



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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Minutes 06/16/2011

Arlington Tree Committee
Minutes
June 16, 2011

Present: Sally Naish, Chair, Mary Ellen Aronow, Eliza Burden, Lisa Decker, Andrew Fischer, Patti Muldoon, Walter Phillips, Ed Trembly, Corinna Vanderspek

Absent: Jim Dodge, Clarissa Rowe, Greg Watt

1. Minutes of Last Meeting - GW

The minutes of the previous meeting were voted into record.

SN asked that future minutes follow a standard format, which she will send out. It would include in particular a consistent subject line/file name, such as ATCminutes110616. Also, the format could follow the agenda, include a list of people present and absent, and the date.

Roberts rules of order: Clarissa said she could have a person added to the Committee, if we/they provided a resume. There was discussion of a few possible new people.

2. Announcements - SN

a. Open Meeting Law - revisions and reminders.

Reminder that under the open meeting law, minutes must be posted within ten days after the meeting. Therefore, we agreed minutes should be sent to the Chair within seven days after the meeting. {Fran Riedy is the Town employee who actually posts minutes to the town website.} Minutes must be posted as a Word document.

b. July and August meetings

We agreed to meet July 13 as planned, and meet again in early September to prepare for Town Day.

3. Assigned roles for ATC members {e.g. Website, PR, Fundraising, Special Events, etc} - EB

Members of the Cultural Council take on assigned roles. Eliza explained that in the case of the Cultural Council, the person filling each role is more the point person for that purpose, and does not necessarily have to be solely in charge of it.

Possible assigned roles aside from the Chair are:

Treasurer {if and when the committee has funds}, recording secretary, corresponding secretary/ outreach coordinator, tree planting coordinator(s), head of fundraising, Town Day coordinator.

The sense was that the Committee is not ready to assign the role of treasurer, or grant writer/fundraiser, because

those roles are not yet needed. For now, funds raised will go into the Trees Please fund. Sally will find out for sure if Trees Please money is ever used by the Town for other purposes than the purchase of trees.

{If the Committee does decide to have a financial account of its own, the Selectmen must request that the Town Treasurer set up such an account devoted to the Tree Committee.}

The role of corresponding secretary/outreach coordinator will most likely be called outreach coordinator. This person would be responsible for communications to the public, for example, by maintaining an email list. The email list, and other means of communication, would be used to invite people to order trees or help pay for trees, to alert people to problems with NStar, for example.

The outreach coordinator would not oversee the web site, but would be the "go to" person for other kinds of publicity.

Sally, Mary Ellen, Greg and Walter will maintain the website. Eliza volunteered to play the role of tree planting coordinator. Patti offered to coordinate Town Day. Corinna agreed to act as Outreach Coordinator.

4. NStar's Pruning on Pleasant Street - CR

The Town allowed NStar to prune trees on Pleasant Street from Rt 2 to Chapman St, on a trial basis. The trial was prompted by the fact that NStar had done a reasonable job of trimming a tree on College Avenue for a homeowner.

The trial did not go well, as NStar workers severely cut substantial amounts of several trees. The company remains banned from the town.

Actions to be taken: Sally will talk with Clarissa Rowe, Jimmy Dodge, Juliana Rice, and the Town Manager to learn more about NStar's current status.

Andrew and Mary Ellen are to call the Advocate, and send digital photos. Ed Tremblay will write a letter to the Editor regarding the damaged trees.

Patti will call the Town of Brookline to learn what their guidelines with NStar are, and learn if Brookline has come to any resolution with the company. Ed will make a call to Watertown for the same purpose.

Also, Ed also will call Massport.

5. Town Day Planning and T-shirt design - all

{In agenda item 3, Assigned roles for ATC members, Patti offered to coordinate Town Day, which will be on September 17 this year.}

The Committee discussed the need for a banner for Town Day. Eliza borrowed a tent for last year's event, and will look into getting another one for this year.

Several themes for Town Day were offered. The booth could highlight this spring's tree planting {40 trees}, which was accomplished by a community of volunteers as a pilot program. The booth can also publicize the web site, <http://arlingtontrees.org/>

A general theme is that the committee wants to promote the planting of trees to improve the streetscape. People often ask for a list of trees appropriate to Arlington, and the Town Day booth could offer such a list, as well as a page showing how to plant a tree and water a tree.

The booth could include some fundraising literature, explaining what the Trees Please Fund is and how it has been funded in the past, that donations to the Trees Please Fund can be in honor of a person.

The Committee discussed whether to sell tee shirts to the public, in addition to having

tee shirts made for people working the Town Day booth. The shirts typically cost around \$9 and can be sold for \$12, for example.

Eliza offered to get together with another Committee member to come up with a tee shirt design.

Part of this conversation included the Town policy about planting trees in people's yards - The conclusion was that the Committee needs to verify that the policy: To plant a tree supplied by the Town on private property, the owner must sign a form saying the Town has permission to trim the tree, and the tree must be planted within 20 feet of the sidewalk.

Lisa offered to print up some photos for the Town Day Booth, and look into establishing a digital repository such as Flickr or Shutterbug as a convenient place for the ATC to store photos.

6. Publicity/Fundraising for Tree Please - all

Last year, the Committee submitted an article to the Advocate before Town Day.

Greg wrote an article last year that was never published anywhere. This article could be adapted to reintroduce the Committee in the Advocate just before this year's Town Day. It could include an explanation of the Trees Please Fund, and that this Fund paid for the forty trees planted in this spring's volunteer planting program. Can also explain that in the future, public donations will be necessary to replenish this Fund.

Two questions came up: Will any override money be used to replenish the Trees Please Fund, and, again, is this money ever tapped for purposes other than trees?

It was also mentioned that we have a list of volunteers who signed up at the EcoFest.

7. "Climate summer": interns for a day - EB

Sustainable Arlington has arranged for college students from "Climate Summer" to spend five days doing volunteer work in Arlington in mid July. Climate Summer is an organization whose mission is to address climate change, in part by arranging for college students to spend the summer traveling by bicycle, spending five days at a time doing related volunteer work in towns and cities across the country.

The Town needs to find projects for these students to do, and ATC is free to offer ideas, such as: the students could research how and where the Town should plant trees in our highest density neighborhoods. We could ask Patsy Kraemer if the students could work in the Town Garden. Students could also do something related to taking a tree census.

8. Website - Needed Updates? - all

There is a desire to add a list of invasives to the web page.

Sally will contact Brian Murray for historical information about the Town's trees.

9. Update on Mill Street Plane Tree - CR

The tree is a large Sycamore on Mill Street that stands in front of the Mill Street Office building. The owners of the professional building think the tree roots are causing water to enter the building, and they want to remove the tree. It is not certain if the tree is on town property. Carol Kowalski, the Town Planner, and Clarissa Rowe are looking into this. Clarissa requested that the ATC write a letter saying what a valuable tree it is, and that it should not come down.

Andrew wondered if the offending root can be removed without weakening the tree.

10. Tree Location and Tree Harvesting - ET -

We did not address this item as Ed had had to leave to attend a Parks and Recreation meeting.

11. Trees and Sidewalks - - ET

We did not address this item because Ed had left to attend a Parks and Recreation meeting.

The next ATC meeting remains July 13 at 6:30 pm in the Selectman's Hearing Room.