

**Barre City Tree Stewardship Committee - Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2019**

Committee Members Present: Conor Teal, Amanda Garland, Nate Ebert, Amy Galford

Committee Members Absent: **Nicko Rubin**

Staff Present: **Jeff Bergeron**

Visitors: None

1. Call to order – 6:00 pm by Member Amanda Garland

2. Changes to agenda? Amanda asked to add: ‘Opportunities’ towards the end of the meeting.

3. Approve Minutes of last Regular Meeting (11-13-19)

- Amanda made the motion to Approve Minutes unchanged. Amy seconded. Unanimous vote in favor.

4. Edit Draft Mission Statement

Committee discussed suggestions for inclusion into a Mission Statement:

- Advising city on planning, outreach piece/encouraging stewardship.
- Outreach/Tree Education to Constituents, working with City officials to recommend and implement actions.
- Part of mission statement should include elements of the Strategic Action Plan.
- ‘Urban Forest’ within purview.
- Assist and recommend to City Staff on tree management plans.

ACTION ITEM #1 (COMMITTEE): Edit examples in shared Drive file for Mission Statement options, vote tabled until next meeting on Top 2 or 3 options.

5. Urban Forest Strategic Action Plan Review

Amanda: The committee had tabled the rest of the Action Items last meeting to be forwarded to Staff member Jeff Bergeron to fill out and return to committee. With Jeff here, the Committee decided to sort the Actions by priority and filter through the Action Item list together.

Jeff holds on to a Master List and is making notes on the progress of the items and status.

[Refer to Urban Forest Strategic Action Plan, Section C: Checklist of Action steps]:

Public Tree Maintenance and Planting Plan

Item 1: Ongoing, City Staff will update Committee on further vacant sites availability.

Item 2: Nate notes we need volunteers with training on ‘assessing 97 trees in need of monitoring.’ Jeff confirmed that some of his staff could be afforded training time.

Item 3: Committee needs to follow-up on pruning schedule for North Main Street trees.

Item 3f: Void, VTRANS no longer covers those planted trees.

Item 4: Done, tree removal complete.

Item 5: Committee will check beaver guards on 12 trees in Elmwood Cemetery.

Item 6: Root issues on 17 trees need to be assessed.

Item 6a: Will check on stem girdling.

Item 7: Done, mulch removed.

Item 8: Not complete yet, no mulch added yet.

Item 9: Have not sent appropriate tree data yet.

Item 10: City Staff doesn't have newest copies of TCIA MBPs or A300 Standards.

Item 11: No city staff are ISA arborist certifications, but Jeff says he aims to have one on his staff and City Engineer, Bill Ahearn will try to have one on his staff.

Item 12: Will need to set up a schedule for planting, 9 new trees planted in 2019.

Item 13: Will need to set up a regular pruning/maintenance schedule.

Item 13d: Have not done pruning yet, pruning schedule will include these trees in some order.

Item 14: Ongoing, more analysis/review of Strategic Action Plan will offer new plans.

Funding, Partners, and Operations:

Item 1: No Grant Funding applied yet.

Item 2: Yes, regular funding of \$5000/year from City.

Item 3: Not yet, need larger volunteer list.

Item 4: Yes, ongoing.

Item 5: Yes, established Tree Committee.

Item 6: No established program yet for tree assurance program.

Item 7: Further discussion needed on Tree Warden Stewardship statutes.

Community Outreach, Education, and Stewardship

Item 1: Have not hosted an annual Arbor Day Celebration. Committee will consider participation next year (April 2020)

Item 2: Have not increased residential awareness of VT local tree sales.

Item 3: Have not promoted and participated in Heritage Festival yet.

Item 4: Member Amanda is a teacher and does visit a classroom regularly.

Item 5: No, but ongoing plans are being developed. Possible grant funding options to assist the Committee.

Item 6: No, haven't hosted one yet. Possibly in Spring 2020.

Item 7: Haven't informed stakeholders yet, still need to be defined by the Committee.

Tree Nursery Development Proposal

Jeff: Bill and Jeff are considering a Tree Nursery development at the Water Treatment Center in Orange. Barre City owns most of the land around the center.

Nate: Offered to dump woodchips from completed jobs for this possible development, if needed. Recommends the city to consider finding grant opportunities for a city-owned wood chipper, especially with future Ash Tree removals.

The Committee supports Jeff in this pursuit, given it would allow for propagation of own trees managed by volunteers and city staff for future plantings (reducing the cost of purchasing trees elsewhere). It also allows for quick decisions to be made for vacant tree locations or replacement trees. Jeff will update Committee on the process.

6. Main Street Trees Check-In

Some discussion on health of trees. Amanda worked with students to build temporary snow plow braces for new Main Street trees. Will be replaced with permanent metal guards next year. No other updates.

7. Volunteer Recruitment and Event Discussion

Committee discussed the feasibility of hosting an educational walk coinciding with volunteer recruitment.

Nate: Winter Tree ID hike?

Amanda: Workshop Series. Cow Pasture.

Amy: Will talk to contact with the Cow Pasture Committee. Amy did some invasion species removal with them before.

Committee is considering a Sunday afternoon in late January or February.
Main Street Tree ID Walk

Spring: Cow Pasture Hike event

8. Emerald Ash Borer Abatement Planning Discussion

Discussion by Jeff about Ash Tree removals (3 months out). GMP covering cost of removal. Jeff will email Members Nicko and Nate to update them on the planned removals and gather their opinions.

Nate: His only concern was thinking it may be too early to cut down, but if they're in the right-of-way and near power lines, then it makes sense to go ahead with the removal.

Committee reiterated the need to eventually have an abatement plan drafted for Barre City and consideration of organizing such a plan will be ongoing.

9. Opportunities

A)

Amanda: Discovered two grant opportunities from Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program.

Caring for Canopies Grant
(Mid-January due) \$1000-\$5000

Emerald Ash Borer Management
\$15,000
- Removal of Ash Trees
- Replacement Tree Planting

Committee discussed the potential for these to apply for. Amanda will look into it more for feasibility. EAB grant may be too daunting for team on short notice. If committee time is available, it will be pursued.

B)

Amanda: Do we want to become a Tree City? Tree City USA, benefits: access to broader group and possible funding, sense of community pride. The one hurdle is not meeting \$2/capita municipal budget for forestry.

After discussion, the Committee realized that the municipal budget is short and the certification would not get approved. The consideration is tabled to next year.

Amanda: April 24 Arbor Day. Recommends hosting an event that day.

10. Set Agenda for next month:

- Discuss and Vote to Approve: Mission Statement
- Urban Forest Strategic Action Plan Review
- Main Street Trees check-in
- Emerald Ash Borer Abatement Planning Discussion
- Volunteer Recruitment Event Discussion - Winter Main Street Tree ID Walk

11. Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn at 6:58 pm by A. Garland and seconded by N. Ebert, passed unanimously.