



Arlington Tree Committee Minutes

Date: Wednesday, February 9, 2022

Time: 7:30pm

Location: Remote meeting conducted via Zoom application -- advanced registration was required.

In attendance: Eliza Burden, Mary Ellen Aronow, Susan Stamps, Keith Schnebly, Ed Trembly, Mara Vatz, Steve Moore, Tim Lecuire (Arlington Tree Warden)

1. *Approve January Meeting Minutes*
 - Delayed until February.
2. *DPW Tree Department Update (Tim)*
 - Tree Bylaw activity -- projects
 - i. 0 Cutter Hill Rd., a wooded lot on a private way, with much granite; blasting notice to neighbors went out; neighbors reached out to Tim. Builder (Scott Rossi) has since reached out to Tim re: Bylaw info and packet. Builder is planning to hire a landscape professional to help with Tree Plan.
 - ii. 238 Park Ave. (corner of Florence/Park), homeowner has previously been in front of ZBA. Owner had a preliminary conversation with Tim re: an addition which will be impacting a tree in the back. No Tree Plan yet.
 - Tree hearing(s) -- none.
 - Tree health / mgmt. news -- crew busy with storm cleanup, and hanging up Town banners. Pruning has begun; Marquis Tree Service part of the effort. Pandemic caused backlog of pruning/removal needs; will catch up soon with Request/Answer pruning.
 - Other Town projects where trees are present -- no new ones.
3. *Report on Bylaw Warrant Article for 2022 (Susan)*
 - Draft circulated; Susan will come back to Committee with the final proposed language after tweaking the draft one last time.
 - Warrant language: broad and complete.
 - Detailed Warrant language: to be brought to Select Board for input
 - i. *Required professional*: change language to "*certified arborist or registered landscape architect*" per Tim's recommendation.
 - ii. *Demolition definition*: *removing the roof or two exterior walls*. Tim recommends better language for the ambiguous '*two exterior walls*'. Dep. Town Manager (Jim Feeney) suggests "*removing more than 50% of exterior wall area*." Susan will reach back out to Building Dept. / Dep. Town Manager / Tim, and come to a final set of definitions.
 - iii. *Protected Tree definition*: reduce diameter minimum from 8" to 6".
 - iv. *New Tree Plan Affidavit requirement*: signed affidavit required from developer/owner when they believe a Tree Plan is not required.
4. *Publicity/Community Outreach*
 - Outreach to Town orgs. (ARB, ZBA, Park & Rec. Commission, Open Space Comm., School Comm., Conservation Commission) and updates on projects/policy involving trees (Steve, Keith, Susan, Mara, Eliza)

- i. *Conservation Commission*: Intent to pursue 40B development for 1021 - 1025 Mass. Ave.; taking out a lot of trees; Steve/Susan spoke re: taking all these trees down will not be the best interest of the Town, and that a Tree Plan and thousands of dollars of mitigation would be required upon doing so. Very early on in the project; may not ever be approved. ATC will continue to follow project and add input early on in the project development (see Other Business for idea generation re: the large area of trees abutting the Mill Brook on this property).
 - ii. *School Committee*: several school playgrounds did not pass inspection this year; improvement/redesign/replacement may be necessary. Good time for ATC to get involved; input, grants, etc.; Mara will contact the Superintendent to get on their meeting schedule about it. Ideas: Bequest funds to possibly be used for an impactful project on school grounds; add a specific line item for trees and tree maintenance in School Budget in time for approval at this year's Town Meeting.
 - Annual Report (Eliza): draft report circulated; Steve to edit through Drop Box. Susan will bring report to Town Meeting.
5. *Report from Subcommittee re: Expanding Tree Planting in Town*
- Community Canopy Program for 2022 (Keith, Mary Ellen, Eliza)
 - i. DPW approved of renewing the program again this year, however, ATC will need to ask for specific dollar amounts. Free tree give-away was mentioned in the Town's Net Zero Action Plan (January 2021). ATC discussed with DPW; additional discussion is needed.
 - ii. ATC will circle back with Town Counsel to talk discuss the procedures for payment and sign-off by residents/Town for trees. MEA will work with Town Counsel to finalize forms.
 - iii. ATC thinks we could sell >50 trees this year. Keith is communicating with NE Nurseries for available stock.
 - iv. Forest St. / Summer St. ball field needs trees; Keith will discuss with Joe Connelly from Park&Rec.
 - Back of Sidewalk Program (Eliza)
 - i. Town Counsel drafted a proposed contract for back of sidewalk planting.
 - ii. ATC discussed with DPW; liability language was satisfactory. DPW suggests a contractor is hired to plant trees. ATC may be asked to be the liaison with resident/owner and contractor, to help alleviate the time DPW would need to commit to each resident/owner. Tim could locate sites he sees as appropriate for M.G.L. Chpt. 87 trees that do not have tree strips, but do have appropriate yard space that is adjacent to the public rights-of-way, as per the Chpt. 87 law.
 - Planning Department outreach. The Arlington Environmental Design Review process and trees (Eliza, Susan) -- not discussed.
6. *Gas Leaks Taskforce Update (Susan)*
- Task Force is bringing a resolution to the Select Board to demand National Grid fix the leaks; ATC vote taken to support the resolution (unanimous); Susan will inform the Select Board of ATC support.
 - DPW has, after lengthy discussions, received a reimbursement of \$14K from National Grid for underground gas pipe leak damage to public street trees in Town.
7. *New Business*
- Outreach to puppeteer for a tree-oriented performance in Town -- Eliza will contact.
 - Other -- proactively look at parcels in Town that could be purchased and conserved with funds from other pro- tree/conservation groups.

Next meeting: March 9, 2022
 Meeting adjourned @ 9:35pm