

Urban Tree Commission

Meeting Minutes

Friday, July 21, 2017, 7:45 a.m.

City Hall Room 205

Present: Jess Barton, Barbara Darnell, Julia Malakie, Amy Sangiolo, Barbara Smiley, Marc Welch, Beth Wilkinson.

Absent: Bob DeRubeis, Francesca Piper Koss

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the June, 2017 meeting were approved by voice vote.

Andover Newton Update

- Andover Newton tree removals:
 - Andover Newton complies with the tree ordinance
 - Removal of 22 trees 8 inches or greater and some under 8 inches, which are not covered by the tree ordinance
 - Their plan replaces some caliper inches and made payment for the rest of the inches
 - They need to do oil remediation for oil spill and years of contamination.
 - The clean up of the land is a condition of the sale.

Forestry Department Update

- They are working on finding and removing the most dangerous trees and anticipate a similar number as last year, which was around 600.
 - They are doing a “windshield” survey, so they only see what is visible from the road.
- The frequent watering of the new trees seems to be working well.
- Pruning is mostly done in the winter and service requests for pruning is done throughout the year.
 - 1 crew is focusing on service requests right now. Only about 50 outstanding requests, down from close to 1,000 in the past.
- The Forestry Department vacancy has been filled.
- Beacon Street Complete Streets Update
 - A new tree removal will be posted because it’s in the middle of cross walk. The tree is not in good shape anyway.
 - DPW is still determining the final recommendation of tree removals for Beacon Street and the number is expected to be lower than the original number.
 - Under 10 or 11 is expected to be final number, but the mayor can still override.
 - The fall plantings will include trees on Beacon Street.
- Zervas Trees
 - Some of the new trees that the contractor planted have died, will replace with new trees.

- Due to contractual obligations sometimes the contractor will plant the trees not in the ideal season timing.
- DPW Complete Streets Policy
 - Marc says that the policy seems to make sense. Provides discretion on whether to remove trees. But some removal decisions are hard and fast rules.

Chestnut Street construction site

- Marc issued a permit for the construction site this morning
- The planting plan has more trees than removed.
- He got shut down for the trees removals without a permit, but was not fined.
- He only cut down a few trees, and one was already dead.
- You cannot get exterior work permit without a tree permit, but the developer didn't get an exterior permit.

Pearl Street

- Marc fined the developer because the owner cut trees and sold within 18 months. Marc knew about the cut trees and so when the developer applied for the tree permit he was able to make them replace the trees.

Newton Housing Authority Tree Removals

- The land is state land so Marc does not have any authority over it.

New Business

- DPW Protections
 - The ordinance says they “may” replace, rather than “shall” replace.
 - Maybe this is something that can be amended?
 - But one issue is that there may not be enough space on certain streets to replace the inches.
 - We can consider outlining the concerns that we have and giving them to Marc who can then share them with DPW.
- Winchester Street
 - Used a new type of paving technique ,which recycles the current pavement, but uses a lot of heat, which caused the leaves on trees to turn brown.
 - Some trees on private property were damaged.
 - Leaves have regenerated after this process was used in other communities, but there is not much info out there about it.
 - DPW plans to use this process on other streets as well.
 - Maybe UTC can express concern about this in letter to DPW.
- Tree Canopy Goal
 - What are the current numbers?
 - Heat island issues

- How can we measure the tree canopy?
- Should there be tiers and levels in measurement and goals of canopy?
- South Pacific parking lot
 - Trucks often park on the sidewalk and strip of pavement next to the sidewalk. This makes it so that pedestrians have to walk through parking lot or on street. DPW put curbing there so that trucks cannot park on the sidewalk, but this has not stopped them from doing so.

Meeting Adjourned