

TOWN OF NISKAYUNA

Tree Council

Agenda

June 13, 2019

6:00 PM

REGULAR AGENDA MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. May 9, 2019

IV. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

V. NEW BUSINESS / ACTION ITEMS

VI. DISCUSSION ITEM

1. Spring Plantings
2. Public Assistance Request – 213 Agostino Drive
3. Memorial Tree Program

VII. REPORTS

1. Public Outreach Subcommittee
 - A. Niska-Day Report
 - B. Website
2. Tree Inventory / Tree Master Plan Subcommittee
 - A. RFP award proposed to W&S for \$3500
3. Tree Planting Subcommittee
 - A. Outreach to Ray / Cornelius

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

**NEXT MEETING: July 11, 2019
at 6:00 pm in the *Schaefer Room***

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39

TOWN OF NISKAYUNA
Tree Council

Meeting Minutes
May 9, 2019

Members Present: Melissa MacKinnon, Chairwoman
Chris Zimmerman
Carol Carey
Paul Sebesta
Andrea Worthington
Amy Howansky
Jeffrey Twitty, Assistant Town Planner

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting came to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Steve Signell, Amanda Matuszyk, and Timothy Welch were absent/excused.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the April 11, 2019 Tree Council meeting were presented. Chairwoman MacKinnon asked if there were any questions or clarifications to be made to the minutes. Ms. Howansky showed corrections were needed on lines 38, 45, 54, and 87. She also wished to add an additional comment to line 89.

Everyone agreed to the changes and Ms. Carey motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Zimmerman seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved as adjusted.

IV. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

No one was present to speak.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Howansky noted that she received a request to plant a memorial tree. Ms. Carey commented that the request has come to the Council in the past. She went to Scotia to learn how their program works and will find her notes to start the discussion again. Mr. Zimmerman asked whose committee this would fall under and what its priority should be compared with projects already in the works. Ms. Carey thought someone from the Town was taking over responsibility.

Ms. Howansky reported she found unhealthy trees on Lexington Parkway and questioned if memorial trees can be planted there. Mr. Sebesta commented that memorial trees and street trees are two different projects. Memorial trees should be in a park like setting while street trees are planted in the Town right-of-way.

Mr. Zimmerman noted the tree planting sub-committee should probably develop a plan with the Parks Department and the Highway Department. Ms. Worthington noted that River Road Park was previously mentioned as a starting point but now that the park is getting attention and planned upgrades, the tree planting will need to be delayed. Ms. Worthington suggested the tree planting sub-committee take this project on and discuss the idea with Laura before proceeding.

40 Ms. Carey noted the planting of the American Chestnut trees went well at the schools. The kids had a
41 great time and were very enthusiastic. Ms. MacKinnon noted that the new school curriculum requires
42 students to adopt a tree. She hopes the tree will mature enough to produce nuts before they move up to the
43 middle school.

44 VI. DISCUSSION ITEM

45 1. Lexington Parkway / Blatnick Park

46 Ms. Howansky presented a handout with trees already ordered (one each variety). She noted the Council
47 needs to locate places where they can be planted. She also noted that the first block of Lexington by
48 Balltown needs a replacement tree.

49 Ms. Howansky noted she noticed damage to the lower trunks of the trees on Lexington. The damage is
50 caused by use of weed-whackers too close to the trunk. Unfortunately when the Highway Department
51 doesn't use the weed-whacker, residents call to complain they did a poor job cutting the grass on the
52 median. It was suggested that mulch be put around the truck (but not touching the trunk) to avoid this
53 issue.

54 Mr. Zimmerman asked why such diverse trees were chosen. Ms. Howansky noted that these species are
55 listed on National Grid's tree plan. If they are planted by power lines, the Town can get reimbursed for
56 them. Ms. Carey asked if they are on the Town's approved tree list. Ms. Howansky stated they were or at
57 least a close relative is on the list but the list definitely needs updating. She found some invasive species
58 and others trees that are no longer available on the list.

59 Ms. Howansky noted that the list contains 8 trees. Two of the trees have a planned planting location and
60 the other 6 need to find a home. She will send out an email to set a scouting day for the other trees.

61 2. Referrals from Highway Department

62 Ms. Worthington visited the two sites noted. 1350 Keyes Avenue has a large tree in a small space
63 between street and sidewalk. The tree roots are above ground and butting into the sidewalk. She did not
64 see any damage and thought the canopy looked healthy.

65 The trees at 2171 McClellan did not appear to be in the right away and she didn't see any immediate need
66 to cut them down.

67 3. Powell Road Single Family Home Review

68 Mr. Twitty reported that the developer has changed the clearing plan. They reduced the area of clearing.
69 Ms. Robertson will schedule a walk through on the property for anyone who wishes to review the new
70 plan and what trees will actually be lost. He also cautioned that the ticks on the parcel are abundant and
71 anyone taking that walk should dress carefully.

72 4. 1380 Van Antwerp Road

73 Ms. Worthington visited the site again and reviewed the locations of the large, old trees. She noted her
74 concern about tree loss due to the moving of the carriage house. To her knowledge, contractors need to
75 clear the area around any structure that needs to be moved along with clearing the area of the direct path
76 to the new location. On this property, a lot of historical/significant trees would need to be removed for
77 this to happen. Ms. MacKinnon noted that even if trees are not removed their roots may be damaged in
78 the process.

79 Mr. Zimmerman proposed a change to the first comment of the Tree Council's memo to the Planning
80 Department. The Council reviewed the amendment and approved it. Ms. Howansky discussed the current
81 consensus on protecting a tree's root system. Based on that, the Council changed comment two of the
82 memo. While the council did not feel the protection area was sufficient, they felt it was all they could
83 reasonably enforce. The changes were reread by Mr. Twitty and accepted by the Council.

84 **VII. REPORTS**

85 1. Public Outreach Subcommittee

86 Ms. Carey reported the Arbor Day event went well despite the weather. Ms. Howansky asked her to write
87 a summary of the event including all contacts and organizations we used. She suggested the comments
88 include what aspects of the event were successful and what ones had issues. Mr. Zimmerman suggested
89 more publicity before the event.

90 Ms. MacKinnon noted she signed the Tree Council up for a table at Niska-Day in the Information Tent.
91 She needs to find people to sit at the table from 11 to 4, the Town needs to sign an indemnity document
92 for N-CAP and the Council needs to pull together material to have at the table. Ms. Carey will coordinate
93 the people to sit at the table and pull together materials to present. Unfortunately, the magnets with the
94 website were not ordered so there are no giveaways available.

95 2. Tree Inventory / Tree Master Plan Subcommittee

96 Mr. Zimmerman reported the sub-committee did not meet. He wanted to know what the final scope of
97 work was for the Master Plan and needed Ms. Robertson to answer his questions.

98 3. Tree Planting Subcommittee

99 Ms. Howansky received a request for a memorial tree while she was picking out trees to plant in our
100 parks. The requester chose the Snowbell and asked that it be planted in Blatnick Park. Since no program
101 currently exists, the Town could consider this tree a donation.

102 Mr. Sebesta reported that he is creating the letter to send to the Cornelius Avenue neighborhood. Ms.
103 Howansky wanted to move forward on this project and set a date for the neighborhood discussion.

104 **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

105 With no further comments, Ms. Carey made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Zimmerman seconded the motion.

106 The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.