



## CITY OF MOUNT VERNON

One Roosevelt Square  
Mount Vernon, NY 10550  
(914) 665-2352 · FAX (914) 668-6044

Tree Advisory Board (TAB)  
MEETING MINUTES  
July 7, 2022, 4pm

A **REGULAR MEETING** of the Tree Advisory Board) was held on Thursday, July 7, 2022, 4:05 pm via zoom. The meeting was livestreamed on facebook.

### **Attendance**

**Voting members:** Eveline Feldmann, Chair • Marlene H. Wertheim, Vice Chair • Henry May.

**Absent:** Vincent DeVito • Marlon Molina. **Non-Voting Members:** Elias Gootzeit.

Our appreciation to Katherine Mella for assisting with technical set up of this meeting.

## **AGENDA**

### **1 – Approval of Minutes**

Meeting minutes of June 2 and June 16, 2022.

Henry's motion was seconded by Marlene and members voted unanimously to accept both documents as is.

### **2 – Tree Removal Permit – Tree ordinance amendment**

The Corporation Counsel informed the Chair that section §252-Trees has been retyped. The TAB amendment, along with any other possible alterations, must be proofread. The Counsel first intends to meet with all interested parties to discuss the above. Members raised that the TAB should be included in these discussions. Approval by the relevant commissioners and Mayor is required before going before the City Council by the August 13 meeting, according to the Counsel.

### **3 – Reports**

#### **3.1 Chair:**

-A letter went to the DPW Commissioner to thank him for reinstating our technical support in posting documents to the website. She thanked Jen Mastrogiorgio for her competent assistance with this task. Also acknowledged was the planting of the pear trees along South Columbus Avenue near Graham School. The Neighbors That Care was praised for demonstrating their commitment to their community by providing the funds for these trees. (On Tuesday, August 2, there will be a "Victim's Night out" ceremony at the site. They can be contacted for further information.) TAB also inquired about the status of the remaining cherry trees designated for South 4 Ave.

The Chair took a few moments to reflect on our TAB vision — As City Forestry Planning is no longer a new undertaking for a municipality and, we, the TAB volunteers, are here to get that started in Mount Vernon, we see ourselves as part of a JOINT effort in the development of such a program. — One TAB mandate is to provide advice and participation in overseeing tree programs and replanting campaigns.

We are a growing ground for dialogue, nurturing the importance of the city forest and assisting the city in expanding its focus on it. Because the approach is to "plant new seeds where seeds can grow," we participate with active programming and project planning for trees by modeling it, currently a process not easily applied by a tree crew itself - but together it can be done. A collective plan, integrated with new techniques and knowhow, can be a way to begin. Planning discussions and up-to-date tree practicing knowledge are important factors, but communication is key to it all. It is easy to repel what does not seem inline or, to prematurely take down new approaches instead of embracing any potential benefits they might offer. TAB remains committed to collaboration, to continue to be mindful in managing our expectations and to value on-going and active communication.

The Chair pointed out, all of this is in line with the City’s objective to enhance the green landscape and the benefit to the quality of life which that can provide. Furthermore, there are heat data maps and satellite canopy cover shots available to help prioritize and define areas of the city with the greatest need, also addressing diversity.

3.2 The Tree Surgeon/DPW updates:

Unable to be present, he called in to say that the Commissioner has okayed the purchase of new cherry trees for South 4th Avenue. Vinny also announced that next week he will be taking a Civil Service Exam that will elevate him to a new level in his forestry career. We recognize how much work he does and the wide scope he is covering and support his efforts to advance.

3.3 Planning Dept. Representative updates:

The TAB has been informed by the Planning Department of a 300 Nuber/East 4th Street subdivision application, for TAB recommendation. The Chair asked that each member follow the developer’s presentation at the Planning Board meeting on Wed., July 13, 6:30 p.m. to get a sense of the application for this property, study the tree removal plan and proposed replanting. If possible, go and take a look at the site directly, with its green assets, prior to next TAB meeting on Thursday, July 21, when this case will be discussed. Since we’ll be off for August, a tree report needs to be drafted also.

**4 – Tree Plantings**

4.1. South 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. planting of 2<sup>nd</sup> set of 6 cherry trees.

TAB is looking forward to hearing from the DPW Commissioner re his approval of placement and date of planting.

4.2. Tree List: This will be tabled for the next meeting.

**5 – Community/Education**

5.1 – Stuyvesant Plaza Park Restoration.

Activity has begun on the site. The planting beds are being cleared and pedestrian safety has been increased with a painted crosswalk in front of the stone bench at the entrance of the plaza.

At the last CHPNA meeting, Marlene committed the TAB assistance when it is time to focus on tree selection and placement. George Profous/NYS Urban Forester/DEC at that time can be invited to make a site visit and offer ideas based on his extensive experience and knowledge. Marlene also advised the group to take their time, not rush, and plan carefully. One idea was to start out encouraging community involvement by putting the area in its historic context, with the aid of Mt. Vernon historians, to recapture its past grandeur and historic significance. There could eventually be a plaque that would point to its being a place of note, to be held in high esteem.

5.2 – Messaging.

The Planning Dept. is in the process of setting up the team/consultants to work on the Comprehensive Plan. They are not at the specific message-creation stage yet but are working on building out a suitable website platform for information dissemination.

**6 – Announcements**

Next regular TAB meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 21, 2022, at 4 p.m.

TAB Summer schedule: There will be no general meeting during the month of August.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:35 was made by Henry, seconded, by Marlene. The recording of this meeting is accessible with this link: <https://www.facebook.com/mountvernonny/videos/1230915004325560/>



---

Eveline Feldmann, Chair

07/21/22

Date of Approval