

City of Newburyport
Tree Commission
Annual Report FY 2018
July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018

Mission

The mission of the Newburyport Tree Commission as stated 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's trees.

Organization

The Tree Commission is a volunteer group whose members are appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council. The Commission consists of seven (7) voting members, plus two (2) alternates, not including the Tree Warden or his designees who serve as ex-officio members of the Commission.

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, create and update inventories of such trees.

Identify issues relative to the health and protection of Public Trees and recommend 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 conduct 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 2018 ACTIVITIES

In furtherance of its mission the Commission, through its monthly meetings and projects, planned and implemented various activities during the year, either alone or in collaboration with the Tree Warden. These projects/activities included:

TREE PURCHASE, PLANTING AND CARE

- Purchased and planted 41 trees in the Fall of 2017 and 105 trees in the Spring of 2018. 36 of these trees were planted on High Street, in addition to the 14 which were planted in the triangle of land in front of Famous Pizza on Storey Avenue. The remainder of the trees were planted in selected locations as part of the plan to replace the 111 trees in hazardous condition which were removed. The locations and species were selected by the Tree Commission, the Tree Warden, volunteer landscape architect and individual residents.
- Continued the implementation of a plan to raise supplementary funds for the purchase and care of trees in collaboration with other public, private, and nonprofit groups.
- Pruned, weeded, and mulched about 150 recently planted trees throughout the Community with Tree Commission members and other volunteers.
- Provided seasonal watering and care for over 114 street trees during July-September 2017. In May 2018, 245 trees were watered and will be watered through the growing season.
- Planted 57 trees Spring and Fall of 2017. This is part of an on-going High Street Restoration Project. We expect to plant 150+ trees as part of this project.
- Utilize a \$14,950 “Free Cash” transfer from the Office of the Mayor in December as all of the previously allocated funds had been expended or encumbered in May/June planting.

TREE WARDEN ASSISTANCE

- Provided on-going support and advice to the Tree Warden regarding hazardous trees, proposed tree action, species and location of trees and answer questions relating to specific issues.
- Advised and assisted the Tree Warden in developing a resource/archive in the Tree Warden’s Office.
- Continued to inventory street trees with Tree Commissioners and other volunteers who spent 459 hours inventorying 2016 trees as of April 30, 2018.

- With a DCR grant of \$13,000 hired two interns to take inventory. These interns will be assisted by 13 different volunteers during the summer months.
- In collaboration with the Tree Warden, maintained a Tree Plan including: Tree Regulations, A Guide for the Protection of Public Trees and the related check list, the Tree Inventory Data Elements, and Recommended and Prohibited Street Trees for Newburyport.
- In collaboration with the Tree Warden, maintained and updated information on the Operational Guidelines, Code of Ordinance: Chapter 12: Streets, Sidewalks and other Public Places, Articles VI: Protection of Public Trees, the City Tree Plan.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

- 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).
- Applied for and received \$42,183 from the Bromfield Trust, the Morrill Trust, Friends of Newburyport Trees and individuals, and \$20,000 from DPS for purchase, planting and watering trees.
- Created and maintained the Tree Commission website which includes: Meeting Agendas and Minutes, the components of the Tree Plan (mentioned above), Adopt-A-Tree Program, Regulations for the Protection of Public Trees, and Tree Commission Annual Reports.
- The Tree Commission and Friends of Newburyport Trees (FoNT) held two second annual celebrations of Arbor Day in Atkinson Common on April 27 and 28, from 9 to 11 AM. Both were free and open to the public. There were activities for both young children and adults, including: crafts, bark rubbings, a pruning demonstration, guided tours of the park, tree give-a-ways, and a raffle.
- Worked with the River Valley Charter School, the Molin Upper Elementary School and the Immaculate Conception School on the Annual Arbor Day Poster Contest sponsored by the MA DCR (Department of Conservation and Recreation) for fifth graders across the state. The theme of the 2018 contest was “My Community, My Trees”. All three schools participated this year and each school sent its winning poster to MA DCR. All the students' posters were displayed at the Senior Community Center during April.
- Created a blog post with photos of the students' posters for the Arbor Day Poster Contest. There were over 800 views by the end of March. The post was called “Newburyport Students Participate in Arbor Day Poster Contest”.
- Initiated a series of informational presentations by guest speakers entitled Shady News Talks to educate the Tree Commission and interested citizens about matters relating to

Newburyport trees. Speakers from the MADAR, the Newburyport Parks Department and the Conservation Commission appeared before the Tree Commission.

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 any 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/Treasurer

Sheila Taintor, Secretary

Paul Bevilacqua

Jane Niebling

David Dylewski

Kim Kudym

Kate Harried, Alternate

Paul Harrington, Alternate

Wayne Amaral, ex officio Tree Warden