

PUBLIC SHADE TREE COMMITTEE
February 10, 2009
First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall

MINUTES

PRESENT: Alan Snow, Tyree Warden; Hope Crolius, Otto Stein, Diana Stein, Bob Erwin, Bill Hutchinson

VISITORS: Natalie Varley, Jason Skeels, David Ziomek.

Natalie Varley, a resident of 259 Lincoln Ave., inquired about removing a Beech which had become too large for the property. Specifically she hoped that a means could be found to move the tree rather than cut it down. Alan Snow said it was possible, although expensive, and said he would look into it.

Jason Skeels, town engineer, updated the committee on sidewalk reconstruction downtown. In total some 14 trees will be needed upon completion of the work in front of the Zanna row, across the street from Zanna, in front of CVS and in front of D'Angelo's building (planted at grade and an approval needed). Asked what kind of trees the committee would like to see, it was mentioned that Scarlet Oak would do well and provide fall color.

At this point Alan Snow mentioned that about \$12K has been encumbered for tree planting in last year's budget. It was discussed that some of this could be directed towards porous concrete under drains; porous piping and tree gators, in order to maximize the street tree's chances of survival. Alan recommended purchasing 20 gators at about \$200 each, which could be used for years to come. Structural soil would not need to be funded by this money, as it was budgeted as part of the sidewalk construction.

Three planters in front of CVS will be removed and relocated, probably to Groff Park. In their place will be three 5 x 5 grade level planters and four similar planters will be put in front of the Robert's building.

Alan recommended using coarse wood chips instead of processed bark mulch when mulching street trees, although he has heard from residents that they find the bark more esthetically pleasing. In the long run the wood chips are better for plant health, and when donated by the DPW for mulching by Amherst neighbors Tree support, ANTS, much cheaper as well. Jason (Skeels) also informed the committee of a possible upcoming drainage project on Sand Hill Road. The bumpy road, off of Pine Street, would be enlarged to 22 feet in width to improve drainage. About 20 trees, including a 24" Oak may need to be removed.

Dave Ziomek, Town Conservation Director, invited the APSTC members to attend a February 25th meeting of the Rail Trail Rehabilitation Project (MassHighway), in order to voice concern for critical wildlife habitat and wetlands that could be affected by the proposed widening and resurfacing the bike trail. Some 600 trees could be removed. Hope Crolius noted the irony of removing so many carbon-removing trees to encourage the use of more environmentally friendly transportation system.

Alan handed out a list of trees not affected by the Asian Long Horn Beetle. Mr. Ziomek suggested organizing a meeting about the beetle.

Otto Stein inquired about the status of the Town Tree Policy. Alan had a polished draft which he was going to submit to Larry Shaffer for the town's legal review.

250th tree ordering: these will be purchased out of the capital account. Libby Lass will handle the paperwork on this.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM.