

## **MINUTES: ROCKINGHAM TREE COMMITTEE**

**DATE: June 6, 2016**

**PRESENT: ELLEN HOWARD, CHIP STEARNS, MIKE HINDES, RAY PERRY CASS WRIGHT, ALMA BEALS, ALAN FOWLER, ROBERT McBRIDE, POLLY THOMPSON**

The meeting convened at 4:00 PM.  
Ellen will be the temporary chair.

### **Agenda Items**

#### **1. Minutes**

The minutes of May 2, 2016 were approved, with Chip and Cass abstaining.

#### **2. Caring for Canopy Tree Planting Grant 2015 – Update**

Thanks to our town Tree Fund and a matching grant from the state, we will be planting eight trees this week, on either June 8 or June 9. Planting will take place on Green ST, South ST, and in Island Park. Polly will contact the nursery to firm up the date and time so that Public Works can reserve parking for the Maple Hill Nursery truck. All locations have been checked by Dig Safe.

In order to fulfill the grant requirements, Ellen will prepare a final report for the state. It will include costs and a description (photos included) of the planting sites. The report is due by the end of June. Ellen will be away at the end of the month. If she is unable to submit the report, she will pass the paperwork along to Chip and Polly for completion.

Polly has taken pictures of the sites prior to planting. Ray will take photos of the installation, and Ellen and Polly will take pictures of the installed trees.

Watering of the newly planted trees will be essential for their long-term survival. The Tree Warden has purchased a tank to make watering more convenient, and Polly will use it to do weekly watering. Polly has been provided a key for the water spigots by the administration for use at either the Waypoint Center or Town Hall so she can obtain water from the municipality and not have to run up her water meter to do watering of public trees.

#### **2. Care of the Urban Forest Project Update**

Rockingham was invited to participate in the Care of the Urban Forest Project, a Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program (VT UCF) grant that has three parts: an inventory of public trees, the development of a maintenance plan, and the training of tree care participants.

Our training session has been scheduled for June 17. The Tree Committee will ask the state to conduct a workshop from 10 AM to 1 PM. It will focus on planting, maintenance, and risk reduction. The outdoor portion of the training will be spent learning how to correct improper pruning, and how to assess hazard trees. Local participants will include two people from Public Works, Ellen, Ray, Cass, and Polly. The state will provide lunch, which will come from Shona Grill.

#### **3. Alan Fowler's request for a tree planting in Memorial Park**

The Windham Hotel has a parking lot that is located next to Memorial Park. As drivers pull into the lot they are driving over the property line and running over the edge of the park. Alan Fowler has offered to pay to have a tree planted right next to the line on

the Memorial Park side in order to direct traffic into the lot. He would like to have the tree match the existing planting in the park, and would like the planting to be done this year. Alma and Polly will take a look at the site and report back to the group.

#### **4. Future planting plans**

1. **Henry ST:** The Tree Committee is moving forward with the development of a planting plan for Henry ST. This site presents a design challenge. There are no greenbelts on the street. The space where greenbelts might exist has been covered over with sure pack. The sure pack strips, which extend the length of the street on both sides, are used for parking. Students at BFUHS (for last year's Envirothon urban forest project) came up with a planting plan for the street that left the sure pack strips in place and added bump-outs where trees could be planted. Mike does not like the idea of bump-outs, especially bump-outs that lack proper curbing, as they make problems for maintenance. It was agreed that a group of interested parties should walk the street to get a better understanding of how it might be possible to add trees to this barren streetscape. The Tree Committee will send out a separate mailing to notify people of the initiation of the project and invite participation.

2. **Atkinson ST:** The Tree Committee will continue to plan for its "Elms for Atkinson" project. The Committee would like to raise local funds to plant elms in the locations on Atkinson that can accommodate these majestic trees. There has been a shortage of elms at local nurseries, so Alma and Polly will investigate using the Elm Institute in Keene as a source of trees.

#### **8. Other**

**Updating of the Tree Inventory:** Ellen will provide the Committee members with a printout of the town's *Tree Planting By Year* chart. Planting and maintenance information need to be updated annually. Now that we have an online inventory prepared by Urban and Community Forestry, the Committee has to find out if it is possible to record our updates using the UCF database.

**Tree Maintenance and Tree Fund:** The town budget has \$2,500 to spend on tree maintenance before July 1. Chip raised the possibility of transferring any maintenance money that is not used by July 1 to the Tree Fund. Cass made a motion to transfer unused maintenance money to the Tree Fund. Robert seconded the motion. There was unanimous agreement by the Committee.

**Wood Chips:** Ray and Mike will provide wood chips for the mulching of our public trees.

**Tree Committee Staffing:** Due to changes in the Planning and Zoning staff, the Tree Committee has lost its municipal connection. Ellen and Polly will prepare a memo for the selectboard that asks for two things: 1. official status as a town committee and 2. the restoration of municipal staffing. Without these two, the Committee will not be able to function effectively as the group that plants and maintains Rockingham's urban forest.

**Tree Committee Chair:** Ellen will chair one more meeting.

Next Tree Committee meeting: The next meeting was scheduled for August 8. Due to a conflict, there will be no August meeting. **The next meeting will be held on September 12, at 4 PM.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:52 PM.

Compiled by:

Polly Thompson  
Tree Committee member