



City of Newburyport Tree Commission

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, 14 August 2019

Department of Public Services, 16A Perry Way

Meeting convened at 6:01 pm.

Tree Commission members (TC) present: Constance Preston (Chair) (**CP**); Crispin Miller (Vice Chair/Treasurer) (**CM**); Sheila Taintor (Secretary) (**ST**); Paul Bevilacqua (**PB**); David Dylewski (**DD**); Jane Niebling (**JN**); Scott Hanley (**SH**); Andrew Sorocco (**AS**), Alternate; Lance Rickard (**LR**) Tree Warden Designee, Assistant Tree Warden, ex-officio

Tree Commission members absent: Jamie Tuccolo (**JT**), Tree Warden, ex-officio

Public in attendance: Britt McLoy, 49 Marlboro Street; Jim McCarthy, 17 Russia Street

Britt McLoy attended to discuss the removal of a red maple. The tree was planted within roughly 3 feet of his water and gas pipes, and he has been advised by a plumber that it needs to be removed. He offered to replace this street tree with 2 smaller trees, planted in front of his house or elsewhere. The tree had been planted originally on Marlboro Street but in 2012 or 2013 was moved around the corner to Reilly Street.

It was suggested that this tree was probably moved and replanted with a grant obtained by Jeff Esche working with former Tree Warden Andrew Lafferty.

PB recommended proceeding informally with this request for now. **CP** was concerned with setting a precedent, stating that there are many trees whose roots interfere with residents' pipes throughout the city.

Before the September TC meeting, **JN** is going to check with Jeff Esche, to see if he has a record or recollection of moving this tree, and Mr. McLoy is going to check with neighbors to see if any of them have objections to the removal of this tree. **LR** suggested contacting all neighbors who have a view of the red maple from their yards.

Reports

Secretary

The Commission approved the Minutes of the 14 June 2019 Meeting. (The July meeting was cancelled.)

Treasurer

The June and July Treasurer's Reports was unanimously accepted.



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Tree Warden

Total Street Trees Removed in 2018 is 91.

During June 2 trees were removed:

117 Water Street

283 High Street

During July the following trees were removed:

State and Liberty Street

75 Federal Street

189 Low Street

61 Federal Street

1. There was discussion about whether information explaining the removal of trees is stored in the inventory.
2. **PB** noted that he had referred a resident to the TW office after the resident had shared a concern about trees next to his home and asked whom to contact. The resident contacted the TW's office but had not had any response as of the date of the TC meeting. **PB** asked if there is a process by which residents who report concerns are informed of action taken by the TW's office.
3. **LR** explained that during the last 3 months he has done little tree work, due to reassignment of his team during the work on High Street and Yankee Homecoming. During May, he did 7 days of tree work; during June, 5; and during July, 4.
4. There was mention that the **TW** needs to update the list of Commission members on his Tree Warden Reports.

Planting and Pruning

The Tree Commission is currently watering 275 trees. Due to sufficient rain, there was no watering necessary during the week of 7/22.

During the June meeting, **CP** reported that there were 5 trees failing. Since then the trees at 117 Water St. and 283 High St. have been removed. The Ironwoods at 298 and 296 High are still failing.

There was discussion about the sudden and inexplicable death of a columnar cherry planted 3 years ago at 42 Boardman Street. It leafed out completely during the spring and now is almost completely dead.

CM mentioned a cherry tree at 299 High Street which was whacked off during the winter and needs to be replaced.



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Fall Planting 2019

A total of 47 trees will be planted this fall, including the 25 pre-purchased 8'-10' tall Liberty Elms. 12-13 of the elms are destined for Merrimack Street, and the others will be included in the 35 resident requests.

The elms will be available to be picked after Sept. 19. **DD**, **SH** and **CM** will plan to pick them up in time for the fall planting.

Inventory

The Inventory will continue to be updated with tree removals and work, and new plantings, but will no longer be a monthly item on the agenda.

Grants/Donations

JN reported that she will be resigning from the Tree Commission as soon as someone is found who can take over her grant writing responsibilities. She has not yet heard whether the City Council approved the CPC grant application for trees on Merrimack Street.

CM reported that based on current sidewalk work paid for by the Tree Commission, we do not have to worry about spending 50% of the Bromfield Trust grant on sidewalks.

Education

AS will be assuming responsibility for Tree Commission outreach with the schools.

AS wrote up a lesson plan for using the "tree cookies" which are cross sections of tree trunks useful for teaching students about xylem and phloem, and tree rings. **AS** usually gives each student a "cookie". They use the front for science and the back for art. In addition to sharing his lesson plan with teachers at the RVCS, **AS** sent the plan to Angela Bik, the Assistant Superintendent and Director of Curriculum for the Newburyport Public Schools. She is very interested and will share the plan with her teachers in the fall.

Community Outreach

JN reported that there will be a *Tree Talks* article in the Daily News next week. **JN** will write part of the article focusing on the Edible Avenue in the Clipper City Rail Trail, phase 2, and Jean Berger (**JB**) will write about tree care.

CM and **JB** are scheduled to make a presentation to the Village on 11/20. They are reaching out to service organizations for other presentations. Their presentation can be delivered in 15, 30 or 90 minutes.



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Old Business

Newburyport Tree Guide

CM stated that the Newburyport Tree Guide has gone into its 4th printing. Doing printings of 100 copies is cost effective.

Annual Report FY 2019

CP reported that the final Annual Report FY 2019 was submitted to the Mayor on July 22, 2019.

New Business

CP met with Fred Chania, chair of the newly formed a Tree Committee in West Newbury to share knowledge about city trees and commission/committees. Since West Newbury is so different from Newburyport, much of our material is not relevant for them. She sold them 5 discounted copies of the Newburyport Tree Guide.

PCI Synthesis in the industrial park was fined by the EPA. Mayor Donna Holaday put them in touch with the Tree Commission. Their fine can redirected/utilized for a community good, such as purchasing and planting trees in wetlands or “environmental justice” (i.e. low income) areas, if agreed to by the EPA. **CM** met with Tracy M. Watson, head of the Newburyport Housing Authority, to identify some potential planting sites. They looked at 3 subsidized housing facilities in Newburyport: the Sullivan Building, Horton Terrace and the Kelleher Gardens, and identified 35 potential locations for trees. Discussions are still in the preliminary phase.

The meeting adjourned at 7:42 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sheila Taintor, Secretary

Next meeting: Wednesday, 11 September, 2019 at 6 PM

Location: Department of Public Services, 16A Perry Way