

City of Northampton, MA
Public Shade Tree Commission (PSTC)

January 15, 2020

Meeting Minutes

Submitted by: Beth Willard

Meeting Called to Order

Lilly Lombard, Chair called the meeting to order at 4:36 PM, and announced the audio recording of the meeting.

Members present and absent/introductions:

Member	Present	Time if arriving late or leaving early
Lilly Lombard, Chair	X	
Susan Lofthouse, Vice Chair	X	Arrived 4:41 PM
Molly Hale	X	
Jennifer Werner	X	
Marilyn Castriotta	X	
Rob Postel	X	
David Lukens	Absent	
Staff & Visitors	Present	Time if arriving late or leaving early
Richard Parasiliti, Tree Warden	X	
Beth Willard, DPW Clerk	X	

Public Comment

- There was no Public Comment.

Approval of previous minutes

- Minutes were read by commission members.

Motion	Motion By:	Seconded By:	Vote:
To approve Dec.18, 2019 minutes	Molly Hale	Jen Werner	Yes 5, No 0, Abstain 1

Chair Report

- NESC presentation
 - Lilly reported the Energy & Sustainability Committee was receptive to her presentation on the PSTC tree program and the value of the urban forest.
 - Her power point presentation will be posted as part of the minutes.
 - They suggested that she present it to the City Council.
- Upcoming presentation to City Council
 - She made the request to Council President Sciarra, and plans to do it in a couple of months.
- Meeting with Bob L. & Laurie S. re “heritage trees”
 - Dave and Lilly met with Bob and Laurie Sanders, who was there as a private citizen.
 - Laurie felt “Heritage Tree” channels people more towards a historic connection for the tree, instead of other significant factors that make the tree important.
 - Lilly was considering a “Notable Tree” data base.

- Laurie felt such a data base should be held by the Tree Warden, not Historic Northampton.
 - A report by David was tabled to the next meeting
 - Meeting with Carolyn Misch
 - Dave, Lilly and Rich met with Carolyn.
 - They discussed the spreadsheet of research on Significant Tree Ordinances.
 - Lilly will share the spreadsheet with the PSTC members.
 - They discussed how to value trees in general.
 - They looked at the free version of a tree benefit calculator.
 - In practical use, it really undervalued a 150 year old tree.
 - It also underrepresented carbon sequestration.
 - The American Association of Consulting Arborists has a different calculator, which Jen noted uses a number of additional factors.
 - Use of this calculator requires taking training courses.

Tree Warden Report

- Gas leaks protocol update/PST Hearing 73 Loudville Road/Lia Toyota/Honda
 - Rich met with Tim Lecuivre, and plans to visit him in Arlington in February to get acquainted with his tree program and protocols.
 - He also plans to talk with the DPW director about protocols and craft some regulations based on them.
 - A Public Shade Tree Hearing was held at 73 Loudville Rd. for removal of 2 shade trees.
 - The White Pine is almost dead, so no mitigation will be required.
 - Mitigation in the amount of \$2,700.00 will be required for the 13” White Oak, which has been damaged by utility company trimming.
 - The choice of these two trees saved a much larger White Pine with a large canopy.
 - The developer will be required to protect the rest of the trees.
 - Lia Toyota/Honda severely trimmed the trees in front on King St, and did volcano mulching.
 - The contracted landscaper said it was done by direct order of the business owner.
 - Rich forwarded pictures to Carolyn Misch, as this appears to be a violation of the site plan approval for their special permit.

Continued: scope of commission, possible name change, coordination with planning

- Lilly noted that the mission seems to be very much on target, but the name does not.
 - The name “Urban Forestry Commission” seemed more appropriate.
 - Rich saw the title as more representative of what the Commission was doing, but suggested caution concerning the mission.
 - The PSTC operates in an advisory capacity only, and neither it nor the Tree Warden have any power over private property trees.
 - Rich suggested that he explore the procedure of name change through his channels.
 - The discussion of coordination with the Planning Dept. was tabled until the next meeting.

Motion	Motion By:	Seconded By:	Vote:
To have Rich pursue the procedure of changing the name of the Public Shade Tree Commission to the Urban Forestry Commission	Jen Werner	Marilyn Castriotta	Yes 6, No 0, Abstain 0

STO updating Report

- Tabled until next meeting.

Arbor Day preparation

- CDH, Senior Center
 - These were the suggested sites for Arbor Day planting this year.
 - Jen has been in email contact with Jonathan Slater on the CDH location.
 - Jen, Rob, and Molly made tree selections, which Rich reviewed and approved.
 - They plan to work on an overlay plan that Jonathan can submit for approval at CDH.
 - 18-20 trees are planned for the site – 13 Large, 2 Medium and several Small.
 - Rich has not yet been in contact with the director of the Senior Center.
 - He and Rob will continue to pursue the Senior Center as a site.
 - CDH will be the main site, with the Senior Center as a backup.
 - The Senior Center is in the Environmental Justice area, and can be planted later as part of the grant.
- Film screening--Eastern White Pine at Historic Northampton (featuring Bob L)
 - Marilyn mentioned that the film was being screened at Arcadia tonight at 7:00.
 - David had suggested featuring it for Arbor Day and Historic Northampton could host it.
 - Marilyn will co-ordinate with Laurie Sanders on it.
 - She will also see if Bob Leverett will be a post-screening presenter.
- Whip distribution--choices?
 - Sue mentioned that TreeNorthampton met with Western Mass Pollinators about the 50th anniversary of Earth Day.
 - She suggested choosing trees to raise awareness of pollinators and the Earth Day anniversary.
 - Jen suggested concentrating on native species.
 - Tupelo, Persimmon, Common Lilac, Black Walnut, and Concolor Fir were chosen.
- School outreach--poster contest
 - Sue re-emailed the elementary school principals about the contest.
- Other education effort?
 - Last year's letter on volcano mulching to landscaping companies didn't have much effect.
 - Rich said the DPW Director is willing to do a public outreach mailer tucked into the quarterly utility bills.
 - He suggested an informational card similar to a door hanger about the PSTC and its mission.
 - He will get a deadline for the next mailing, and Marilyn will work on some language.
 - Marilyn suggested running a front page article on volcano mulching in the Gazette for Arbor Day.
 - This idea was tabled for discussion next time.

Neighborhood Planting Project

- Review submitted application

- Only one was submitted for 2020 on Dec. 31, 2019.
- Rich has been in contact with Kyra Anderson about the Munroe St. neighborhood.
 - The neighborhood includes Munroe St, East St., Lyman Rd., and Hampton Terr.
 - There are about 53 planting locations identified, including setbacks in 5-6 locations.
 - East St. was identified as a good location for setback plantings.
 - Rich will supply the neighborhood with Setback pamphlets.
 - Ken Neiman last year figured he did 85-100 hrs. of work, so Kyra will be encouraged to start tracking her hours.
- Discussion re. promotion and protocol re. neighborhood-based inquiries
 - Molly mentioned that the Grove St. neighborhood was interested last year
 - They felt it was a lot of work to apply, and that the Munroe St. neighborhood had already been selected for this year.
 - Lilly was concerned about the perception of fairness in the process versus maintaining fairness in reality.

Planting Plan Summary, (no update)

- Tabled until next meeting.

Poll of meeting times

- Tabled until the next meeting.

Any other business not anticipated by Chair

- Skipped

To Do list

- Skipped

Motion	Motion By:	Seconded By:	Vote:
To adjourn	Sue Lofthouse	Molly Hale	Yes 6, No 0, Abstain 0

Meeting adjourned at 5:56 PM.