

**City of Newburyport
Tree Commission
Annual Report FY 2017**

Mission

The mission of the Newburyport Tree Commission as stated in in the **Newburyport Code of Ordinances: Chapter 12: Streets, Sidewalks and Other Public Places, Article VI: Protection of Public Trees, Section 12-172** is to select, plant, protect, maintain, plan for and increase the health, beauty, quantity, diversity, and vitality of Newburyport trees.

Responsibilities

Advise the Tree Warden and other City officials with respect to the adoption and amendment of plans, programs and regulations pertaining to the protection of Public Trees in the City, including the City Tree Plan and Tree Regulations;

Monitor the health and protection of Public Trees, creating and updating inventories of such trees;

Identify issues relative to the health and protection of Public Trees and recommending solutions to problems identified;

Advise the Tree Warden and other City officials with respect to the planting and replacement of Public Trees and on tree-related issues;

Seek grants and conducting fundraising to assist the Commission's mission, such funds to be deposited into the Tree Fund;

Promote knowledge and awareness of the benefits of trees and their impact on the quality of life in Newburyport;

Actively design select, plant and maintain the tree ecology of Newburyport in coordination with the Tree Warden and the City Tree Plan.

FY 2017 Activities

In furtherance of this mission the Commission, through the monthly meetings and committees, plans and implements several projects during the year either alone or in collaboration with the Tree Warden. These projects included:

- Purchased and planted 73 trees in the Fall and Spring in selected locations as part of the plan to replace the 157 trees in hazardous condition which were removed by the Tree Warden in this period throughout the City's neighborhoods. The locations were selected by the Tree Commission, in collaboration with the Tree Warden, upon review of City

streets by: Tree Commissioners, the Tree Warden, suggestions from the general public, and the work of several volunteers;

- Implemented a plan to raise supplementary funds for the purchase and care of trees in collaboration with other public, private, and nonprofit groups;
- Conducted pruning and mulching of 210 selected street trees on April 22 and April 29 by Commissioners, along with both community and professional volunteers;
- Provided on-going support for and advice to the Tree Warden relative to hazard trees and proposed tree action and related issues;
- Advised the Tree Warden relative to populating and maintaining the Tree Commission documents on the City of Newburyport website;
- Initiated an inventory of street trees involving all Tree Commissioners and other volunteers. Three hundred and thirty-one trees were inventoried as of 6/30/ 2017.
- Maintained and posted in collaboration with the Tree Warden a **Tree Plan** including: **Tree Regulations**, a **Guide for the Protection of Public Trees** and a related **Check List**, a **Tree Inventory Data Elements**, and lists of both **Recommended and Prohibited Trees**
- Provided seasonal watering and care for over 107 street trees which had been planted in Fall 2014-Spring 2017.
- Actively sought increased support for the Adopt-a-Tree Program and other related projects in public/private partnerships with the non-profit Friends of Newburyport Trees (FoNT);
- Received nearly \$20,000 from the Bromfield Trust, the Merrill Trust, Friends of Newburyport Trees and individuals.
- In collaboration with the Tree Warden, maintained and updated information on the Tree Commission website including: The Tree Commission Meeting and Operational Guidelines, Code of Ordinance: Chapter 12: Streets, Sidewalks and other Public Places, Articles VI: Protection of Public Trees, the City Tree Plan, Meeting Agendas and Minutes;
- Initiated planning for several major, long term projects with the goal of planting large numbers of trees with funds raised from various private and public sources.
- Gateway II project is at the Merrimac Street roundabout. We have planted two trees to date in this project. Once additional funds are secured, additional trees will be planted in this project.
- High Street Project. Fourteen trees were planted in the Fall 2016 as part of the High Street Project, which extends from Atkinson Commons to the Newbury town line. We expect to plant over 200 trees in this project.

- On Arbor Day 2017, the Newburyport Tree Commission, in collaboration with the Friends of Newburyport Trees (FoNT), held a celebration of our city's trees. Around 30 attendees joined the Tree Party for Kids and enjoyed preschool activities and snack time. They also received a sapling to take home.
- The Daily News has provided the Tree Commission with a venue for community outreach with a monthly column **Tree Talk**. Kim Kudym also posts updates regularly in a blog "**Branching Out in Newburyport**" with photos of newly planted trees throughout the city which can be found on the Friends of Newburyport Trees Facebook page.
- The Tree Commission reached out to 5th grade teachers at the public schools in the hope of having them participate in the Annual Arbor Day Poster Contest sponsored by the MA DCR (Department of Conservation and Recreation) for fifth graders across the state. Although none of the schools submitted posters in the Spring of 2017, hopefully the ground has been prepared for 2018.

Summary

The Tree Commissioners are committed to continuing their volunteer efforts to meet their assigned mission and responsibilities and to build upon their accomplishments to date. The Commissioners would welcome an opportunity to meet with appropriate officials to discuss the work of the Commission.

Respectfully Submitted,
Newburyport Tree Commission
Crispin Miller, Chair
Constance Preston, Vice Chair and Treasurer
Paul Bevilacqua, Secretary
Sheila Taintor
Jane Niebling
David Dylewski
Kim Kudym
Paul Harrington, Alternate
Kate Harried, Alternate
Wayne Amaral, ex officio Tree Warden

March 15, 2018