

**Barre City Tree Stewardship Committee - Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**2nd Floor Conference Room, Aldrich Library (6 Washington St, Barre, VT 05641)**  
**Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 6:00p-7:00p**  
**Committee Members Present: Conor Teal, Amanda Garland, Nate Ebert, Amy Galford**

Committee Members Absent: **Nicko Rubin**  
City Staff Present: **Jeff Bergeron**  
Visitors: None

**1. Call to order – 6:02 pm by Chair Amanda Garland**

**2. Changes to agenda?** None.

**3. Approve Minutes of last Regular Meeting** - None to approve, previous scheduled meeting did not meet quorum.

**4. Announcements/Old Business/Housekeeping**

Amanda: Reiterated the announcement that the Committee's grant application for a tree nursery had been accepted by Vermont Urban & Community Forestry. Further details added to: Tree Nursery Planning.

**5. Tree Nursery Planning**

The Committee discussed the parameters of the Nursery grant and started the conversation of what will be next steps towards preparing the site. Amanda suggested meeting at the Nursery site for the next scheduled meeting. However, this was not decided as a Committee at the meeting until the City confirms it can be allowed for a public meeting. The alternative is to meet there on a separate occasion in a non-official capacity.

Amanda: Offered to include her students and other volunteers to visit the potential space available at the nursery site and consider setting roles for volunteers to help organize the location.

Jeff: Superintendent of Water & Wastewater, Steve Micheli, and Director of Public Works, Bill Ahearn, along with Jeff, will scope out the site within a month and update the Committee at the next meeting. Currently, there are clearly marked spots where not to park to protect water area.

Conor: Signage to direct the public to the proper location will be a future issue to figure out and designate responsibility. And the Committee should discuss car parking planning for the Nursery at the next meeting.

Amanda: City staff will manage grant funds collection and disbursement. Her students will research possible trees to grow, form a list, and present them to the Committee for consideration. Sourcing of tree saplings? Nate said he has a source and that Nicko likely has at least 3 other connections for tree sources.

Committee also discussed materials allocation, including plans for fencing the location.

Amy: Deadline for using the funds? Amanda: Within a year, so there's no major pressure to complete tasks.

## **6. Evaluation of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Remediation Plans**

Committee had an intensive conversation about their role in developing an EAB remediation plan and if the Committee has the capacity to complete one, whether to have a plan in-place at all, discussed priority Ash trees needing attention, whether to implement a volunteer identification event to locate more Ash trees on publicly-owned land, and next steps for deciding on whether to seek additional help in creating an EAB Remediation Plan.

Nate: Paper roads and adjacent property owned by the City has an unknown amount of Ash trees and currently is the optimal time to identify Ash trees. There may be training potential for volunteers to scope them out. Do we want to keep the status quo of not having a remediation plan? Or identify trees in areas with most potential for damage? If on paper roads, they may not be needed to be identified or felled if development is years away. Might be beyond the scope of driving on roads to identify all of the Ash trees. Maybe Committee doesn't have capacity? Maybe it's more of a financial problem? When trees are brittle, becomes much more costly to remove.

Nate suggested a whole weekend (or two) to drive down all Barre City roads and identify trees over 6" diameter, classifying ash trees if they are leaning towards roads/homes and within right of way (up to 32') and creating a database. Also looking for co-dominant leaders. Finding most hazardous ones.

Amanda: Should we as a committee work with third-party to develop plan?

Nate: Wondering what the City's view is on developing a Plan?

Jeff: It is a big order and may be out of the scope to manage and create the plan within this Committee alone. Lots of details to work out. Ultimately, it is the Committee's decision whether to go forward with it or not.

Amy: Potential for a pilot area first?

Nate: With an hour or so training from Joanne, Vermont Urban & Community Forestry, could help with structure on setting up scoping project to identify trees by car or biking down roads.

Amanda: Something volunteers could help with as well.

Nate: Maybe tabling until this decision until the Fall and use the Spring/Summer to set this up for generating report on ash trees identified.

Committee decided to discuss at next meeting and consider the above options further.

## **8. Debrief Winter Main Street Tree ID Walk**

Amanda: Feels it was a great success. Received recommendations about tree tags on planted Main Street trees. One person was interested in volunteering for pruning.

Nate: Heard from Tessa, the Tree ID walk host, and said she was pleased with the experience.

Amanda: Next steps for including volunteers?

Jeff: If we're meeting at the dam for possible nursery, good to invite potential volunteers to see the site on Reservoir Rd. Near dam outflow and creek.

Committee supported Jeff's suggestion and will consider inviting those on the contact list to join the Committee at the site.

## **9. Committee Funding**

Jeff: Budget not cut as first reported. Listed as Tree Removal, \$10,000 still in the account. Semprebon Fund: \$5,000 as well for tree maintenance. Possibly more funds, but he will confirm and follow-up with Committee.

**ACTION ITEM #1 (JEFF): Will email Committee total funds available and for which designated use before next meeting.**

## **10. Main Street Trees Update**

Amanda: Tree guards removed, two guards were damaged from snow plows. Represents importance of permanent guards getting built and placed.

Nate: Knows of a tree on Pearl St. that should have major pruning done within a year to avoid future damage, plus other general maintenance on Elms during dormant season to avoid Dutch Elm Disease.

Jeff: Tree pruning waste will be handled by city staff. Potential for borrowing a wood chipper.

Amanda: One test model of guard on Matheson. Bill Ahearn and Steven MacKenzie are talking about buying guards or City staff making their own? Bill says they can be made for around \$90 per guard. Owner of Grackles requested to plant flowers in the ground space of a recently planted Main Street tree in front of the shop. Committee approves the use, potential to help avoid people walking in the tree space.

Amy: Plan for tree tags?

Conor: Maybe once tree guards are placed, to offer space for permanent tags.

Committee agreed with waiting for the tree guards to be installed before working on tree tags.

## **11. Outreach**

Amanda: Got a blurb about the tree nursery grant recently gained. Might need materials/ educational flyers to help inform the public on caring for trees and that explains the maintenance of recently planted trees.

Amy: Willing to find educational materials. Any events to plan?

Amanda: Arbor Day conference, in Montpelier coming up, dependent on the status of the Covid-19 virus and if the conference will be postponed.

Nate: Tree giveaway? Jeff: May not be happening, but possibly. Will reach out to hosts.

**ACTION ITEM #2 (Jeff): Contact hosts of annual Tree Giveaway to see if the event will happen in Barre City again this year and report back to the Committee.**

## **12. New Business**

Amanda: Mentioned how Amy recommended Committee having their own tools. Likes the idea. Inquired with Jeff about what the city can offer. Jeff: A few items are available to borrow, including shovels, pruning shears, and a pole saw.

Committee: No other new business at this time, except that the next regular meeting may be cancelled due to the City's decision to cancel Committee meetings indefinitely due to the Covid-19 outbreak. Potential for conference call meeting.

## **10. Set Agenda for next month:**

Committee decided to keep the same Agenda as this month.

## **11. Adjourn**

- Motion to adjourn at 6:54 pm by A. Galford and seconded by N. Ebert, passed unanimously.