

DRAFT MINUTES: ROCKINGHAM TREE COMMITTEE

DATE: November 14, 2016

Present: Ellen Howard, Cass Wright, Alma Beals, Betsy Braden, Mike Hindes, Polly Thompson

The meeting convened at 4:00 PM.

Agenda Items

1. Minutes

The minutes of October 17 and 27, 2016 were unanimously approved.

1. Trees for Henry Street

The Tree Committee is moving ahead with a plan to plant trees on Henry ST, where greenbelts were replaced by sure-pack covered strips that are now used for parking. In order to determine where sections of the greenbelt can be restored, the Tree Committee did a survey of the street. Ellen then prepared a map that showed seven potential locations for planting beds in areas where NO PARKING is allowed, at the intersections of Henry with Westminster, South, Hadley, and Atkinson. Mike was asked for his opinion of the placement of the planting beds. He was also asked if the proposed shape of the gently curving beds would allow for plowing. Mike said that the proposal is compatible with the needs of the Highway Department and should move forward. Mike also said that the materials for construction of the planting beds, such as granite curbing and topsoil, are already owned by the Town. A Highway crew could do the installation. Mike is going to come up with a budget figure that the Tree Committee can assign to the project. The Tree Committee will ask the Selectboard to put "Trees for Henry ST" on an upcoming meeting agenda. Committee members will attend the meeting to answer any questions that the board may have.

The locations of the planting beds at the intersection with Atkinson remain to be determined. The Bike Project hopes to have bike lanes in that area, and the Committee has to find locations for trees that are compatible with the needs of bicycle riders.

If the "Trees for Henry Street" project is approved by the Selectboard for inclusion in the budget, the Committee expects to have the greenbelt sections restored in 2017. It is likely that trees would be planted in 2018.

2. 2017 Planting Locations

The Tree Committee would like to plant 8 trees in 2017.

Maple Hill nursery was supposed to replace four infested Adams crabapples in October. When November arrived and Maple Hill had not replaced the trees, VT Urban and Community Forestry advised the Committee that it was now too late for a fall planting, and that tree replacement should be postponed until next spring. Maple Hill has agreed to plant in 2017.

The Committee is going to consider School ST for planting in 2017. Due to the removal of trees during the Middle School renovation, there are planting locations available at the east end of the street. In addition to the east end, the rest of School ST will be scouted for planting sites. The Committee has decided that it makes sense to plant numerous trees on a single street, rather than individual trees spread over many locations, because that makes watering more efficient.

3. Other Business

Green Mountain Power (GMP) – Cass Wright

Tree Warden Ray Perry, Cass, and Polly met with Dave DeSimone of Green Mountain Power (GMP), who was kind enough to drive to Bellows Falls to discuss GMP's pruning of our public trees. Mr. DeSimone said that GMP will work with the Tree Committee to ensure that our public trees are pruned as

lightly as possible when they conflict with power lines. He would like to come to a Committee meeting to discuss tree care.

Mr. DeSimone said that GMP does some pruning for the communication companies, whose lines run through our street trees below GMP's power lines. He is going to make sure that excessive pruning is no longer done around the communication lines, which don't require the same clearance as power lines.

When the Committee is planning for the placement of new trees, or the pruning of existing street trees, Mr. DeSimone said that power lines that run to houses are meant to co-exist with trees. The same is true for the power lines that go to street lights. Both of these are low voltage lines.

Japanese Maple

The town received a donation of a Japanese maple tree. Mike has chosen a location for the tree in Hetty Green Park. Polly will keep the tree in her yard over the winter and plant it in the spring.

7. Next Meeting

Ellen will send an email to the Committee to determine the date of our next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:42 PM.

Compiled by:
Polly Thompson
Tree Committee member