as a result of the Hannaford Tree dedication ceremony. Nancy commented that there is research that connects businesses doing better when they embrace the landscaping with trees.

Motion: Marcy Appell motioned to give Rosemarie Zengen permission to spend about \$20 on a sign, Eleanor seconded, all agreed.

Eleanor has seedlings (high bush cranberry, cherry, etc) in buckets of water. Nancy will pick them up then Linda and Nancy will pot them up with Linda tending to them until the fall. Nancy will get soil donations from Grande Flora. Seedlings will be distributed during Hardscrabble Day. Linda suggested that when they are potted a donation should be sought from the public.

3. Update on the grant proposal: There is no update yet. If we are awarded we can't do anything until the fall. Linda is confident that the Tree Commission will be awarded the grant.

4. ReLeaf Program: The emphasis was on planning. She participated in the planning process for the conference so she could learn. The program will include green infrastructure. There will also be a tour of the Mohonk House. She will attend the emerald ash borer workshop as it is a problem in the Hudson Valley. Rosemarie referred to the Poughkeepsie Journal's recent news article on the subject.

Nancy noted that there are 700 million ash trees in NYS which is 7% of the forest. Industry creates millions of dollars of product from ash wood. Once the ash borer gets into the tree there is nothing that can be done. The tree will eventually die. It is a serious problem and it is now in Ulster County.

Motion: Rosemarie Zengen motioned to not meet in July, Marcy Appell seconded, all agreed.

Micki Strawinski arrived and Nancy reviewed what we covered so far. She referred to the Conference workshop about "Ordinances with Teeth that Don't Bite". Nancy felt we have a fine written ordinance that we will revisit but we don't want to be the "tree police".

Nancy will not be delivering her monthly report in person to the Town Board but will send in her written report to Supervisor Crane. Discussion focused on the order of Committee Reports during Town Board meetings. Rosemarie Zengen felt that the Volunteer Recognition night at town hall last year put the volunteers last and the employees first. She felt this was not right as it was suppose to recognize the volunteers not employees who are paid for their services.

5. Central Hudson Pruning Issues: Nancy called the Lewis' Tree Service Forman, hired by Central Hudson, and he assured her that the pruning will be done with care. Nancy indicated that they are hacking the trees. Linda Keeling noted Lewis' cut the ends of the branches on her tree and now those branches are have died and the tree's health has become compromised through their lack of proper pruning techniques.

Nancy conferred with Brenda Cagle and it was suggested that all the interested groups (Tree Commission, CAC, 10% Challenge, Village Green, etc.) write one letter to Central Hudson and sign it at the bottom. Rosemarie felt that each department should write their own letter so Central Hudson gets a mass of letters on the same topic. Nancy related that the foreman felt Brenda was unrealistic. Nancy felt this was an unprofessional comment.

Rosemarie Zengen suggested writing directly to Community Relations Paul Tusaro about the bad Public Relations this is doing for Central Hudson. Even Rhinebeck's Sally Mozzarella and Meg Crawford (CAC) have had problems with Lewis'. Nancy said she has attended workshops with Con Ed and National Grid in attendance. National Grid's Board member gave a workshop. National Grid actually gives away trees and has a list of appropriate trees for planting. She felt Central Hudson should be doing more in this area.

6. Dr. Saltanoff Foundation: Dr. Saltanoff is a chiropractor in Kingston who has a foundation focusing on environmental concerns. He read Nancy's letter to the editor about the vandalized Hannaford tree. He requested that Nancy send a letter describing the Tree Commission.

She put together a packet of information and wrote a letter which she read to the group. Everyone was impressed with the content of her letter. Hopefully, he will send the Tree Commission a donation.

7. Finalize Commemorative Tree Program: Initially Nancy wanted Linda to write up the tree program but Rosemarie Zengen suggested having someone like Dick Wambach do the graphics and all. Nancy said she looked at the Village Green's Memorial Tree Program on their web page. It is somewhat simple and direct. Linda suggested we get Dick Wambach to do a web page link for our group. Micki Strawinski noted that is Dick's job with the town. Nancy would have to go through the town clerk on this. Rosemarie Zengen, whose former business was advertising and public relations, described some of her ideas for the hand-out. She will do a draft proposal.

Some discussion focused on burial of pets. Some felt it was not appropriate. Micki Strawinski noted that some people have been advocating for a dog park. This might be a possibility. Rosemarie suggested an asterisk with the statement we can make provisions for your pets.

Discussion focused on planting locations at the old and new Rec Park, Red Church but not the Lutheran Church as it was too expensive (about \$500) Linda suggested St. John's parking lot as it could use some trees. It was agreed the charge would be \$200 per tree to coordinate with the Village Green price.

The plaque size will need to be specified, 6 inches by 8 inches. Micki referred to the plaque at the Rec Park. David Fell has been contacted and will be recommended but anyone can go anywhere as long as it fits the design criteria. A cast bronze is \$226 and the stake is \$66 (tree purchase \$200) so this comes out to be comparable to what Ken Giek of the Lutheran Church charges.

Nancy noted that Joyce Cole's family had a plaque made up and would have a family dedication day for Bill Lewis.

Linda asked if there was a height restriction. Nancy felt that should be considered. She noted that some people put the plaque in the stone while others feel it looks like a gravestone. Rosemarie got a price from David Fell of Dutchess Signs for a bronze-like plaque for \$166.

A registry of trees planted would be on the website along with information on how to apply and a form to fill out. A tree could be planted in honor of someone living.

Nancy wrote a letter to Joyce Cole thanking her. Nancy felt we should do this whenever a Memorial tree is planted. Rosemarie suggested using Hardscrabble Day for planting and/ or recognizing the person(s) honored with a Memorial tree. Nancy felt a spring planting might be better. It all depends on what is convenient for all involved. Nancy will make up a recommended list of trees.

Micki felt a memorial tree dedication to George Hildenbrand at the site of the new town garage would be appropriate. Everyone liked the idea. Rosemarie suggested a tree for Margaret Doty. Micki would like the landscaping recommendations to go through the Tree Commission for their input.

Car Quest called Nancy as he was directed by the Planning Board. Nancy inspected the property and gave suggestions. He wanted a flowering tree. So she typed up a list for him. NAPA previously had cut down the honey locust trees which saddened the commission. Presenting a visual of a treed business property might encourage business owners to actually do more planting to improve the scenic ambiance for their customers thereby improving the business climate.

Having an inventory will support not taking down trees without permission. This would be enforced by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. There is a \$500 fine for cutting down a tree but Nancy does not want to be the bearer of bad news.

8. New Business, Fundraiser: Rosemarie Zengen described the ice cream social set for Sept. 24th, Hardscrabble Day. This will be a joint fundraiser with St. Margaret's Committee. She talked to Pattie Bowman of the Holy Cow. She agreed to donate the ice cream. Tickets would be sold in advance. Micki thought it might not be a successful fundraiser due to the distance from the center of the village where most of the activities are. The group is willing to try this change in location as it opens up more space for activities within the town like a display of antique cars. Nancy will not be there that day but she can have all the written material available ahead of the time. Eleanor might not be able to attend the August meeting.

Motions: Nancy Guski motioned to charge a fee per person for the ice cream social, Marcy Appell seconded, all agreed.

Micki showed and explained the new garage plans.

Adjournment: *Motion: Eleanor Friery motioned to adjourn the meeting and Rosemarie Zengen seconded, all agreed.*

Concluded: The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Next Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, August 16, 2011.**

Respectfully submitted,

Linda J. Keeling, TC Secretary