

Arlington Tree Committee

Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, November 12, 7:30 PM, Selectmen's Hearing Room, Town Hall

Present: Mary Ellen Aronow, Liz Pilcher, Sally Naish, Ed Trembly, Eliza Burden, Mike Rademacher, Susan Stamps.

Prospective Members: Emily Snyder, Becky Edmondson.

1. Welcome

Introduction of members to Becky Edmondson, a prospective committee member.

2. DPW Tree Department Update (Mike)

- **Fall tree planting**

MR reported that the DPW is planting this Fall using Sacca. Sacca contacted DigSafe for all the locations. About 20 trees are being planted each day for a total of 150 trees: eight different species—large, medium and small tree species—based on the presence of wires and the size of the planting strip. Water bags are being used, and a notice is being left with residents to add water to the bag until the ground freezes and in the Spring. The trees fulfill tree requests made by town residents. Ten locations were inappropriate for a new tree. The DPW contacted residents about this via email to say that they would be contacted in Spring to inquire about planting in their front yards instead.

- **Tree Warden**

The tree warden position is being advertised with the Society of Tree Wardens and the Mass. Municipal Association. SN and MEA will send MR websites of horticultural associations and the Alliance for Community Trees for places to advertise the position.

- **NSTAR**

NSTAR will start pruning based on locations that have primary wires. They will start next week on the Lexington / Arlington line and will continue along the Grafton, Everett and Broadway circuit thereafter. NSTAR is on orders to maintain each route once every four years.

- **Other Matters**

SS reported that the Master Plan committee indicates plans to further analyze staffing requirements of the Arlington DPW as it is understaffed in comparison to other towns. Another commented that trees are not succeeding well. EP inquired about watering trees, and MR mentioned improving watering methods.

3. Possible Grant opportunities (Liz/Eliza)

EB researched adjacent towns' grant activities:

Between 1994 and 2007, Lexington received \$83,000 in grant monies (12 different grants); Medford received \$40,000; Somerville received \$165,000, Watertown received \$60,000; Belmont has received \$5,000.

EB presented projects possibly worthy of receiving grants:

1. Conduct a public shade tree inventory in the main downtown section of the town.



2. Plant more trees along Mass. Ave. in the main business districts of Arlington in Arlington Heights, Arlington Center, and East Arlington.
3. Increase canopy cover in Arlington by including trees on private property.
4. Promote improved tree stewardship, increase the capacity of local residents/organizations, and provide resources for Arlington to develop a more sustainable urban forestry program.
5. Provide a summary of Shades of Green outreach activities, including tours, trainings and best practices.
6. Provide tree planting/stewardship jobs for Arlington youth, for example partnering with other Arlington organizations like AYCC or AHS.
7. Enhance traffic islands with trees (list of acceptable trees for visibility).
8. Create and/or enlarge tree planting beds along the primary traffic corridors, such as Mass. Ave., Broadway, etc.
9. Remove and restore the trees in the historic Winfield Robbins Memorial Garden, partnering with the Arlington Historic Commission and/or the Friends of the garden.
10. Hire college interns to develop a tree inventory system to help improve Arlington's tree maintenance practices. Provide inventory results, summary of data collected, and a plan for maintaining and updating the new computer data over the next few years.

Additional ideas discussed at this meeting include:

11. Develop a Tree Rebate Program (<http://caseytrees.org/programs/planting/rebate/>)
12. Expand Tree Warden hours.
13. Provide funds to undertake a tree master plan.
14. Undertake a canopy analysis to identify locations along Mass. Ave., Broadway and Warren Street where there are no trees and where there are no tree pits or inadequate tree pits).
15. Enhance plantings from Mill Street west to the Lexington line along Mass. Ave.
16. Improve the historic Town Hall Garden, a good candidate for CPA funds, which will also serve as good leverage to attract additional grant funds.

In the next year or so MR will be working on a plan to further improve the center of town and develop a more comprehensive approach to the design of the town center.

Grant opportunities were found at:

http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/dcr/forestry/grant_history.html

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/conservation/forestry-and-fire-control/urban-and-community-forestry-challenge-grants.html>

<http://actrees.org/what-we-do/grants-and-awards/>

<http://actrees.org/what-we-do/grants-and-awards/neighborhood-grants/>

<https://mediaroom.tdbank.com/index.php?s=30400&item=33989> **TD Tree Days:** As TD's flagship volunteer program, TD Tree Days provides employees the opportunity to demonstrate leadership in environmental stewardship within their local communities. Beginning in the fall, thousands of volunteers will plant hundreds of trees throughout our Maine to Florida footprint.

The ATC formed a subcommittee to assess and pursue grant opportunities. The committee is SS, EB and EP.



4. Publicity

- **Advocate article(s)**

We discussed monthly articles and materials for the Advocate through April 2015.

December: Trees in winter—identification of trees by overall form—a quiz.

SNaish (deadline to Liz: 11/25 for publication in Advocate 12/4/2014)

January: List of events organized around trees in Massachusetts. **EBurden (deadline to Liz: 12/16 for publication in Advocate 1/1 2015)**

February: Winter Tree Pruning—why and when to repair winter tree damage.

This piece will tell you why you should have your trees repaired and shaped and why the homeowner should hire a certified arborist.

March: Interviewing the Tree Warden and Tree Division preparations for spring tree care and planting.

April: Arbor Day is coming--goings-on in Town; plan to plant a tree on your property; learn how to select the right tree for the right location; and learn about balled and burlapped, containerized and bare root trees.

May: Greening up. Learn which trees leaf out first and where to see examples; learn about tree flowers and pollen.

- **Website**

We identified the need to more frequently update the website.

- **Facebook**—to be discussed next meeting.

- **Tshirts/Business Cards**—to be discussed next meeting.

5. Approval of October Meeting Minutes

Approved.

6. Membership –

- **Chair rotation**

EB discussed staying on as junior chair until the new Tree Warden comes online.

MEA wants to step down as senior chair after Town Day 2015.

- **New member search**—More information about this at future meetings.

- **New member**—Emily Snyder will be appointed a new member on November 24.

7. Other Business

There is a movement to start a Friends of the Winfield Robbins Memorial (Town Hall) Garden. MR explained that Tibbetts has a mowing contract for this area, and the Garden Club and MMGA are also working on the site. SN said that Historical Commission requires that the management and maintenance plan done in 1998 should be adhered to now and in future efforts. SS suggested that the Town Hall Garden is a good candidate for CPA funds that will also serve as good leverage to attract grant funds. EB suggested that the garden could qualify for preservation grant funds due to its being a significant Olmsted Brothers-designed garden.

Next meeting: Committee meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month. December 10th

