

**MAYOR'S BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE
TREES AND PUBLIC GREENERY
7:30 AM – Wednesday, May 13, 2009
City Hall, City Manager's Conference Room**

Call to Order:

Peter Loughlin Chair	A.J. Dupere, Community Forester
Richard Adams, Vice-Chair	Carla Marvin, Member
Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director	June Rogers, Member
Everett Kern, General Foreman	

Peter Loughlin called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 a.m.

- 1. Acceptance of the Minutes** – Minutes of the April 8, 2009 meeting were accepted as presented.
- 2. Tree Removal Requests:**

20 Hillside Drive – Tree is directly across the street from 20 Hillside Drive. Everett Kern posted this tree basically to put the residents mind at ease. After looking at the tree the Committee members saw nothing wrong with this tree.

MOTION made by Everett Kern not to recommend removal of this tree. Seconded by Dick Adams. Motion passed.

Langdon Park, Corner of Lincoln and Junkins – June Rogers didn't see anything wrong except for the hole, the rest of the tree is beautiful. Dick Adams stated the need for a careful analysis, does not feel confident to judge whether it's strong enough to hold itself up. Everett Kern stated this is the concern, looks like it's in good shape, but knowing the hole exists does not know how long it will last and suggested AJ look at it. The chair stated that if AJ could core through and if more than 50% is dead, then you probably have a problem, if less than 50% it probably is okay.

Everett Kern will contact AJ.

The Chair stated that action will be delayed until AJ looks at it and a determination is made.
- 3. Tree City Designation** – The Chair reported that Portsmouth has been named Tree City and thanked Economic Development Director Nancy Carmer and the Public Works Department for all of their work that made this designation possible.
- 4. 198 Islington Street Report** – They have been before the Site Review Committee and TAC recommended that a tree be planted and the species be selected by this Committee. The Chair reported that Dick Adams went out and recommended a Hackberry tree. The Chair sent a copy of the recommendation to the Planning Dept. June Rogers and Dick Adams went and looked at it. A triangular area is to be cut out of the pavement to create a space for the tree on the left hand side of the property. The Planning Department is interested in getting more greenery on Islington St. and wanted to see this as part of the Islington St. project.
- 5. Report on Arbor Day Activities** – The Chair reported that 4 or 5 tree services donated their time and spent most of the day pruning large trees in Haven Park and did some fertilizing. A tree will also be planted in front of the North Church with a ceremony.

6. **Letter Thanking Tree Companies** – The Mayor sent a letter to the Editor and the Chair has drafted a letter to each of the companies thanking them on behalf of the Committee.
7. **Report on Little Harbor School Plantings** – AJ reported he was not able to attend and sent a member of his staff, a pear tree is in the ground, all went well, the students were involved and next week AJ will be working with them as part of their activities to get mulch around the trees. The Chair thanked AJ for doing this.
8. **Policy on Memorial Trees** – The chair reported there was a request regarding planting of a memorial tree for a baby that died about a year ago and requested the City to plant a tree on Pierce Island or somewhere in honor of this child. The Fogarty situation was a unique situation. The Chair questioned where you draw the line if it's a question of the City paying for the tree. This is a policy question.
Steve Parkinson stated typically people buy a bench and we supply the plaque. If someone would like a memorial tree, they would pay for it and the City will plant it.
AJ felt the idea behind a memorial tree is nice, however, they have a few memorial trees at the Center and some are not doing well, they are old and getting bigger. AJ suggested keeping track of these trees and keep them watered and cared for.
Richard Adams stated that the marker is another aspect of the policy question.
The Chair stated the general rule is if somebody wanted a tree they would pay for it and the City would plant it.
Steve Parkinson stated they are donations to the City and must be approved by City Council and suggested speaking to the City Manager regarding the City's policy on memorial trees and markers. The Chair will place this on the next Agenda and will contact the City Manager.
9. **Memorial Tree for Mayor Sirrell** - The Chair suggested planting a memorial tree for Mayor Sirrell as she was the one who started the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Trees & Public Greenery. The Committee discussed finding an appropriate location and agreed to look at locations around City Hall after the meeting. Everett Kern stated the best possible time for planting will be early to mid-June, given that he had received the species for different locations. Everett agreed to get a quote from Stratham Circle Nursery.
10. **Lower State Street Improvements** – Steve Parkinson stated that the lower State Street project is about to go out to bid.
The Chair stated that Dick Adams, AJ, Everett Kern and himself had a meeting at Public Works with the landscape architects, Peter Rice, Calypso Associates and CMA Engineers. The sidewalk will be expanded on the south side starting at State St. running to the bridge at Marcy St. which is a separate project from the bridge. Another meeting at State St. looking at the area and discussed the species and locations with Jeff Hyland from Hyland Assoc. and Peter Rice. The wires will stay as they now are. The protection of trees was discussed with several different options
Steve Parkinson stated what we are proposing on State St. is a constructual component to hold up the sidewalk, yet have the material underneath not compacted so the roots have the opportunity to promote more growth rather than having the tree in a box.
The Chair commented that he likes what was done on Congress St. it seems to work, and gives them protection from snowplows. One of the most important things is having some sort of protection to keep the plows away from them.
Steve Parkinson stated we work with various types of materials and keep experimenting to see what works best. Raised plantings on Congress St. were done because we could never get anything to grow there. It does create obstacles for pedestrian traffic and we

are trying to open up the sidewalks. The sidewalks on the north side of the road on the State St. project is not being widened a lot and we are doing some planting on the north side to maximize the amount of pedestrian space. We need greenery. The sidewalk on the south side will be widened, poles and wires are staying where they are. Getting the trees out from under the poles gives them a better chance of vertical growth. Bump outs are a different situation and we are limited as to what can be put in regarding height. On the south side the trees will be as close to the curb as possible.

The Chair asked to see a drawing and feels the 6 ft. sidewalk, if you stay outside the poles make sense. The critical thing is protecting trees from snowplows and feels that Congress St. worked very well and would like more soil brought in.

Steve Parkinson referred to the storm water cleansing process involving the tree well which we are putting some in on Coakley Rd.

AJ will provide information on silva cells. The structural soil used in other areas is problematic and when put together right, works very well and has proven itself. It is a mix of rock, aggregate material with a minimal amount of soil.

Steve Parkinson will take another look at this, his concern is we are trying to widen our sidewalks and feels if we start raising elements and diminishing what we're trying to accomplish, why widen the sidewalks.

The Chair stated the one charge of this Committee related to that project is trees and his major concern is that the trees have a reasonable chance of survival. If we can give them additional protection then that is in the interest of what this Committee promotes. The Chair questioned Hyland Assoc. and Richard Adams didn't recognize the trees, except for one. It appeared they didn't go with what they originally suggested.

11. **Spring Tree Planting** – Everett Kern sent out a list. He received a call requesting two trees at 47 and 49 Orchard St.

Richard Adams referred to the cemetery wall side of South Sagamore & Miller there's a broad strip of open space and felt a tree would look good there.

Everett Kern cautioned that during a snowstorm it is pushed back there at that intersection.

June Rogers suggested putting forsythia at that corner which would provide greenery and the snow wouldn't bother it as it is very substantial.

Everett Kern stated he needs suggestions on species. He has the ones Richards Adams provided him and asked for a time to get together to go out and look at the remainder of the sites and get this moving.

Referring to the crab tree, AJ reported he looked at them at Stratham Circle where there are a couple of different varieties that essentially are just about fruitless.

12. **Old Business** –
Tree Ordinance - Richard Adams asked about the Tree Ordinance. The Chair contacted the City Attorney and will follow up with him.

409 Lincoln Ave. - Richard Adams referred to the root ball on the tree at 409 Lincoln Ave. being exposed.

13. **New Business** –
South Church – The Chair provided pictures of the tree in front of the South Church. Someone on a Church Committee wants to take the tree down from more of a plaza area. It is a perfectly formed Beech and a critical downtown tree. The Chair suggested send a letter from this Committee stating we don't have jurisdiction over it but it is the

Committee's feeling to take a hard look at it because of the impact it has on State St. Everett Kern suggested digitally taking a photo removing the tree from the picture so they can see what it look like without the tree. Steve Parkinson suggested waiting till it is leafed out so that you get the whole effect. You will just see a brick wall.

14. Next Meeting – 7:30 a.m., Wednesday, June 10, 2009

15. Adjourned

Respectfully submitted,
Peter J. Loughlin, Chairman