

**City of Essex Junction
Tree Advisory Committee
Minutes of Meeting
October 17, 2023**

Members Present: Nick Meyer, Rich Boyers, Nicole Klett, Max Seaton
In attendance: Ashley Snellenberger, Winners of the Tree contest with names below and friends and family and other members of the public

I. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 pm by Nick, second by Nicole.

II. Additions or Amendments to Agenda

No additions or amendments.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the September 2023 meeting minutes was made by Nick, second by Max.

IV. Greatest Tree Contest

“It is a tree I had a lot of memories with and have a lot of fun playing with now.”-Celia Ekstrom shared about her backyard family tree that won third place as TAC welcomed the winners of the tree contest and their friends and family.

Rich and Nicole stated their appreciation for public support, the participants, the committee, and a big thank you to Ashley Snellenberger.

Nick told the the story of how the judges got to be on a treasure hunt to find the various trees sometimes in yards and sometimes nominated by past homeowners

Kate Vanni was here to take pictures of the winners and the awarding of prizes including:

FIRST: Village Cemetery Tree-a sugar maple from Andy, Emma, and Jesse Lawrence awarded a \$100 Gift card provided by Northfield Bank

SECOND: Summit Street School Tree -a Mulberry-by Luisa Alvez-Georgeoglou awarded a Maple Syrup Sampler provided by Brownell Library

THIRD: 35 Woods End Drive- a White Pine -Celia Ekstrom awarded an Original Birdhouse made with the help of Kyle Albee and a student.

The committee explained the purpose of the committee and its work around the Junction. There was a nice conversation about trees and community amongst the winners and other spectators that filled the seats for the public to attend meetings.

TAC will plan to go over the tree contest plans for next year based on this year and get thank you notes ready to our sponsors. The Essex Reporter will have a report on the contest and winners 10/18/2023.

V. Proposal for Maple Street

Nicole updated information she had received including that Mark from EJRP is on board with the changes that TAC is thinking about for the walk.

And shared the opinion/insights from Brian Neufeld, Science Teacher, on signage and park accessibility from an educator's point of view after hearing from the high school students proposal last meeting. He invited TAC to look at the signage for a Niquette Park sign.

Also, Ashley discussed that QR codes can be used for both the entry sign and individual trees so the goal of adding more info can be accessible including types of trees/tree facts/tips for growing trees.

Nick said he thinks we need new sign at entryway with QR code and Individual trees with QR codes for tree facts would be ideal.

Rich reached out to a design tech teacher who knew another expert but hasn't heard back due to an illness from the teacher.

TAC discussed the idea of reviewing the park as individuals.

Action steps for next meeting:

Review park and trees to make sure map is correct/or suggest changes

Ashley to reach out for sign options that city has used for signage and other metal laser engraved with QR

Nicole to reach out to CTE or EHS Science classes for design collaboration

Consider QR code at front and at individual trees with attached PDFs and have audio recordings and see how that might work

Aim for Arbor Day as a grand opening.

VI. City is starting Visioning and Strategic Planning

Ashley let the TAC know that the city is busy with building an action plan for 5 years and vision of what the city will be. Future IQ is the consulting co with survey out to citizens available in multiple venues.

Nov 2 and Nov are Think Tank sessions that are focus groups with looking at data and narrowing down directions the city is moving in. In February, the plan will be complete and then presented to City Council and implemented by city employees.

Ashley encourages citizens, employees in the city and committee members to take survey and participate in focus groups.

VII. Planting

Steve will pick up tree sticks and bags from the tree planting from this past year and Max will help as well.

VII. Other Business

None

IX. Date for Next Meeting

The Committee will meet on October 17 at 4:30 p.m with agreement from committee members for the time change.

Adjournment

Nick made a motion to adjourn at 5:56 p.m. 2nd Nick.

January -Planning Calendar
February -Public Education around Tree Work/Trimming (Winter is the time to reach out to arborist)-HOLD for 2024
March -Public Education around Thinking about planting a tree?
April - Potential Tree Keeper Training/Dip and Bag 28th and Tree Sale 29th/National Arbor Day 28th
May -Tree Planting 6th/VT Arbor Day 5th/Hiawatha
June -Tree Walk 3rd
July -Public Education around Tree Planting/Maintenance/Watering
August -Advertise Tree Contest
September -Form Submission for Tree Contest open after Labor Day
October -Judging and Announcement of Tree Contest Winner
November -Public Education around Trees in Fall (Best Handling of Leaves, etc)
December -Public Education around Tree Decorating/Tradition of Cutting down Christmas Tree