

Village of Perry Tree Advisory Board
Minutes – Nov. 12, 2015

Present: Felisa McKay, Robin Redding, Lori Schofield, Steve Townes, Dan Zerbe, Eleanor Jacobs

Trustee Jacobs called the meeting to order at 7 PM. Members of the board introduced themselves and spoke briefly about their interests in trees and the tree board. Members received a packet of information that included the VOP code sections that reference trees; tree board/policy information from Medina, Bergen and Ithaca; NYSEG's tree trimming policy; and the National Arbor Day Foundation Tree City USA program.

The group discussed strengths and weaknesses of the VOP's "urban forest."

- Strength: As an old village, it has old trees and on some streets, such as Spring St., that create beauty.

Weaknesses:

- NYSEG's trimming procedures
- The types of trees planted push up sidewalks.
- Old trees lose limbs and begin to die or are dead. This also creates safety issues.
- The village park needs more trees.
- More trees are needed to make downtown appealing and attractive.
- There needs to be attention to varieties so the VOP doesn't overplant a particular type of tree.
- Vacant property and the potential to plant trees

Two weaknesses that can be addressed immediately:

- DPW must improve communication with residents regarding tree removal and plantings. Board members' personal experience points to the fact that DPW hasn't always talked to homeowners prior to removing a tree. It also hasn't always asked homeowners if they want trees replaced.
- Residents may not know the current tree policy. Dan suggested we prepare a brochure presenting information on the value of trees and the VOP tree policy.

Eleanor mentioned the DEC Urban & Community Forestry Cost Share Grant. Perry plans to apply for this grant when the application comes available, possibly in early December. If received, the village could possibly hire a forester to inventory VOP's trees.

Group discussed the value of becoming a Tree City USA.

Lori suggested we develop a survey for residents, the results of which would give the board baseline information on opinions and priorities. This could help guide the board's development of a draft policy.

Task Assignments

Prior to the next meeting board members volunteered to research the following:

- Steve: Tree City USA. Complete courses offered online through treeboardu.org (a program funded by USDA Forestry Service).
- Felisa: Geneseo's tree program
- Dan: brochure content & design
- Robin: Urforean manager – a web-based tree inventory management application. Warsaw's tree program
- Lori: Mt. Morris' tree program. Treeboardu courses.
- Eleanor: Vision statement draft. Draft survey. Contact Bergen mayor for more information on its tree board.
- Everyone: Email Eleanor your value statements to be used as a basis for the survey. (Forwarded to you is Dan's list of value statements. Feel free to add to that.)

Next meeting: Monday, Dec. 14, 7 PM. Village Hall.