



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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Minutes 09/14/2011

ARLINGTON TREE COMMITTEE MINUTES **SEPTEMBER 14, 2011**

Present: Sally Naish, Mary Ellen Aronow, Eliza Burden, Lisa Decker, Andrew Fisher, Walter Phillips, Corinna Vanderspek, Greg Watt.

Guest: Patsy Kraemer, Event Coordinator for the Town of Arlington

Absent: Ed Trembly, Clarissa Rowe, Jim Dodge, Patti Muldoon.

Minutes of August 11 Meeting. Minutes of August meeting approved.

Question of tree removal at Whittemore-Robbins House. Patsy Kraemer spoke about the potential hazard presented by two Black Locust trees on the hill at the westerly side of the Whittemore-Robbins house, the possible Town liability if these trees were to come down, and the concerns of the abutters. One similar tree fell recently for no apparent reason. It is believed that Jimmy Dodge feels the trees are not a hazard. The committee felt that the Tree Warden and the Town Counsel should resolve the issue.

Town Day Planning. Plans were discussed and details finalized. Sally showed a banner that will be used. Handouts to be available will be for planting instructions, suggested tree species for planting, and tree request forms for 2012. These will also be put on the website. A poster that Eliza obtained showing in some detail the tree cover in town will be used. Suggestions were made about how to make this map more useful for the purpose. Also we will use Lisa's poster from last year presenting the Good, the Bad and the Ugly (trees). And a poster with some photographs from our tree planting project.

The tree cover map, with some graphic indication of the street trees lost during the year, and the few trees planted, will be shown to the selectmen when the tree committee meets with them later in the year. We will investigate and show prominently on the map the trees that were planted and the trees that were removed during the past year.

Talking points will include questions like: Do you live in a low tree-cover neighborhood? Would you be willing to represent your precinct? Would you be willing to plant a tree? Would you be willing to make a contribution to Trees Please?

Tree branches from the Town can again be used to enhance the booth.

Publicity / Fundraising for Trees Please. Greg will work on an article for the Arlington Advocate. A photograph of a notable tree in Town could accompany the article.

NStar. NStar is still banned from working on trees in Arlington. The company did more damage to street trees immediately after hurricane Irene in late August. Discussion followed of the advantages of putting utility wires underground as other neighboring communities have done.

Mill Street Plane Tree. No action yet on the request from the Mill Street building owners to remove the tree. Hopefully a more reasonable action can address their concerns.

Tree Hearings. Are not being posted on the Town web site. The committee should be notified of any upcoming hearings so that we can post these on our web site and members can attend hearings.

Other Business. A suggestion from Walking in Arlington that the Tree Committee co-sponsor an event in the Mt. Gilboa neighborhood that they will host in October was considered. It was decided that our committee would not co-sponsor because the focus of the walk is primarily historical, and there would not be enough tree content to warrant our sponsorship. We could provide them with our e-mail list of residents interested in trees. The committee felt that in the future it would be useful for us to organize a walking event with them that focused on trees rather than history.

Lisa will find out what tree species are planned for the upcoming Mass Ave upgrade.

General Discussion. It would be useful to find which of the trees planted this spring survived. We could send e-mail to those responsible for their care (Eliza will draft e-mail), or committee members could go around and inspect them. Volcano mulching was discussed and could possibly be discouraged by an entry on our website. When storms uproot a tree whose street-side roots are restricted by adjacent curbing and street pavement, the tree falls away from the street toward homes and buildings.

Some photographs from our spring tree-planting project should be included on our web site.

Next Meeting. Wednesday, October 12th at 7 pm in the Selectmen's Hearing Room, Town Hall.