

## **Barre City Tree Stewardship Committee - Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Virtual Meeting: Google Meets Platform**

**Wednesday, November 18, 2020, 5:00p-6:00p**

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

Committee Members Absent: **Nicko Rubin**

City Staff Present: **None**

Visitors: **None**

### **1. Call to order – 5:02 pm by Chair Amanda Garland**

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

### **3. Committee Members Check-in**

Committee members each shared their current status and asked if continuing regular meetings again is feasible for them. All attendees were willing to meet virtually going forward at selected time, though the meeting time may be considered to be set later in the spring.

### **4. Main Street Trees Update**

Nate gave an overview of work he completed with City permission over the summer. Generally, the planted Main Street Trees are healthy and doing well. Examples of work completed, include: Pruning, as needed, on trees. Also, cutting down of 4 trees due to poor health after initial planting. The Oak trees are doing well. Some Elms are doing well, some have structural issues. No more Maples recommended to replace cut trees, given how a few did not survive. Hackberries were fine except one not good, it was cut down due to root girdling. Main issue: a lack of water during warmest days caused some to not take root well.

Amanda: Need to make a clear watering plan and general maintenance for current trees.

Nate: Budget for pruning other downtown trees?

Amanda: \$38,000 in tree budget, possible for more pruning. No word on prototype tree guard yet. City staff do not want grates over tree plots, so attempting to figure out how to install tree guards to the ground. They are considering purchasing two tree guards initially. Also looking to replant the 4 cut trees. Consideration of a tree planting event in the spring. Awaiting more updates on tree guards by City staff.

Nate: Consider bare root trees? He reports that if ordered soon, there is a significant reduction in tree cost with an arrival at spring. Approx. \$500-\$600 per tree.

Amanda: Gator watering bags already secured, could be installed next summer.

Nate: An idea proposed from the Tree Budget: purchase a watering tank to be placed on the bed of a pick up truck. The Parks Department can use this to water downtown trees every other day, for first two-three weeks after planting. Recommends: 7 gallons per tree.

**ACTION ITEM #1: Amanda will research cost of ordering 4 trees for spring planting, will decide as a committee at next meeting on picking new trees and placing the order.**

**ACTION ITEM #2: Committee will recommend to City Staff of purchase for a mobile watering tank and use available Tree Budget funds to purchase.**

## **5. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Update**

Amanda: Spoke about results of a State of Vermont/UVM Urban and Community Forestry EAB study. Overview of results from EAB traps show a slow spread of EAB, yet new locations in Vermont have shown presence of EAB. The arrival of EAB is still in early stages.

Nate: Believes more will spread further within a year. Recommends the committee contact Joann Garten, Vermont urban community forestry to do an extensive inventory of Barre City Ash trees. Nate notes that it would require a big commitment as a committee. Questions about what do we do with the resulting data. He also notes that there are not many Ash trees in public areas, yet many in private yards.

Conor: Recommends the committee at least commit to some initial outreach to community residents on status of EAB and point towards State of Vermont information.

Nate: He reiterated the benefits of a potential Barre City Tree Nursery for use in growing trees to replace Ash trees preemptively taken down.

**ACTION ITEM #3: Committee will seek out EAB go-to resources and consider placing them on committee website. Committee will also reach out to VCUF about the possibility of a full inventory of Ash trees in Barre City.**

## **6. Tree Nursery Planning**

Amanda: Contacted Vermont Urban & Community Forestry (VCUF) about extension of grant implementation due to delay from pandemic. Committee has been rewarded a time extension. Grant includes \$3500 to spend on fencing, tree stock with a mission to propagate future street trees for Barre City.

Discussion on siting of Nursery: Initial considerations for the Nursery to be located on Barre City property at the reservoir, but there is restrictions on current access until spring, plus the prep work for site could be extensive.

Conor: Reminded committee of the length of time for planning the site design. Recommends a central location for planning materials (ex. Google Docs folder) and consider making Nursery planning a strong of focus of future committee meetings.

Amanda: Agreed about the focus and open to other locations that are more easily accessible, especially for those without access to vehicles (ex. Students). Consideration potential for siting at the Barre City High School.

Amy: Curious of the types of trees grown and best practices for street trees.

Nate: Likes visibility and access if near school, much easier than the reservoir. For best health of new saplings, recommends growing in-ground, then transplant as bare root (faster, easier). Nate also owns an air pneumatic tool to quickly carve out in-ground trees for transplanting.

Amanda: Another potential is near the Community Garden at Elmwood Cemetery.

## **7. Outreach**

Amy: Would like to post on city website with tree resources. Audience: City Staff, residents. Potential for event advertisement. Will bring potential resource items to next meeting.

Amanda: Agrees about the resources online and any events will likely need to wait until spring at the earliest.

## **8. Next Steps**

Amanda: Any directives?

Conor: Recommends setting aside most of next meeting for deciding on new trees and Nursery planning. Ongoing goals progress still should be reported on.

## **9. Adjourn**

- Motion to adjourn at 5:58 pm by A. Garland and seconded by C. Teal, passed unanimously.

**Next public meeting: Second Wednesday of December, 9th @ 5:00p - 6:00p**