

Beech Mountain Tree Board

Beech Mountain Tree Board Minutes November 14, 2008

- I. **Call to Order** - The Beech Mountain Tree Board met at 10:05 am in the Council Room at Town Hall. Present were Committee Chairperson Renee Castiglione, Committee Members Rory Ellington and Marge Bailey. Committee member Peter Patton was present for the meeting via conference call. Alice Russell was in attendance as a concerned citizen as well as Jennifer Broderick, a Town Employee, who performed the duties of taking minutes.
- II. **Approval of Minutes** – Mrs. Bailey motioned and Mr. Ellington seconded that the minutes from October 10, 2008 be approved.
- III. **Notice to Property Owners** – Mrs. Castiglione stated that she had discussed with the Towns’ Mayor, Rick Owen, the possibility of him doing a mass e-mail to announce the Tree Board. A quarterly newsletter sent via e-mail was also discussed. Mrs. Castiglione stated that Mr. Owen said he would do this and that he would send the information out on its own, not tying it in with the Town’s Newsletter. Mr. Owen is currently paying for these mass e-mails out of his own pocket. Ms. Bailey informed the committee that she had the notice put in the News and Notes with the Club. Mrs. Castiglione has set up an email account with yahoo, beechmountaintrees@yahoo.com. Mrs. Castiglione also recommended that the name for the newsletter be “Tree Hugger”. Mrs. Bailey, Mr. Ellington and Mr. Patton were all in agreement. Mr. Ellington wanted to inquire with the Town about getting a link set up to the Town’s website to put announcements and such on. Mrs. Castiglione recommended the committee set up its own website. Mrs. Castiglione stated that it was feasible to do this for less than \$100.00 a year. Mrs. Castiglione nominated herself to look into the creation of a website which she would then e-mail to the rest of the committee to discuss at the following meeting.
- IV. **Cool 5** – Mr. Ellington stated that the “Cool 5” would be looking for a fundraiser cause for this upcoming years running event.
- V. **Tree Codes** – Mrs. Russell stated that she thought the Municipal Tree Code for Henderson County was an excellent reference and had brought a copy for the committee to review. One idea that this code includes is the designation of heritage trees, i.e. large and/or historic trees. The committee in Henderson County can nominate a tree and then if selected the owner receives a certificate. Mrs. Russell suggested that this idea worked really well for educating people. Mrs. Russell further stated that Henderson County has a formula for appraising the value of a landscape tree. Mrs. Russell explained that this would help if a tree is somehow

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damaged, such as a car hitting it. Mr. Ellington thought this should be brought back up when discussing the details of the ordinance. Mrs. Castiglione congratulated Mrs. Russell on the tree inventory she had gathered together for the committee. Mrs. Castiglione stated that one of the purposes of the committee is to prevent “pole farms” such as the incident that occurred on Wild Daisy. Severe damage was done to those trees.

VI. **Nursery’s** – Mr. Ellington stated that he had tried to contact Fitzgerald’s as well as Sarah with Mountaineer Garden Center in an effort to get a nursery to work with. Mr. Ellington stated that the committee needs to have someone lined up by next spring and that it is imperative that we support local growers and landscaping suppliers. Mrs. Russell agreed with this sentiment if the local nursery’s were getting their seeds locally from similar elevations. Mrs. Russell used as example the Red Maple which grows from Maine to Florida, just because it is adaptable to these regions does not mean that a seed from a tree in Florida will grow successfully here. Mrs. Russell further stated that plants have different genetics and have evolved to their environment. Mrs. Bailey recommended “Gardens in the Blue Ridge”, which is located past Land Harbor near the Blue Ridge Parkway. Mrs. Bailey stated that they have been in business over one hundred years.

VII. **Seeds and Seedlings** – Mr. Ellington recommended taking Mrs. Russell’s list to local nursery’s to see what they already have. Mrs. Russell interjected that the committee should come up with a five year plan for this process. Mrs. Russell stated that there was a wonderful Mountain Ash up at OZ, that with permission, would be a great tree to collect seeds from to give to growers. Mr. Ellington voiced that he was concerned about receiving support from the Town down the road. Mr. Ellington stated that he was willing to grow five to 10 seedlings in the greenhouse and that he would document this process digitally. Mr. Ellington suggested that the committee should get together before the next meeting to collect some saplings. Mrs. Russell said that after two weeks she would be out of town and that trees are dormant this time of year so it may be better to do this in March. Mr. Ellington stated that they should make a grid of the mountain and then try to get two trees from each grid. Mr. Ellington also stated that he would be out of town this upcoming week at a Turf Grass Meeting. Mr. Ellington, Mrs. Castiglione and Mrs. Russell agreed on getting five saplings of each type of tree. Mrs. Bailey recommended getting Magnolias because they are easy to grow. Ms. Russell noted that it would be more difficult this time of the year to identify the trees since there are no leaves on them now. Mr. Ellington stated that soil samples should also be collected and Mrs. Russell concurred. Mr. Ellington stated that he could get this done free of charge. Mrs. Russell inquired as to whether Mr. Ellington had picked up the Cucumber Magnolia

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Cones that she had left for him at Fred's. Mrs. Castiglione interjected that we need to plant trees that will survive and be hearty and that our criteria for purchasing seeds/saplings be having knowledge of where the seeds came from.

- VIII. ***Educating Our Community*** – Mr. Ellington stated that he knew how to heal a hemlock and other trees. To heal a Hemlock you simply need to drill a couple of holes and put a combination of fertilizer and insecticide in these holes. Mr. Ellington further stated that this product can be purchased at Southern States. Mr. Ellington rationalized that it does cost money to rehabilitate a tree but it saves homeowners money in the long run. Mr. Ellington stated that pesticide operators have to be licensed by the state but that they can have workers not licensed work through them. Mrs. Russell stated that homeowners can apply anything to their own property without a license and that the pesticide test was easy and she had taken it. Mrs. Russell inquired as to whether there were any extension services available because they may bring the test up here to us. Mr. Ellington stated that he would call Frank from Boone and find out. Mr. Ellington stated that education was important because of situations like “Hemlock Hills” down in Banner Elk. Mrs. Russell recommended further that they start using the term “provenance” when discussing the source of the tree.
- IX. ***Tree City USA*** – Mr. Ellington stated that Boone and Beech Mountain would be the only “Tree City USA” members and that Blowing Rock was not.
- X. ***Ordinances*** – Mrs. Castiglione stated that some of the ideas she had so far for the ordinances were not permitting anything to be nailed to a tree. Mrs. Castiglione also thought it was a good idea to state some kind of provision that would eliminate trees being “cut in half” and thus taking the natural shape of the tree away. Mrs. Castiglione further wants the ordinance to address the way in which the building inspector performs his duty. Mrs. Castiglione recommended that every tree be marked by the building inspector before it is cut. Mrs. Russell suggested that the inspector could take a picture of sights before homes are built. Mrs. Castiglione also suggested that driveways need to be looked at as well. Mrs. Castiglione stated that the committee needed to come up with criteria for enforcement. Mr. Patton stated that the battery on his phone was dying and that he would have to leave the meeting.
- XI. ***Next Meeting*** – Mrs. Castiglione stated that the next meeting would be on December 12th. Mrs. Castiglione also stated that Tony Hunter would be willing to come in on a consultant basis. Mr. Hunter handles a tree servicing company. Mrs. Castiglione also stated that two of the main topics for next meeting would be ordinance and criteria and that the meeting after this next one would be prolonged to get the ordinance taken care of. Mr. Ellington suggested doing a workshop for this meeting.

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Mrs. Castiglione stated that she planned on attending the next Town Council Meeting and being very vocal at it. Mrs. Castiglione stated that she was going to put town council on notice that enforcement is what we are looking for, they need to let us know up front if they are going to enforce or not.

XII. **Future Ideas** – Mrs. Russell stated that Beech Mountain could become an educational center by doing meetings that promote the propagation of trees. Mrs. Castiglione stated that the committee should do something for Arbor Day such as bringing experts in. Mrs. Bailey stated that just because Arbor Day falls in April that doesn't mean that we have to celebrate it on the actual day. Mrs. Russell stated that the committee needed to look into planning into the future specifically to try to attain grant money. Mrs. Russell stated that the committee needed to think of specific projects that they wanted to implement. Mrs. Russell stated that she feels the Town could easily get \$10,000 in grant money by looking into such places as the National Forest Service. Mrs. Castiglione asked Mrs. Russell to look into this for the committee. Mr. Ellington stated that it would be nice to get a list of deadlines for some of these grants. Mrs. Castiglione told Mrs. Russell that if she found out more specific information on the grants then the committee would come up with a project.

XIII. **Adjourn** – Mrs. Castiglione motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Mrs. Bailey stated, “yes” and Mr. Ellington seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 11:18 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Broderick