

SHADE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Meeting date Thursday, June 1, 2023 in the employee breakroom at Town Hall

Chair: Laura Beebe **Minutes:** Fred Taylor

Committee members in attendance: Laura Beebe; Maura Doherty; Maritta Cronin; Carol Stocker; Bill Madden; Fred Taylor

Committee members unable to attend: Nancy Chisholm; Branch Lane, Milton Tree Warden and Ex-Officio committee member.

Other attendees: John Corey, Peggy Chao

Meeting called to order by Laura at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes approved: The April 2023 minutes were approved. **Fred will submit to the town clerk.**

Membership changes: Maritta and Bill have not been officially approved by the Select Board and have not been sworn in. **Laura will follow-up to get it on the Select Board agenda.**

Debrief May 15 Tree ID event at the cemetery. Nancy, Maritta, and Fred attended. Lisa Ahern gave a 1.5 hour tour of a portion of the cemetery describing her favorite trees. Two of the trees might be of particular interest to STAC, a Sourwood which Lisa said had multi-season interest because of its flowers and fall colors, and a Tupelo which she thought could take the place of a Sugar maple because of its intense fall colors. Bill and Carol pointed out that the Tupelo likes wet soil conditions. Lisa did not have a tree planted in honor of Arbor Day as we expected.

Arbor Day Event. In response to the cemetery discussion, John said he came across the DPW crew planting a dogwood in front of Town Hall, apparently as an Arbor Day event. STAC had not been informed. **Laura will follow-up with Chase to verify Arbor Day compliance so that we keep qualified as a tree city.**

440 Granite Avenue. Laura sent an email to the chair of the Planning Board explaining that we were not informed about the change in the project to bury the wires so that a taller tree might be better than the crabapple that Carol had suggested. It is not clear whether an overhang of the building would still be a problem for any tree. The contractors have suggested a hornbeam, but STAC experience is that it is not a very resilient tree.

193 Central Avenue. The developers of the new Goddard School have created a new landscaping plan after the original building burned down. **Laura will send the plans by email for STAC to assess.**

New Milton Environmental Coordinator: Jack Turner will start full time in a few days. Nancy has already been in contact with him to get more tree tags. **Laura will set up a meet and greet.**

DPW tree planting and tagging: Nancy has spearheaded the tagging of the trees in the DPW yard that are ready to plant. Nancy and Fred wrote on each tag whether the tree was "short for under wires" or "tall, no wires" and attached the tags to all the trees. They will be planted this spring, instead of autumn, despite the STAC request, but Chase said it was a manpower issue. Some of the tree planting crew showed up while Nancy and Fred were there and said they would plant the trees appropriately and water them in. They also said that they left the gator bag instructions at each house, which could take the place of a letter from STAC. Fred said that preliminarily he was finding 92% survival of the new trees planted in FY2021 and FY2022. An exception seems to be hornbeams, where only 4 of 8 are in fair to good condition.

Tree bylaw: The sudden death Alex Whiteside was reported, and he will be greatly missed as a friend of our trees. Maura had been collaborating with him on a new bylaw and will now have to find someone else with bylaw expertise. It was suggested that Maura contact someone on the Bylaw Review Committee. Carol emphasized the need for better penalties and will contact Steve Ives, the Conservation Committee Conservation Agent for his expertise.

Tree planting and care guidelines. Bill has started to draft recommendations similar to the Boston Complete Streets document, but appropriate for our suburban setting. Which tree, where, and differences in care based on the tree species. **He will present an outline to STAC.**

Landscaping at Expressway exit 10. John is anxious to get started and said that DOT has given Milton permission to landscape. **Bill sketched something on the spot and will send it to John.**

Legacy tree. There was further discussion of what tree would be nominated as the DCR legacy tree in town. A beech at Forbes House was considered the front runner, in part because of the public, non-profit status of the Forbes House. Nancy's suggestion of a beech at 48 Walnut is considered a strong candidate also. Lisa Ahearn at the Milton cemetery has apparently decided not to nominate a tree. **Laura will contact Forbes House to inquire about the history of the tree.** Also discussed was nominating a Japanese Cedar at 287 Hillside Street as a State Champion tree.

Mystery tree cutting. Discussion of who puts blue dots on trees and then cuts them down. **STAC will try to get a meeting with an Eversource representative.**

Cocktail party to celebrate Milton 360. Due to inclement weather this weekend John has postponed the party until next September. John will try to set up a tour of Milton Academy specimen trees.

Next meeting date: **Thursday July 13, 2023, 7 PM**

Meeting adjourned: 9:10 PM