

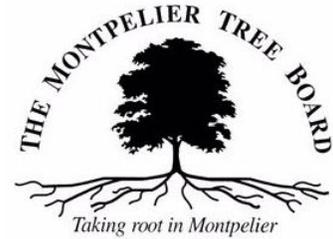
DRAFT

Tree Board Regular Meeting Minutes

7 April 2016

5:30-6:30 Thursday

City Hall Memorial Room



Attending:

Tree Board Members:

John Akielaszek, Steve Bailey, Heather Calderwood, Jake Feldman, Jeff Schumann, John Snell, Tree Warden Geoff Beyer

Volunteers:

Bob Troester

Park's Department:

Zack Simpson (AmeriCorps)

Agenda:

- Agenda was approved with one addition
- Minutes from the March 2016 meeting were approved without changes
- Public comments

In honor of Poetry Month, Bob recited:

I think that I shall never see a billboard lovely as a tree.
Perhaps, unless the billboards fall,
I'll never see a tree at all.

Ogden Nash

• Updates:

- Tree Pruning Workshops (John S and Geoff)

Geoff reported that he had about 17 people and they were able to do some pruning.

He also reported however, that most of the people wanted to know how to prune fruit trees and not many seemed to be interested in helping to prune street trees.

He proposed that next year we advertise that we have one session for pruning fruit trees and one or more for pruning street trees.

John reported that he had about 13 people and much the same results. But he did get some names of people who would be interested in pruning street tree.

- City Forest walk and monitoring (Jeff)

Jeff reported that in an email exchange with Tom McArdle he learned that Geoff Wilson, Chief Operator of the treatment plant and his staff are responsible for the Town Forest and the entire Berlin Pond water shed as required by the city's Source Protection Plan.

Jeff also mentioned that in a walk around part of Berlin Pond he saw activity of path clearing and tree cutting near the pond. As Geoff Wilson explained, the trail along the shoreline was done by his crew. It is the area where they have been working on a trail

to start to reclaim the raw water main. The ash trees that were cut were blow downs that were cut and removed by the town.

- St. Paul Street project (Lynn)

John provided an update on the project.

There has been a change to the schedule to allow for two weekends of planting; 22 & 23 April and 6 & 7 May.

John S. will be working with Lynn on a revised schedule and will send it around the following week. To be included in the schedule:

- When to have Dig Safe come out – Sarah will call them
- Finalize what trees we can use from the nursery and which ones we will need to order
- When volunteers will be needed at the Nursery to dig up the trees
- Coordinate with Geoff on getting the backhoe to St. Paul Street to dig the holes
- Coordinate with the city on street closer

Geoff will also get a street map for St. Paul Street for use in planning and planting.

- Inventory software training (Geoff)

Geoff reported that he, Zach, Alec, and Elise (from Urban & Community Forestry Program) have been working with the software installed on new iPads. Through this process they have identified some customizations that are needed and have been submitted to the company. They expect a new version of the software with these customizations within a week or so.

Geoff also reported that four dates have been set up with Elise to continue working with the software and iPads and that in early May a temp person will be hired to help with the inventory.

It is expected that once the “bugs” have been worked out and procedures established for inventorying, Geoff will be asking for volunteers to help with the inventory.

- Planning for Earth Day (4/22), Arbor Day (5/6) and Green Up Day (5/7) (all)

Ideas were presented for activities to occur on Green Up Day. They include mulching trees on Stone Cutters Way and Barre St. Also it would be a good time to have volunteers clean out the grates in downtown.

The Tree Board’s Earth Day activity will center on the St. Paul Street project.

- Other business:

- VT UFC Commemorative Tree Planting Grant (due 4/16) (John A)

Geoff proposed writing a grant application to replace invasive species with native fruit and nut trees/bushes along the bike path by the High School.

This was agreed to and Geoff will write the application.

- Geoff reported that Patrick Healy would like to see about getting some trees from the tree nursery to plant in the cemetery.

- Geoff was also informed that there has not been any recent beaver activity along the bike path. It was speculated that recent ice jams may have “relocated” the beavers. But he wants everyone to be on the lookout for beaver activity and notify him at once.
- If any tree board member is interesting in attending the Arbor Day conferencing taking place in Montpelier, notify John S. and the tree board can pay the registration fee. Details are here: <http://www.vtcommunityforestry.org/get-involved/vermont-arbor-day-conference>
- Note: next scheduled workdays are Thursday, 4/21 and Saturday 5/7
Also note that these are days set aside for the St. Paul Street project.

DRAFT

The agenda was approved with one addition

- Minutes from the February 2016 meeting were approved without changes
- Comments from the public

There were no public comments

New Business:

- Tree Board t-shirts were presented to the two new board members who were present. The new board members were also asked what they would like to have the Tree Board work on in the coming year. More tree plantings and removal of hazarded trees were offered.

Old Business:

- Update on Town Forest

Jeff had spoken with Jeff Langmaid of Fountains Forestry. Jeff L. has agreed to give a presentation and provide a walk-through of the Northfield section of the town forest. He suggested that this could be done sooner rather than later to give us a better overview of the timber harvesting.

There was some discussion about whether the harvesting will still be in process given the warm weather coming up but it would still provide us an opportunity to see how the harvest went and what steps are next.

Proposed dates for the walk through are;

12 March – a Saturday

13 March – a Sunday

19 March – a Saturday

We would meet at 9:00 am at the landing site.

Please email Jeff S. if you would like to come and your preference on which day. He will send out a reminder email.

- Update on Inventory & Management Software

Alec provided an update on the progress of acquiring the software. It was decided to purchase Urban Forest Metrix. The primary factors in choosing this product was that it is compatible with iPad devices (which the Urban Community Forest Program is lending to the Parks Department) and there was a need for software designed for tree professionals.

It is expected that the software will be purchased and installed within the next 3 weeks. Geoff and his crew will then field test it for inventorying street trees. These field tests will be used to come up with a method/procedure on how to do a full inventory. Once this has been determined then teams will be go out to do the inventory of street trees. This is expected to happen in late April, after leaves are small and not obscuring the upper branches.

- Update on St. Paul Street Project & Moving Trees From Nursery

Lynn passed out a schedule for the remaining work for the St. Paul St. Project and then went into more detail about it.

The basic plan is that the sites where trees will be planted will be identified and marked. Then Dig Safe will be called out to see if there are any problems with the sites and adjustments will be made if necessary. Two days before planting the holes will be dug and then the day before planting the trees from the nursery will be dug out. Lynn's scheduled had planting occurring on 6 May, Arbor Day in Montpelier. However there was a discussion about possibly having some of the plantings done earlier, on or around 22 April, which is Earth Day.

One of the conflicts that has to be worked around is that the timing of the plantings coincides with when Geoff's crew is expected to be doing the street tree inventory.

Lynn also mentioned that on 6 May there will be an Arbor Day conference in Montpelier. Lynn is working with Danielle Fitzko in arranging a coordinated event with the conference and the St. Paul St. plantings. One option talked about would be to have conference attendees come down to St. Paul St. between 1 and 2 to help with the planting.

Lynn, Geoff, and Jeff did visit the tree nursery to look at the trees that have been marked for the St. Paul St. Project. Unfortunately some of the trees have been damaged by mice and may not be suitable for transplanting. Geoff figures that if we plan on taking 16 trees out of the nursery may get about 12 good ones. Remaining trees for the project would have to be purchased.

Lynn will be updating her schedule and sending it around.

- EAB Planning

John A Updated the group on what would be happening next. He said that we are still in the pre-arrival phase; EABs have not yet been discovered in Vermont.

He has tried contacting various tree businesses in the area to arrange for them to be on the lookout for possible EAB damage when they remove ash trees. He has not had much success with this yet and will be going back to them.

Removal of street ash trees that are in poor health is something that can begin sooner than later. We also need to arrange for a quarantine area to take infected ash trees to once they have been cut down. And there will need to be engagement with neighboring communities to have a coordinated response when EAB does show up.

He also mentioned that when planting new street trees, the Tree Board needs to have a diversity of trees.

John A encouraged everyone to read through the EAB Preparedness Plan which can be found on the City's website or by following this link:

<http://www.montpelier-vt.org/documentcenter/view/1244>

- Update on spring tree pruning workshops at Hunger Mountain

Please note and spread the word that there are two tree pruning workshops scheduled at Hunger Mountain Coop

- Saturday, March 12, 10:00-Noon, John Snell
- Tuesday, March 22, 4:30-6:00 Geoff Beyer

- Consideration of Trees to plant and Purchase for 2016

Jeff volunteered to head up a subcommittee to review John S' draft list of trees to consider for planting in 2016 and what trees we might order, either for replacing street trees or to add to the nursery.

Anyone interested in this process should contact Jeff.

- Theme of Earth Day 2016

There was not enough time to talk about this item.

Work Day Planning:

- 5 March 10 to Noon TBD
John S will not be available this day. If someone had a suggestion on work that could be done, please notify the group.
- 17 March Noon – 2:00 TBD

Next meeting
Thursday, 7 April, 5:30-6:30 at City Hall