

DECORAH TREE BOARD

Report on year 2007 activities

DATE: February 4, 2008

Meetings: The Decorah Tree Board met monthly throughout most of 2007. Our November meeting was a working session where we met at a project site and planted and mulched trees along Water and Main Streets.

Branching Out Tree Planting Project (West Main & Water Streets): This project was initiated by the tree board and received assistance from the Decorah Downtown Betterment Association, Kyoto Committee, Luther's Environmental Concerns group, property owners, and volunteers from the community. A \$2000 grant from Alliant Energy / Trees Forever through their 2007 Fall *Branching Out Program* provided the majority of funding for the 35 trees planted with property owners contributing as well. This project will help create an attractive downtown area.

Trout Run Trail of Decorah: The Tree Board continues its support of this project and is currently planning several plantings involving area youth groups along the trail. The Tree Board has committed \$2,000 a year for the next three years for plantings along the trail. The board is hoping to obtain half of the \$6,000 it has committed to the project through matching grants. Recently the board was awarded a \$1,900 grant toward this goal from Trees Forever.

Downtown Decorah Tree Project: The Tree Board and the Decorah Downtown Betterment Association have been working together the last few years replacing aging trees as they outgrow their environment and planting new trees in the downtown business district. Both replacement trees and additional tree plantings are planned for this coming year.

College Drive Boulevard (Arboretum) Program: The Tree Board in past years has planted a number of trees in the area between College Drive and Sunset Avenue in the Dahly Addition to help replace the aging large maple trees. This past year the tree board celebrated Arbor Day with approximately a dozen neighborhood kids and their parents by planting several trees in this area. The project is ongoing with additional plantings scheduled for this coming year.

Boulevard Tree Program: The Tree Board continues its popular boulevard tree program that offers financial assistance to homeowners who plant pre-approved trees in the city's boulevards. A coupon worth \$35 toward the purchase of tree is issued by City Hall to a homeowner after the City Forester has reviewed the proposed location of the tree and the type of tree chosen by the homeowner. To help homeowners over the age of 60 on restricted incomes a coupon worth \$60 is available. Approximately 25 trees were planted through this program.

Brochure: The board continues to print and make available to residents its brochure "Planting Trees in Decorah". The color brochure is available free of charge at City Hall, local nurseries, and on the city website. The brochure describes the value of trees to property owners, summarizes the provisions of the city ordinance regarding trees along city rights-of-way, and includes a list of recommended trees for planting in various locations.

Grants/Matching Funds: The Board received two grants this year. A \$2,000 grant was awarded to the board from Trees Forever / Alliant Energy's *Branching Out Program* and a \$1,750 grant through Aquila's Trees Forever Community Project program.

Future Projects: In 2008 we plan to continue projects along Trout Run Trail and begin working on plans for the southeast entrance into Decorah along the airport and business park. We will also continue with the boulevard tree program and the Decorah Downtown Business District tree planting and replacement project.

Budget: The Tree Board receives an annual budget from the city of \$4000 for FY 2007-2008. The board added matching funds of \$3,900.00 and many volunteer hours on the part of tree board Members, volunteers, and residents planning, planting, trimming, mulching, and caring for new and existing trees.

Tree Board Members: James Anderson, Mark Faldet (chair), Nancy Sojka, Roger Timp, Mike Weis (secretary/treasurer), Wayne White, and Robert Wilson. Elected at the January meeting were Nancy Sojka, chair, and Wayne White secretary/treasurer.