

Present: John S., Sarah, Lynn, Abby, Steve, James (and son Douglas), Geoff, Jac, Tristan, John A.

- The **Agenda** was approved with two additions (O'Rourke Painting Fundraiser and Signage for Tree Walk)
- The **February, 2019 Minutes** were approved.
- **Comments** from the public
Tristan Timpone, a junior at Montpelier H.S. joined us for the meeting. He indicated that his philosophy teacher had recommended that he attend the meeting and he was interested in Tree Board activities.
- Old Business:

Adoption of Best Management Practices

The BMP for construction and other aspects involving trees were discussed. It was suggested that a set be provided for the Kellogg Hubbard Library. The use of mycorrhizal inoculations during tree planting was also discussed. We also discussing including a Construction FAQ section on the Tree Board website based on the BMPs. A motion was made for the Tree Board to adopt the current version of the BMP and recommend that the Planning Commission require contractors to follow the BMP. The motion was approved unanimously.

Planning for spring planting; Neighborhood locations; Available tree species; Downtown locations

John S reported that he and Sarah drove through three neighborhoods (Berlin, Liberty, Ridge) to check for possible planting locations and found about ½ dozen. Also need to check North Main (to the roundabout) and College; John mentioned there might be other streets which are heavily used and trees might help slow speeding traffic. John passed around a listing including about 150 trees for purchase this year but we may reduce the number to 125. With a 3-4 week window for planting, larger trees will be planted in the neighborhoods and smaller trees will be planted in the nursery for possible fall planting. For the downtown area, three empty spots will be planted and three new planting wells (to be determined with DPW) will also receive trees. Compost will be obtained from the Cemetery and Geoff indicated that there was sufficient mulch to be provided by the Parks Dept. James will be examining street tree planting success in other municipalities and Sarah will be looking into street planting of other trees such as yellow birch. It is our goal to complete neighborhood plantings by mid-May.

As a side note, we had about 70 folks stop by our Tree Board display on Town Meeting Day (March 5th) to learn about EAB and our Neighborhood Planting program. About 53 copies of John Snell's description of the latter were distributed and John is already receiving inquiries.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)

EAB Management Plan, including proposed budget, was adopted by the City Council on February 27, 2019.

EAB Marshaling Yard – Geoff reported that the City's use of the property between the Montpelier Agway and Connor properties as a marshaling yard has met with some complications. Geoff is interested in hearing of any other possible locations. John S mentioned that we may be able to get by without a marshaling yard this year by chipping trees where they are cut down. Geoff has also heard from the municipality of Grand Isle in terms of Montpelier processing the many ash trees from that municipality.

EAB Public Communications – John S has begun assembling communication components for delivering EAB information to the public via various channels. John A and Jac will be working with John on this. We may incorporate an EAB FAQ section on the Tree Board website based on these components.

Statehouse Forest Management Plan – Geoff and John have not been in contact with Forest, Parks and Recreation forester Dave Wilcox in recent weeks. The goal of the Plan remains (1) deal with the loss of ash trees (2) deal with the aging red pines and (3) improve the view from the tower. Geoff indicated he will try to contact Dave Wilcox again to find out where things stand.

John A has sent an e-mail to Craig Strachan at **National Life** to set up a meeting to see what National Life has done in the past 6-8 months regarding the EAB infestation. With the number of ash in the NL forested area adjacent to where the EAB was first found in Montpelier, John A suggested that a drone flyover of that area might be useful in identifying additional EAB infestations on NL land.

EAB Planning for March/April/May - John A has prepared a **re-survey** form for use by volunteers this year and passed around an example. We hope to enlist last year's volunteers to help with the re-survey which will, at a minimum, only involve inspection of about 454 right-of-way trees around Montpelier. Re-survey packets will also include the volunteer's previously submitted sheets to aid them in identifying previously checked trees as well as maps. Purple flagging will be provided for any hazard trees or suspect EAB encountered. The re-survey will need to be performed in April and May so any EAB infested trees can be checked/removed prior to the adult fly period (late May/June).

Ash Tree Protection: Geoff indicated that the plan is to have Alec and Adam trained to treat the 15 downtown ash trees and some others with Tree:Age (Emamectin benzoate) this Spring.

Ash Tree Green Monitoring Traps – these have not been ordered yet but John S will order these in the next few weeks.

Updating Tree Board Ordinance - Sarah provided the group with a comprehensive listing of trees that could be incorporated into the Tree Board Ordinance when revised. A subcommittee was formed including Sarah and James, (with Adam expected to join) to revise the Ordinance, probably looking to other communities for good examples.

Tree Festival Report – Jac had provided a good report on the Tree Festival at the last meeting. Lynn indicated that next year's Tree Festival will be on February 9, 2020 and that the North Branch Nature Center will join us in planning and conducting the Festival. One goal is to make the Festival child friendly.

Tree City Montpelier Planning – Lynn state that we will need to add one poster dealing with the bad practice of volcano mulching. Lynn has also created a list of ten trees for metal signs to be created by Jac. The metal signs will indicate tree species and some tree facts but will be transferable to other trees should the signed tree expire. A guide to the trees would be provided to the public which ties in with what Sarah was planning regarding signage. Steve recommended that QR codes be included in the signs that could be used by the public to get further information about the trees.

Lynn also indicated that Tree City festivities could include a fundraiser using a painting donated by Katie O'Rourke.

Parks and Trees Department Update – Thanks to Jac's efforts, Parks will be receiving a \$15,000 grant for watershed related work which included \$11,000 for tree planting and the rest for trail maintenance and invasives removal. The Park's budget, included in the City budget passed on Town Meeting Day, includes funding for a new 'Parks' person and a new 'Tree' person.

• **New Business**

Snow Removal Tree Damage - John S reported that we lost a Serviceberry on State Street, taken out by the street snow plowing. The damage was not reported by the operator to DPW head McCardle.

Dr. Gorres' Snake Worm Talk at K-H Library Saturday, March 9, 11:00 – Sarah reported that Dr. Gorres returns to Montpelier to give a talk on the invasive snake worms.

• **Workdays: TBD** – Not discussed at the meeting.