

Tree committee welcomes new members

By Michaela Kennedy

The town Tree Preservation and Protection Committee welcomed three new appointees — Anthony Antine, Edwina Cloherty and James Rugh — to the board at its Jan. 16 meeting.

Cloherty and Rugh needed no introduction to the committee, since both had previously attended meetings and participated in committee activities over the last few months. Committee Chairman Emmett Turley introduced Antine, a new face to the board.

Antine said the "incident on Walcott" was a provocation to join the tree committee. Antine's property abuts the triangle park at Walcott Avenue and High Street, where two trees were recently planted. "I like the views, and that's what got me fired up," he said. Antine noted his service on the state tree committee in New Jersey, which launched a tree beautification campaign in Bergen County. "A lot of things bother me about Jamestown, such as the maintenance of trees. I have 33 trees on my property and prune them myself," he noted, suggesting that an inventory and map of significant trees on the island was important.

Rugh told Antine that the committee kept a map of all trees on the island, "and we have a significant tree inventory."

In a request for an acting secretary, a discussion about the committee's by-laws ensued. Turley asked members to consider the duties of elected offices. "I don't want anyone to get into a position of taking on a job before knowing what it entails," he said.

In recognition of community service, the committee awarded Eagle Scout Brian Volpe a certificate of appreciation for work completed on the Town Forest project.

In the absence of the tree warden, Rugh reported that David Nickerson was preparing to submit an appli-



Scout honored by tree committee

Emmet Turley, chairman of the town Tree Preservation and Protection Committee (right), presents a Certificate of Appreciation to Eagle Scout Brian Volpe.

cation for a grant from the Rhode Island Tree Council. He noted that part of the grant would be used for signage on trees around town, and that the tree warden was looking for additional sites for tree plantings. "He's putting in to the state for \$2,000 for tree planting. The grant money will come in April," Rugh noted.

Conservation Commission liaison Patrick Driscoll acknowledged that the master plan for Ft. Getty included a call for new tree plantings.

Antine criticized the efforts toward obtaining grant money, saying, "We can't keep getting these grants and running with them." He stressed that safety was more important. "If trees are not pruned, limbs can fall on people and kill them," he added.

Cloherty explained to Antine the process of requesting pruning or removal of a tree on public property.

In determining new business, Cloherty suggested, with the agreement of the committee, that a master plan for the committee should be developed.

In a discussion of the Town Hall construction site, Rugh said he attended the Town Council meeting where concern for the trees on the site was addressed. Council members worried that the two trees on the property might die because at least a third of their roots had been cut off, according to Rugh. After some discussion, the committee agreed that pruning may help save the trees.

In old business, the committee reviewed avenues for finding volunteers to input tree inventory information into the database. After speaking with the school administration, Cloherty reported that an eighth-grade student might be available for the work. Turley praised the notion, noting that the idea of student community service was "to get the kids involved as tree stewards."

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