

Longmeadow Tree Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 22, 2021

Remote Meeting via Zoom

The meeting opened at 6 p.m. The following members were present: Chair Dave Marinelli, Bari Jarvis, Kathy Kucab, Steve Steiner, and Mark Tolosky. Also present was Longmeadow resident, Bill Seefeld.

Public Comments - None.

The minutes of the meeting of March 18, 2021 were approved as circulated.

Tree Warden Report/Old Business

Dave Marinelli gave the report in place of Rick Mastroianni, who could not attend.

A response from the State was received regarding several concerns that Dave had raised regarding tree preservation related to the Route 5 to Converse Street improvements. Currently, there is no plan to hire an arborist as part of the project. However, it is possible to add a special provision later in the process to require the contractor to engage the services of an arborist.

There is still no word on the status of the Department of Conservation (DCR) grant.

Dave referenced a spreadsheet regarding details of the Arbor Day activities including a tree planting at Wolf Swamp School, and the distribution of seedlings at the other Longmeadow schools. Volunteers are available for all sites, and more can be added.

225 tree seedlings (Beachplum, American Hazelnut, and Ninebark) were distributed on the Town Green on Sunday, April 18 in lieu of “Long Meddowe” days.

Dave Hawkins is prepared to conduct the annual windshield survey. It is hoped that the funds to support this activity will be available in September.

Emerald Ash Borer Treatment – there are no funds available for another treatment this year. It is anticipated that stretching the prior treatment another year (3 years total), is viable. Dave asked the acting DPW director to include treatment funding in the budget for next year.

Earth Day activities in town were very successful. Kathy led a crew collecting trash, and Dave led a group removing invasive species.

Sixty public shade trees will be planted this Spring. The trees will arrive on April 27. Dave has identified locations for the trees, filling the oldest resident requests first. It is planned to have them all planted within a week.

New Business

The Tree Manual on the town’s website was updated to the most recently approved version, which includes guiding principles for canopy protection, and a statement of principle regarding removals and plantings. Dave indicated that the new Town Administrative Assistant, Mike Barbieri, has been very responsive and helpful.

There are six hearings currently scheduled for proposed tree removals, largely related to sidewalk or driveway repairs. The committee engaged in a robust discussion regarding the need to balance sidewalk repairs and tree preservation.

Dave referenced an article that he had sent the committee regarding techniques for tree protection.

There was particular concern regarding the proposed removal of a large oak tree at 31 Durham Road, since oak trees are resilient, salt resistant, and can tolerate some element of root disruption.

Dave will follow up with Rick to ascertain who requested the removal, and what steps if any are available to save the tree. The purpose of the Tree Committee is to promote a healthy and sustainable community forest by planting and maintaining quality trees and providing education and advocacy to the public on the benefits of trees.

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Next meeting date: The next meeting of the Tree Committee will be May 27, 2021, at 6:00 PM.
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.
Respectfully submitted: Mark Tolosky, Recorder