

Newburyport Tree Commission

February 8, 2018

Children's Activity Room
Newburyport Public Library

Meeting convened at 7:00 pm.

Tree Commission members (TC) present: Crispin Miller (Chair) (**CM**), Paul Bevilacqua (**PB**), Constance Preston (Treasurer) (**CP**), Sheila Taintor (Secretary) (**ST**), Jane Niebling (**JN**), Wayne Amaral, Tree Warden and Deputy Director/Director of Operations Department of Public Services, ex-officio (**WA**)

Absent: David Dylewski (**DD**), Kim Kudym (**KK**)

Public in attendance:

Javier Marin, Forest Pest Outreach Coordinator of MDAR

Jeff Esche, Executive Director of Northeast Urban Forest Advocacy (NUFA)

Richard Lodge, Editor of The Daily News of Newburyport

The Commission initiated its series of informational presentations by guest speakers at the beginning of our monthly meetings to educate ourselves and interested citizens about matters relating to trees and our canopy. The series will be called "Shady News". Javier Marin, Forest Pest Outreach Coordinator of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources kicked off the series with a presentation on the **Emerald Ash Borer**. The EAB is not a federally regulated insect, since it only targets ash trees. As a result, complete responsibility for safeguarding the ash tree population rests with the municipality and the state. NUFA's Jeff Esche has identified 138 white, green or black ash trees on public streets, parks or cemeteries in Newburyport, 27 on other government property and 24 on private land. Although Newburyport's ash population is in 'good' condition, we must be vigilant. The ash borer reached nearby Georgetown in 2017, and once a tree is infested, dies within 2-3 years. The recent drought has put the trees at risk already and a weather event would bring down all affected trees. Marin proposed setting up a program to educate residents about how to identify an ash tree and recognize signs that could signal the presence of ash borers. There was discussion about linking an educational training session with Arbor Day.

Reports

Secretary

The Minutes of the 11 January meeting were reviewed and approved 4-0, with 1 abstention due to **PB**'s absence from that meeting.

Treasurer

The Treasurer's report for January was unanimously accepted.

CP explained that the \$14,950 free cash transfer approved by the City Council has not yet been received.

Tree Warden

WA's goal as Tree Warden is to plant more trees than we remove.

- A total of 9 trees have been removed this year.

The most recent trees are:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| ▪ Chain Bridge Lane at circle
(3 trees) | ▪ 7 Ferry Road (2 trees) |
| ▪ 5 Coolidge St. (2 trees) | ▪ 12 Ferry Road |
| | ▪ 19 Ferry Road |

In addition, 6 trees have been removed from Harnch's Way. These were park, not street, trees.

WA has requested funds to treat EAB over a 3-year period @ estimated cost of \$16,000/year.

Planting and Pruning

CP stated she and **DD** left 26 notices about planting street trees on High Street, 5 on the south side and 21 on the north. It is likely that some homeowners will refuse the trees, so we may end up with about 23 new trees to be planted in spring. These trees will be planted using the free cash disposition (\$14,950) recently approved by the City Council.

After this spring's planting, there will be approximately 60 sites remaining on High Street, for future plantings, depending on passing the vetting process.

WA mentioned the MA Safe Routes to Schools grant received by the City to make improvements to High Street between Toppans Lane and Johnson Street, with the goal of increasing biking and walking among elementary and middle school students at the Nock Middle and Moulin Elementary Schools. This federally-funded \$1.6 million project will be managed by MA DOT. When the work is undertaken in FY 2019, trees will be included.

Grants/Donations

JN has submitted the following grants: Bromfield Trust (\$12,800 to purchase, plant and care for 20 trees), the Cutter Trust (\$6000 for 10 trees) and the Gayden W. Morrill for \$4000 (5 trees on High Street). These applications will not be read until June, so any money received will be applied to planting in Fall 2018 or Spring 2019.

On behalf of FoNT, **JN** plans to approach the local banks asking each for \$1000 for the tree sculpture on the Rail Trail. FoNT has already received 3 donations for the tree sculpture.

Education

ST informed the Commission that both the single fifth grade class at the Immaculate Conception School and teachers at the RVCS are offering their students the chance to participate in the 2018 Arbor Day Poster Contest for 5th graders sponsored by the MA DCR. She is setting up a meeting with 2 teachers at the Moulin to discuss the Contest.

Community Outreach

There was no report due to **KK**'s absence.

Old Business

Election of Officers

The Commission elected Connie Preston as Vice Chair.

New Business

Tree Commission Documents

The Commission discussed the storage of important documents, such as agendas, minutes, financial reports, bids and contracts. **WA** stated that once the TC has sent final Agendas to the City Clerk and Minutes to him for posting on the City website, the City is responsible for their maintenance, not the Commission.

The unanimous decision was that binders of some other important documents will be stored in the Tree Warden's office.

The Commission decided to add the Annual Reports to the website. **CM** asked **PB** to coordinate the development of the Annual Report each year in cooperation with other members of the Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Sheila Taintor, Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday March 8, 2018 at 7 PM

Location: Children's Activity Room, Newburyport Public Library