

Park and Tree Board Meeting Minutes 3/17/2020

Trustee Liz Kormos called the meeting to order at 7:04pm

Meeting convened via Zoom- conference call- due to COVID-19 meeting restrictions and social distancing. Liz announced the meeting was being recorded. Those in attendance were Trustee Liz Kormos, Ray Otten, Ed Hersch, Judy Esposito and Stacy Simmons.

Liz requested a secretary and Stacy agreed.

Liz announced the Village has been approved as a Tree City. We now wait to see if the Village will be approved for the Tree Grant. We should know around Arbor Day if approved and can then move forward with a consultant and tree inventory.

Ray discussed the work proposed for the improvements to Wiswall Park. The project is for the redesign of Wiswall Park to make it more useable by the general public as a pocket park and not an events location. Plans are being discussed to move the spring feature and possibly repurpose an existing gazebo as a structure to provide cover. There are memorial boulders to Wiswall and Balmuth to be shifted, walkways to be redirected and created with pavers instead of asphalt, a pavilion is planned to be located along the Walnut Alley side of the park and used for sitting, eating lunch, etc. Walnut Alley needs to remain open to thru traffic as it is access to the backs of the adjacent buildings as well as the police and other emergency vehicles. There was discussion about the wall along the parking for Augie's Restaurant and how to make it a desirable background for the park with murals that could potentially change seasonally or to match themes in the village. The Christmas Tree location is planned to be relocated to the northwest corner for better use of the park space as well as better viewing of the tree. The park will be handicap-accessible and children-friendly, but not a playground. The Ballston Spa Rotarians have 5 park benches, that do not require maintenance, ready for installation to replace the existing, failing benches. An arborist will be brought on board to identify failing trees. Also included was discussion regarding the use of the park by the Farmers Market with ideas for other places for the market to succeed in. Ray will reach out to Susan Rhoades of the Saratoga County Fairgrounds to see if her offer is still available if the Farmers Market Committee approves. Stacy will contact the committee chair to relay the message. Moving forward, Liz will require pricing, budget schedule, timing of stages of project, and design to bring before the Village Board for approval.

The owner of Henry's Tavern has reported to the village his problem with the Linden trees at the sidewalk outside his business. Stacy shared the Lindens have been suffering from aphids each year that produce a honeydew that attracts the bees that are a problem for Henry's Tavern outdoor dining experience. Since it would take too long to get rid of the insect problem, the board agreed to allow the trees to be taken down. Liz will work with an arborist for a list of replacement trees for Henry's Tavern to be planted along with care suggestions.

Due to the COVID 19 problem, Arbor Day will most likely not be celebrated in the village on April 25 as planned. There will be a tree planted for Arbor Day, at a later date, at O'Brien's Pharmacy or in front of the Library. Stacy will talk to the owner of Brookside Nursery regarding the replacement tree for O'Brien's Pharmacy and when it could be planted this year.

There were no public comments tonight.

There was other discussion from Judy regarding the suggestion of a grant that could be applied for through the National Garden Club for the plantings in Wiswall Park.

Stacy asked if Adopt a Plot plans need to be shared with this board and it was agreed she should share 2020 plans at the next meeting.

There was also discussion about using the Iron Spring Park for Movies in the Park. Ed Hersch will be put in contact with the committee chair for that event.

The next meeting for the Park and Tree Board will be April 21, 2020 at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted by Stacy Simmons