

SHADE TREE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES



Date: December 4, 2023
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: Belmont Town Hall, Room CR1
Subject: New Members Orientation

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: February 15, 2024
TIME: 8:11 AM

Meeting called to order by: Eva Hoffman, Chairperson

ATTENDEES

Lucia Gates, Eva Hoffman, Glen Valentine, Adam Howe, Michelle Oishi

The meeting was called to order and the agenda noted.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

1. Eva read the Shade Tree Committee's charge. "Since 1983, the Shade Tree Committee has been composed of professionals in urban forestry, landscape, horticulture and recreation, and interested residents. Its charge is to review the current tree and vegetation practices, stay advised of the town tree budget, and make recommendations. The committee shall recommend annual priorities, long-range plans and maintenance regarding plantings on public land to the Select Board and Town Meeting." The committee works closely with the tree warden, who is responsible for trees planted along the Town roadways.
2. Eva went on to review the Committee's procedures reminding the new members to read the Open Meeting and Public Record laws as well as take the MA Ethics Training online after being sworn in at Town Hall. Both Adam and Glen have been sworn in. Michelle will do so tomorrow, Dec. 5. All meetings must have an agenda posted with the Town Clerk in advance of the meeting and minutes signed by the chair and provided to Town Clerk for posting on the Town website. Glen will recuse himself on votes regarding the new Belmont public library project as he is landscape architect for the design. Eva reiterated the importance for all members to read and understand the State's conflict of interest guidelines as part of the ethics training.
3. Review of the committee's founding and history. Lucia and Eva provided background on Belmont's becoming one of [Arbor Day's](#) Tree Cities which requires that the Town maintains a tree board, a tree ordinance, spends a minimum amount on urban forestry and celebrates Arbor Day. Lucia has been an active member of the committee since the 1980's and regaled the group with stories about Belmont's tree wardens past and present, successful input by

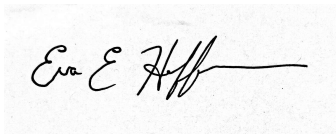
the committee on projects around town, and development of the Notable Tree list among other activities.

4. Belmont has tree regulations approved by the Select Board. The zoning bylaw also includes provisions affecting trees. The committee has begun conversations with the tree warden about updating the tree regulations. The committee does not have a formal role in approving or disapproving tree removals. When a tree hearing is scheduled, the tree warden notifies the committee for our information.
5. Eva also gave an overview of the tree inventory that was conducted by a third party consultant last year. The inventory mapped all trees along roadways and on municipal land (parks, cemeteries, schools, etc). It includes a summary report with recommendations and is available on the Town website.
6. Current projects were discussed. Eva mentioned that Arlington has a shade tree member attend every public meeting in their Town. While she did not advocate for such a high level of involvement in Belmont she suggested that at our next full meeting the committee should discuss having a liaison with boards and committees that include public grounds.
7. Tree planting work at the new Middle and High School will continue with the future construction of the pedestrian tunnel under the MBTA train tracks. Lucia cited some success in revising plantings that the project had initially proposed to improve tree locations and include some native species.
8. The new hockey rink has little ground space to include plantings but the project will remain on our radar.
9. Tomorrow night there will be a meeting of the Cemetery Board about the condition of the Belmont Cemetery on Grove Street. Eva and Lucia are concerned about the decline of the historic tree allée as well as the decimation of many of the existing trees by the emerald ash borer.

Next meeting: Monday, December 17, 2023 at 5:00 pm on Zoom

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Submitted by Michelle Oishi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eva E. Hoffman", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Signed by Chair Eva Hoffman