

Town of Exeter  
EXETER TREE COMMITTEE  
DRAFT MINUTES FOR 5/07/2024

**I. PRELIMINARIES:**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Eileen Flockhart (Chairwoman), Sally Oxnard, Niko Papakonstantis, Deb Twombly, Gwen English

STAFF PRESENT: Kristen Murphy, Kirk Scamman

**II. CALL TO ORDER:**

Meeting was called to order at 8:35AM in the Wheelwright Room

**III. OLD BUSINESS:**

Minutes from 4/09/2024 were approved as written. Motion to approve by Sally Oxnard, seconded by Deb Twombly.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

There was a quick review of the Arbor Day celebration held on 4/22/24. Eileen reported that it was a great day for planting the pin oak in the Kid's Park. Deb reported that she did a play-by-play video of that event, and Gabe Perez was there as well taking pictures. Kirk said that the two maples went in well at Gilman Park after the pin oak was planted. Once again it was noted that the Kid's Park tree was paid for from our budget, the Gilman Park trees came out of Greg Bisson's budget.

We now have a new flag from Tree City USA, along with the Growth Award and the 5<sup>th</sup> year 'label' for Tree City USA.

We would like the Selectboard to acknowledge/recognize this achievement at their next meeting.

Deb has been on High Street making a list of house numbers where there are gaps in trees. We'd also like more trees on Portsmouth Avenue, but Kirk noted that it is under a reconstruction phase and trees should be put in then. (It will be a multi-year project)

Kirk also noted that it is getting too late to plant trees now, so we should look to September 15-November 15 as a target time frame for putting new trees in the ground.

Kristen says that if the elms on Water Street die, they will need to be replaced by the individuals responsible for their demise. Sally Oxnard suggested that perhaps getting them professionally pruned might improve their chances of survival.

We would like to put in some trees by Citizen's Bank. The dirt is there under the filter drains. They're covered over but we can plant trees in those locations. This would be good PR for the future.

There was a discussion about Mountain Ash trees and it is felt that these are not impacted by the emerald ash borer. Kirk told the group that the State has a machine (with a drill) that they'll lend us to treat ash trees that are infected with the emerald ash borer. Bio Spray could help us with this treatment. Kirk indicated that this is not a one-time treatment, and that trees must be treated every two to three years.

Two flowering trees will be planted at Lincoln Street school by the corner where the big tree came down.

Jay scooped up Unifit trees (+/- seven trees) for Holland Way. There needs to be protection around the base of these trees (like what Steve Jones made for other newly planted trees). Maybe we should get tree diapers for them as well.

A.J. Dupere and Greg Jordan held a tree inventory workshop that Deb attended on April 11 despite the rain. It was held on the green in Kingston, and participants learned how to evaluate trees (determining whether a tree should be fixed, pruned or taken down) Trees were identified, and the health of the top, middle and bottom of each tree was noted. Spreadsheets were assigned to each tree. Deb noted that trees should be evaluated every ten years.

The group went on to discuss priority tree planting areas.

1. Water Street
2. Brickyard pond (Sidewalk construction in that area should be done by fall. We can plant after that)
3. Front Street
4. We need to monitor trees on Holland Way

John Brough at EHS has provided Steve and Sally a list of trees that he and the Environmental Committee put together, and they noted places where new trees could be planted on the EHS property. (Students intend to come up with a map showing where these trees could go.). Since it is now late, fall plantings would be advisable. Sally Oxnard has expressed a desire to donate three trees.

The following trees are currently on the students' list: Eastern Red Cedar, Elm, White Oak, European Beech, Cluster of River Birch (to plant in back by the detention pond). They would like to have plantings visible from the biology classroom.

All is on hold with this project until the school gets back to Sally and Steve.

The Alewife Festival will be on Saturday, May 11 by the Exeter Library. Kristen noted that the first big movement of alewife hasn't happened yet. She reminded members that the herring count is ongoing, and more information, and instructions, can be found on the Town's website. The Tree Committee will be present for the festival, and Eileen outlined some things that we will have at our table.

- \*Tree leaf shaped crayons

- \*Pencils

- \*Tree diapers

- \*Tree tattoos

- \*Possibly a power point loop on a laptop

- \*Possibly a map highlighting where the big trees are in Exeter

- \*Possibly a demonstration on measuring a tree

- \*A sign-up list for citizens who would like to help with a tree inventory

- \*A tent in case it rains. (Kirk thinks there is one at DPW that we can borrow)

- \*Gwen will bring 'birch trees', weather permitting

We discussed suppliers of tree diapers and decided it would be worthwhile to put a list together of these suppliers and devote time to researching the cost and quality of diapers from each site. The group wonders if it might not be worthwhile to purchase some to have on hand. Kristen will look into this.

Kirk was asked about the water truck and he responded that we should have one by the end of the year.

We should continue to label trees. If planting multiples of any variety, we should label at least one of the two (or more) new trees planted. None of the trees on Lincoln Street have labels.

On May 20 at 2:00 Lincoln Street School will have a tree planting. Liz (from Tree City USA) and A.J. will attend and assist! Eileen noted that LSS has been awarded many grants for their projects!

Riverwoods was to do their walk in May but we haven't heard any details about this as yet. Kristen will reach out to Riverwoods' horticulturalist, Patty Davidson, there for updates.

Sally Oxnard asked about walking on selected cut areas. (Henderson Swasey, PEA properties etc.). Kirk brought up a 97-acres site in Stratham that is to be cut every 10-15 years. He noted the importance of having a forester on board to properly mark trees that are to be cut. Sally Oxnard felt it would be good to get Anne Demarco at SST involved in this with her students. Kirk indicated that he is happy to help coordinate this.

Lastly, we talked about the tree inventory. Kristen is working with RPC and the plan is to use Dover's format. She'll work with Jay and Kirk to figure out what data we

need to make this work for us. Ideally it will happen this year. This would add to data that we already have on GIS. We can update as we go.  
Deb indicated that we should consider tree equity area(s).

It was questioned whether we should tag trees at Stratham Circle Nursery that we'd like to plant in the fall.

We should meet with the Selectboard in August. Eileen and Niko can work out a date for us to attend a meeting with them.

**Next meeting will be June 11 at 8:30AM in the Wheelwright Room.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:45

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Gwen English on May 10, 2024