

City of Northampton, MA
Urban Forestry Commission (UFC)

Date September 20, 2023

Meeting Minutes

Submitted By: Bonnie Netto

Meeting Called to Order

Susan Lofthouse, Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m. and announced that this virtual meeting would be recorded to the Cloud via the Zoom platform.

Members present and absent/introductions:

Member	Present	Time if arriving late or leaving early
Richard Parasiliti Jr., Ex-officio Chair	x	
Susan Lofthouse, Vice Chair	x	
Molly Hale		
Jennifer Werner		
Richard Parrish	x	
David Lukens	x	Left 5:15pm
Jordan Friede	x	
Staff & Visitors	Present	Time if arriving late or leaving early
Bonnie Netto, DPW Clerk	x	
Kent Johnson	x	Arrive 4:49pm
Jackie Balance	x	

Public Comment

- None

Review/approve amended minutes September 6, 2023 meeting

- A motion was proposed, seconded and a roll call vote was taken. There was no further discussion.

Motion	Motion By:	Seconded By:	Vote:
To approve the meeting minutes.	Richard Parrish	David Lukens	Yes 5, No 0, Abstain 0

Chair/Tree Warden Report

- Rich signed off on permits. On Park Hill, a single family residence needs a Public Shade Tree Hearing. Rich met with the contractor and they want to remove more trees than planned. Rich will have to look again.
- Rich has not talked to the Maynard Rd resident yet regarding their wanting solar.
- Sue will host the Oct 4th meeting. Rich will not be at the October 18th meeting, he will be attending the World Forum on Urban Forestry.

Fall Planting Discussion

- Planting is underway. There are a Wednesday and a Saturday group, with ten (10) trees planted on Saturday. We will be planting until the end of November. We have planted twenty-eight (28) trees.

Incorporating Native Shrubs Into The Setback Mix

- David put a list together of shrubs that were based on a book by Douglas Tallamy. He chose shrubs that are native to the Northeast, not too unruly, and not too tall. Rich included it in an email he sent. There is also a document in the Urban Forestry Commission drive. Rich and Jen will go through the list and compare against the tree planting guidelines. Rich Parrish wonders if getting into shrubs is considered “landscape planting” and Sue agrees it should be discussed further. Rich sees value in using these alongside tree plantings. Jordan said shrub is a variable term and thinks there is a role for these in providing things such as: canopy, habitat, and ecosystem benefit that isn’t landscape planting.

Urban Forestry Master Plan Discussion

- Rich sent two links for Urban forest master plans, one for [Cambridge](#) and one for [Boston](#). Brookline has also just finished their plan, Rich will find it and send a link
- We have built a wonderful foundation over the past 8 years, developing our own goals and objectives. Trees have quite a role in our sustainable systems in the City. How can we build a more permanent framework that can be adopted by our Public Officials, should they choose to? We need to create a sustainable system for the future. The City’s Masterplan is to be carbon neutral by 2050. They have recently requested the ability to require any new construction to be fossil fuel free. One of the biggest ways to do this is solar, and we know that means solar vs. trees.
- We should think about developing a tree plan that stands on its own. We should have a conversation about this, having commissioners provide input. Is this something we would like to pursue?

Spotted Lanternfly Update

- Molly sent Rich the letter she worked on and Rich sent the draft to the Mayor’s office for approval. We also have a list of addresses that we would like to send the letter to.

Any Other Business Not Anticipated By The Chair

- We have no update on the Significant Tree Ordinance
- A motion was proposed, seconded and a roll call vote was taken. There was no discussion.

Motion	Motion By:	Seconded By:	Vote:
To adjourn.	Rich Parasiliti Jr.	Richard Parrish	Yes 4, No 0 , Abstain 0

Meeting adjourned at 5:57p.m.