

Minutes of the Meeting of the Schuylerville Village Committee on Street Trees and Plantings June 13, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 7:17 pm by Trustee Nikki Proctor, Chair

In attendance: Cathy Boden, Rich Furlani, Mary Roberts, Bill Standish, Deb Mathis and Dave Roberts

This being the first meeting of the committee as formed by Mayor Dan Carpenter, Nikki Proctor explained her understanding of its mandate and her expectations for how the meetings would be conducted. She said she hoped to leave with members volunteering to follow up on individual conclusions reached after discussion of the specific items on the agenda. She promised to open the meeting to general discussion as the last item. She also asked that discussion remain on point so that the meeting could conclude at a reasonable hour.

The First agenda item "The experience of other communities" began with a discussion of "Tree Toga," a citizen-based approach to street tree planting in Saratoga Springs. A recent article from the Saratogian was read and discussion followed. Mary Roberts suggested that the committee invite Tom Denny, one of the principals of Tree Toga to the next meeting. Bill Standish volunteered to contact Mr. Denny and to invite him.

Second on the agenda was an "Inventory of existing trees, dangerous trees and sites where new plantings would be welcomed". Rich Furlani explained the dangers of historical "mono cultural" plantings of chestnuts, elms and sugar maples which resulted in disastrous die-offs and bad results. He volunteered to designate 12 specific trees that currently present a danger to the Village. Mary Roberts suggested that Rob Decker of the Village DPW might know where some of the worst cases exist. Cathy Boden volunteered to list some high-profile sites where trees have been removed and would be potential candidates for new plantings. A brief discussion of the need to cross reference sites with the ownership of adjacent properties ensued due to a need for support from and co-ordination of interests with owners.

Rich Furlani, Mary Roberts and Deb Mathis offered information on various species of trees and their efficacy. It was quickly agreed that further discussion should wait until the experience of "Tree Toga" had been presented.

Potential sources for trees was discussed. Dave Roberts said he would distribute the link to The National Grid Tree Replacement Program which is explained on-line. Cathy Boden suggested that local nurseries like Grasshopper Gardens, be contacted. Ian Murry of Brookside Nursery and the State nursery were also mentioned. It was agreed that Ken and Tom Macica of Schuyler Farms should also be included.

In a brief review of possible funding sources, Nikki Proctor said she would explore the Village's past commitments and the current budget. The Village budget, potential subsidies from other sources and possible grants were discussed as funding possibilities. Cathy Boden offered to contact village resident Heather Janek, who has experience in seeking grant funding, to invite her to join the committee.

The need to research potential contractual agreements with property owners for cost sharing of new plantings and/or removals was discussed. It was recognized that there needed to be a clear understanding of who was responsible for trees, both in the case of existing dangerous ones and the

potential for caring for new plantings. This is potentially a legal matter that could be explored with Village counsel.

A discussion of potential committee members generated the following: Eric Laffer, Cindy Wian, Heather Janek and Tara Letzring. Cathy and Nikki agreed to reach out to them.

Other ideas and suggestions considered under open discussion included a suggestion by Mary Roberts to include the Future Farmers group at Schuylerville School as the administration had been helpful in planting lilacs around the Village. The name of the Green Ribbon School group was mentioned as was an organization known as "Effective Schools." Cathy Boden said that Heather Janek would know about both. Nikki Proctor reported that a teacher from Ballston Spa, John Balet, had three students who were working on projects relevant to the interests of the committee, one of whom Batai Mueller had based his project on the improvement of the streetscape on South Broad Street with a strong focus on the benefit of trees.

It was agreed that the next meeting would be convened based on the availability of Tom Denny of Tree Toga, hopefully between two weeks and a month from now.

Nikki Proctor thanked the members of the committee for volunteering to undertake specific tasks and for their full participation in the meeting which was adjourned at 8:25 pm

It is hoped that this meeting will conclude in a timely way and that participants will agree to reconvene within 30 days

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Roberts