

SHADE TREE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date: February 12, 2024

Time 5:00 PM

Location Zoom

Meeting called to order by: Eva Hoffman, Chairperson

ATTENDEES

Lucia Gates, DeNee Reiton Skipper, Eva Hoffman, Adam Howe, Michelle Oishi, Molly Aalyson, Vickie Amalfitano, Glen Valentine, Mike Santoro – Shade Tree Committee Members

Jean Devine, Sarah Wang, Lois Pines - Guests

MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 pm and a quorum was in attendance. The minutes from the January 8, 2024 meeting were approved as submitted.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The committee agreed to March 11, April 1, and May 20 2024 for the next several meetings. In the warmer weather, an in-person meeting of the committee will be held.

TREE WARDEN REPORT

1. The ice rink project is requesting the removal of a black walnut to accommodate a new ramp into the building.
2. Mike and Jay are reviewing the contract and tree species to be planted with the maintenance company, Asplundh. Planting is slated to begin in April/May. Wagon Wheel may continue to plant trees for the town.
3. The DPW will be clearing and trimming trees along Pleasant Street from the police station down to Trapelo Road. This work has been held up due to a lack of police details. Although Pleasant St/Rte 60 is a state road, the town ends up maintaining the trees along it. The eastern stretch of Pleasant, from the bus stop to Rte 2, is maintained by the MASSDOT.
4. Barrett Tree service is feeding the beech tree across from the Lions Club in an effort to



prolong its life.

5. The commemorative tree program has seven (7) trees funded for planting this spring. Some of the donors have requested specific tree species.
6. Mike stated that between 100-120 trees of 2"-2 1/2" caliper will be planted in Belmont this spring.
7. The online version of Davey's tree inventory needs renewing. Currently the computer link is not working.

LIAISONS FOR TOWN PROJECTS

8. In order for the committee to stay apprised of work in Belmont that may affect trees, the members will follow specific projects. Shade tree members volunteered to be liaisons for the following:
 - a. Library - Lucia
 - b. Clay Pit Pond - Concord Ave side= Lucia
 - c. Belmont Cemetery - Eva and Glen
 - d. Alexander underpass - Adam
 - e. Community path - Vicki, Molly and Lucia as back-up
 - f. McLean new housing (within MBTA overlay zoning) -
 - g. Sherman Gardens - Molly to coordinate with housing authority
 - h. MBTA Communities - Eva and Michelle
 - i. Ice rink - Adam

PREFERRED TREE LIST

The meeting was spent reviewing comments Eva had received from attendees.

9. Yellowwood was voted to not be classified as a 'street tree'.
10. Latin names to be italicized and capitalized.
11. Maples to be noted as comprising a majority of trees in town and therefore to be avoided until a better diversity of trees was achieved. Remove the species from the Preferred Tree List.
12. Ash species will be the only tree on the Trees to Avoid list that is an emerald ash borer host. Eva contacted DCR who confirmed that outside of the Worcester area, they are not avoiding other potential host species.
13. Butternut, *Juglans cinerea*, to be taken off the Trees to Avoid list.
14. The introduction should include contact information for the Tree Wardens, Mike and Jay, including the telephone number 617-993-2680.
15. Scarlet oak, *Quercus coccinea*, Glen suggested not be listed as a 'street tree' as he has had low success with that species along streets.
16. Lucia asked if the list could be distributed by the Building Department to people applying for building permits. The project liaisons should also give it to their respective project committees.
17. The header and footer of the document should include the date it is issued and Shade

- Tree Committee as author.
18. The size column is useful as a way to sort the trees in the Excel file and will be kept.
The range of heights needs to be reviewed and updated.
 19. Simplifying the text in the Conditions column will be undertaken by Lucia, Vicki, and Adam. Focus of the text to be on moisture and light needs for the tree.
 20. The variety of common names is confusing because they often use different terms for the same Latin species however the Latin names provide clarity on which tree is being listed.
 21. A brief 15-minute meeting will be held on May 26 at 5 pm on Zoom to vote on the final version of the Preferred Tree List.

ZONING BY-LAW

The MBTA Community zoning overlay proposal is an opportunity to update tree-related zoning for Belmont. That proposal will be submitted to the town for approval before the May 2024 Town Meeting and so action to insert new language needs to be taken in the next few weeks.

Currently Belmont's zoning bylaw section 5.3 Landscaping requires either trees or evergreen shrubs to be provided at least one tree per 40 linear feet of planting area length. Parking area plantings are required to comprise a minimum of 2% of the interior area of parking lots with three or more rows.

Further discussion on tree zoning will continue at the next regular Shade Tree meeting.

Next meeting: Monday, March 11, 2024 at 5:00 pm on Zoom

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Submitted by Michelle Oishi



Signed by Chair Eva Hoffman

