

DRAFT MINUTES (9/13/2022)

Town of Exeter
EXETER TREE COMMITTEE
September 13, 2022
Minutes

I. PRELIMINARIES:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT BY ROLL CALL: Eileen Flockhart (Chairwoman), Deb Twombly, Gwen English

STAFF PRESENT: Kristen Murphy

II. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Flockhart called the meeting to order at 8:30AM

III. OLD BUSINESS:

Minutes of June 7, 2022 were unanimously approved.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

Tree City USA requirements for Exeter have been officially met for this year following the tree planting event at Main Street School earlier this summer. All the new trees have survived in spite of the drought and intense heat.

We all need to keep a record of our volunteering time and provide Eileen with those details. This includes donations/contributions from utility companies (Unitil), Jay Perkins (Department of Public Works) and others.

Exeter Public Works assisted in the placement of granite and markers, and it was noted that this work was all done by hand. Kristen's recollection is that 12 markers were placed: 10 at Swasey Parkway, one at Gilman Park, and one on the triangle by the Tree City USA flag.

The question was raised as to whether more markers should be installed, for example, by the new Sweet Gum tree(s). If so, we should first identify the trees, and then order the labels. Trees to consider would be the Princeton Elms at Main Street School, two large trees in the cemetery, tree(s) in the pocket park in Town, and large trees in Gilman Park. Kristen added that it would be good to focus on the marking of native trees, though non-native champion trees may be the exception.

Eileen commented that it is important to recognize the volunteer efforts by individuals, such as Will Curtis, Dave Short and others who selflessly offer their time to the Town.

Following a brief discussion about needless removal of trees, Eileen posed the idea of a public relations campaign that would raise the awareness of the value of a tree, and instilling a 'think once, think twice before cutting' mentality in our citizenry. Perhaps we could put some statements on facebook? On the Conservation Commission page? Deb Twombly offered to provide Eileen with some statement samples. It might be effective to use good graphics instead of/or in addition to text. It might also be possible to have a table (with handouts) at the next election, or the Household Hazardous Waste day which is coming up next month.

Eileen indicated that there is still a Green Team at Main Street School (parents only) and Lincoln Street School still has an active Green Team. Once a month they have a Zoom meeting and maybe we could jump on that. Also, Eileen will reach out to Drew Bairstow at the Middle School. Kristen also has worked with Bob Johnson at the Middle School, and will reach out to him.

Gwen mentioned Susan Pike who writes wonderful articles for the Exeter Newsletter, and suggested that perhaps we reach out to her. She might be willing to write an article on a topic relating to trees. (Eileen will look into this!)

(Deb Twombly left at 9:00)

Eileen wondered if we should have a system of monitoring the health of the trees that we have planted. Should Kristen add this to the Street Tree plan? Kristen also noted that Jay Perkins is advocating for a part time arborist to help.

It was noted that TD Bank has a Community Beautification Grant, and the committee wondered if this grant, if we were lucky enough to obtain it, could go toward the purchase of trees, or perhaps cover the cost of an arborist. Kristen will look into this. We also wondered if there might be other grants available.

(Greg Bisson arrived shortly after 9:30)

We discussed our desire to reach students in the district, and Greg offered to touch base with Dan Provost at EHS to get an appropriate EHS contact person for our group. We will also contact Anne DeMarco at SST.

We will reach out to Bob Glowacky again to see if he would be willing to film a tree walk and information session with the plan to combine that with the restarting of the Exeter Outdoors (Exeter TV) program.

Next meeting is scheduled for October 12 at 8:30AM

Meeting adjourned at 10:00AM

Respectfully submitted by Gwen English on 9/20/2022