

BBC MINUTES FEB. 25. 2025

Present - Sharon, Gwen, Mary, Ruthie, Ruth, Bart, Beverly, Rise

Guests - Marci and Brian Hickey, Peter Russell

Not present - Ron Pitz and Cathy

Thank you Gwen for January minutes. Minutes approved by Mary and Brian.

OLD BUSINESS

A) -Ron Pitz was unable to attend. Plans to grow herbs and vegetables in raised beds in the Courtyard Garden at 330 Park was discussed. Ruth shared a list of questions from her experiences which Sharon will pass on to Ron. Counselor Michael Oliver is working on a vocation woodworking program with High school students. Their first project may be to build wooden planters requested by the BBC. Sharon has been in discussion with Yvette Huyghue-Pannell, Director of Senior Services to see if Seniors are interested in becoming involved. Dave Melesko, Director of Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services has also shown interest and Sharon is working with him for more detail.

There was questions on:

- -How would food be distributed to the community? TBD
- -Would Local Food Bank be interested in produce?

B) 2025 Notable Landscape Awards

- Gwen and Claire delivered remaining 2024 Notable Landscape Awards Certificates that weren't picked up last year from Town Hall.
- Judges for 2024 NLA will be chosen from last year's winners - Rise will work with Gwen and Claire on who to choose and she will contact them once Sharon has seen the choices. Judges can be picked from previous winners but not having been a judge before.
- In September at 330 Park there will be a party from 5:00 - 7:00 PM in the courtyard for Notable Landscape winners and judges and BBC committee.
- Lawn signs and award certificates will be distributed at that time.

D) CT Rhododendron Society currently meets the first Wednesday of the month at 330 Park in Room 131. Their March meeting will be on Zoom; Sharon will send out Zoom link. April meeting will be dinner and auction at The Pond House.

- The CRS is working on a design for and will donate rhododendrons for the east side of the Town Hall building. They will also help install. BBC will provide compost and mulch.
- Additional volunteers are needed.

E) Kevin Wilcox will be helping to identify all the conifers in the Clock Tower garden at the Arboretum at Town Hall with Sharon. She will be installing markers for identified plants.

- A sign will be made with QR code which will bring visitors and residents to a BBC page on the Town Website which will identify all the plantings along with additional plant information. Brian Wolff will be working with Sharon to help create an information page for the conifers.
- A revised brochure is needed for the self-guided tree tour at the Arboretum as many new trees have been added since the original kiosk was installed three years ago. Sharon is working on that project.

F) The Arbor Day Foundation in collaboration with Cummins Corporation has donated \$7000. to BBC to remove invasive bittersweet vines in LaSalette Park. An employee community Service Day is scheduled for April 4. 11am-3pm

Rented heavy machinery with a tractor will be used by DPW staff to remove the initial layer of invasive plants. Peter Russell, Ron Pitz and Sharon will be meeting to plan for preparations for the day. Gwen will be directing the setup of the lunch with assistance from volunteers from Duncaster.

TREES FOR BLOOMFIELD (TFB) Hats will be given to volunteers, designed by Sharon. \$8000 has also been donated by Cummins (Jake Brake) to allow the following:

- TFP to run their **Trees for Free Community Giveaway program** for a fourth year.
- There will be a free tree give away for residents who've never received a tree from TFB in previous years. First come first serve, first serve.
- Sign up is in June, pick up is in September. Trees must be planted in front yard, and resident is responsible for contacting CBYD after a TreeKeeper meets with them to assist in locating and staking where the tree will be placed.
- A portion of the donation will go to planting of 1 to 3 trees with large canopies for shade on the Town Green.

NEW BUSINESS

A) Farmington River Park

- Sharon has completed new signs to be installed by DPW... a directional sign so the Park can be more easily located and one Dog Poop sign for the new trash receptacle donated by Niagara Bottling.
- Four benches donated by Niagara are going to be put next to the soccer fields as requested by Parks and Rec Committee. Plaques are in the process of being printed with funding information to be attached to each bench.
- Paula Jones of Parks and Rec committee will be applying for a grant from the Lower Farmington Wild and Scenic, eliminating the controversy with the benches.
- Sharon would like to request that we contact ABB to see if they would be interested in doing community service project of helping BBC put down bark chips donated by DPW on FRP gardens before the plants start to come up.
- Last 4 years has been Mother's/Father's Day Walk with guides. Should BBC do an event again or turn it over to Parks and Rec Committee? Will discuss at next meeting.

C) OTHER ACTIVITIES

Holiday decorations and scarecrows will be removed by end of February. Cathy will talk about town wide scarecrow project at next meeting.

There was discussion on involving Duncaster and Seabury residents in BBC projects?

Mid-March time to replace 8 hanging holiday baskets with spring pansies at Town Hall and 5 planters at 330 Park.

T Shirts for BBC volunteers, Sharon will send out suggestions for t-shirt designs for committee to view. Beverly suggested they be green like the TFB shirts so there is continuity and they are easier to see for safety. Sharon requested that everyone send her a T-shirt size. She would like to see the shirts worn every time BBC volunteers go to a planting project.

D) DPW Report from Bart Ritson

- 2 new DPW employees hired for grounds

- DPW is having mulch blown in on all garden areas. He couldn't guarantee that TFB trees on public locations would be mulched. Sharon requested that mulch be dropped off for the park Ave. trees. Treekeepers would mulch the trees and BBC would pay for the mulch. She and Bart will arrange with Sharon the final detail of the job.
- BBC requested Bart to arrange a meeting and walk around to coordinate which trees town or tree keepers will mulch.
- The rhododendron beds on west side of Town Hall with the Tulip tree needs additional compost and mulch to raise the bed and a few plants may need to be replaced.
- BBC requested irrigation for beds in front of Town Hall. The responses came back-no money. BBC requested that garden beds be mulched before flowers begin coming up.
- The overgrown miscanthus grasses are going to be removed in the spring from the front town hall bed closest to the entry. They will be divided; residents can pick up said grasses at DPW. Details to be worked out.
- Bart request that windows not be blocked by trees or plants for security reasons by Town Hall. Sharon indicated the willow in the Town Hall garden will be cut down as soon as the pussy willows bloom and be cut and removed to be used in the hanging baskets and planters.
- BBC requested Bart to arrange a meeting and walk around with Mario to coordinate who will do what taking care of planting beds and trees at Town Hall and other public garden spaces. No date was set. Bart will get back to the Chair.
- DPW will do edging at TH before mulch is applied in May.
- CNLA main office is located in Bloomfield.
- Stump has been taken out from electric sign bed across from Town Hall, Bart indicated no plantings were disturbed. BBC will need to check in the spring and see what repairs need to be addressed.
- Wintonbury branch library has no outdoor landscape yet. Sharon inquired about the planter that used to be on site. No information was available.
- Sharon asked Bart for suggestions where in town new street trees might be needed. He will get back to BBC.

Meeting adjourned 7:10.

NEXT MEETING MARCH 25TH, 5:30pm Town Hall, Room 2.