

Draft Minutes (10/12/2022)

Town of Exeter
EXETER TREE COMMITTEE
October 12, 2022T
Minutes

I. PRELIMINARIES:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT BY ROLL CALL: Eileen Flockhart (Chairwoman), Gwen English, Sally Oxnard, Sara Sankowich, Sally Ward

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Bisson (Exeter Parks and Recreation)

II. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Flockhart called the meeting to order at 8:40AM

III. OLD BUSINESS:

Minutes of September 16, 2022 were approved following Sally Ward's edit of the word 'used' to 'use' on the second page of the minutes.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

Chair Flockhart wants to get the Tree City application "Signed, sealed and delivered" and would like to get a final figure for Unitil's contributions to Exeter. Tree committee members need to submit their volunteering hours. We also need to record in-kind donations. Regarding donations, it was suggested that we could count the (value of) the discount that we were given for trees purchased from Dave Short, as well as the portion of Jay Perkins' salary given to him as Exeter's Tree Warden.

A discussion ensued regarding our desire to recognize people who have donated their time and resources to us. Perhaps we could do this online, (Exeter Community Forum facebook page) and/or put a piece in the Exeter Newsletter? She cited an example of the work that Will Curtis (Curtis Tree Service) has done for the Town, and thought he might be a good candidate for our first person to recognize and honor. Sally Oxnard suggested having a *Tree Champion of the month*.

The tree label issue was raised and Eileen would like to find and label trees where people congregate. Examples: The tree(s) by the Green Bean (Now Otto Pizza). The park on the corner of Court and Front Street. The tree(s) in front of the Congregational Church. Founder's Park by the Library. Sally Oxnard will circulate a list of trees we've already marked with Dave Short. There was a brief discussion about the trees at Park Street Common. There is an Ash at that site, and we questioned whether it is being treated for the Emerald Ash

Borer. (Apparently we are). There are memorial markers on some of the trees, but we can put the tree labels on the other side of these trees if needed. We should not label any Bradford Pears, as these trees may need to be removed. Greg Bisson noted that there is a large tree at the new Parks and Recreation location that we could consider. He isn't sure, but thinks it may be an oak.

Greg offered to purchase the tags to go on the granite markers. We should advocate for the marking of native trees, but certainly other noteworthy trees can be considered.

We'd like to advocate for the health and maintenance of important trees, and may have to ask for a budget for this work. In doing this, we need to investigate treatment options and be able to support the chosen treatment by providing viable data. Explore the possibility of finding an intern to inspect trees and determine whether they are healthy or need treatments. We could possibly find someone at UNH, or UMass School of Agriculture in Stockbridge. Having this assistance would help us advocate for the health of our trees.

Eileen reminded the group that Kevin Martin will be in Exeter on Saturday, Oct. 15 at 9:00AM at Swasey Parkway to conduct a tree walk. Greg Jordan will also be there.

Eileen recapped the visit the Tree Committee had on October 4th with Phillip Exeter's manager of Sustainability and Natural Resources, Warren Biggins, where he talked about the Academy's acreage and the sections of tree forest where they are implementing forest management practices. It was noted that the public has been alarmed by the considerable cutting/clearing that has taken place, and the need for better signage to explain why the Academy is doing this work.

We talked briefly about construction sites, and Sara Sankowich explained that assessment management can be done to determine which trees can be saved on a construction site. For example, tunneling vs. trenching, the use of barriers, using deep root fertilization and aeration to boost the tree's health.

Currently, trees are seen as owner commodities, not as benefits for the public. In New Hampshire, trees are valued for timber, not as shade, or as a benefit for public health.

Eileen has spoken with the Green Teams at Main Street School and at the Lincoln Street School. They meet once a month on Zoom. Drew Bairstow is now the principal at the Cooperative Middle School, and is excited to help with our desire to get students involved in tree related projects. He told Eileen about the 'Builders Club' and gave her the names of teachers who are involved in that.

1. Brittany Thompson, Builder's Club leader
2. Jessica Carcerano-Wheeler, STEAM leader

3. Annika Vittands, an 8th grade science teacher
4. Ben Clapp, CMS tree inventory. (Kevin Breen will help with this project)

Ben Johnson, with SAU 16, is another contact.

Greg Bisson has volunteered to reach out to Anne DeMarco to get a follow-up on her class with SST, and their tree project conducted last spring.

Sara mentioned an Arborist Development program at Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School.

Eileen revisited the discussion about the 17 (or 19) trees that we have planted in Town, and her desire to make sure they are monitored. She suggested that perhaps we should get students involved in this, and perhaps have students paired with members of the Tree Committee. We could develop a checklist that students and Tree Committee members could follow. Perhaps Anne DeMarco has students in her class who would be interested in doing this. If transportation is an issue, Greg Bisson indicated that he could provide a van to shuttle everyone from site to site. Sara offered that if Unitil was involved, it could be done as Unitil volunteer time and with Unitil resources.

The checklist could include: Tree. Location of tree. Condition of roots and crown. Diameter. Height (Possibly using the Biltmore stick method). Photo of tree.

Sara can provide us with the International Society of Horticulture's assessment list, which could be modified to suit our needs.

Greg Bisson was asked about the new trees on Holland Way which seem to be doing well. He noted that there will eventually be a giant pollinator garden to help with pollinators, and also reduce the need for constant mowing in that area.

Sally Ward offered to contact Aqeel Hishan with the Exeter Newsletter (about our desire to have the paper feature a monthly tree champion).

Eileen will reach out to the woman who is the new Tree City contact person.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:50AM

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 16, 2022 at 8:30AM

Minutes respectfully submitted by Gwen English on 10/17/2022

