

**TREES AND PUBLIC GREENERY COMMITTEE  
City of Portsmouth**

**MINUTES**

**7:30 AM – Wednesday, July 8, 2015  
Portsmouth City Hall**

**Members Present:** Peter Loughlin, Chairman, Richard Adams, Vice-Chairman; A. J. Dupere, Leslie Stevens, Peter Rice, Director of Public Works, Todd Croteau, Public Works General Foreman; and Dennis Souto

**Members Excused:** None.

The City Arborist Corin Hallowell was present at the meeting.

*Chairman Loughlin called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.*

**1. Minutes of the June 10, 2015 Meeting.**

*Vice-Chair Adams moved to approve the June 10, 2015 minutes, and Ms. Stevens seconded. The motion was **approved** by unanimous vote.*

**2. Tree Removal Requests:**

**236 Cate Street.**

Mr. Croteau noted that the homeowner was concerned about the tree limbs falling on her children.

All thought the tree appeared to be in excellent health.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Stevens moved that the tree be monitored, and Mr. Souto seconded. The motion was **approved** by unanimous vote.*

**391 Colonial Drive (continued from June meeting).**

Mr. Hallowell stated that had found no signs of aphid infestation and that the tree looked very healthy. Ms. Carol Edwards of 144 Spinnaker Way said she was concerned for her grandchildren's safety because the tree's limbs were overpowering, and she was also concerned about the black mold falling from the tree. Chairman Loughlin said the Committee was reluctant to remove healthy trees but that they would continue to monitor the tree. Ms. Stevens said the tree did not hang over the house or driveway but did hang over the sidewalk, like all the other trees in the neighborhood. She had found no evidence of infestation. She had also parked under the tree and had not noticed anything on her vehicle. She agreed with Chairman Loughlin that the tree was healthy and should not be removed. Ms. Edwards suggested trimming the tree, and Ms. Stevens replied that it would become unbalanced if one side was pruned further than it had already been.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Rice moved that the tree continue to be monitored, and Vice-Chair Adams seconded. The motion was **approved** by unanimous vote.*

#### **492 Colonial Drive**

Mr. Croteau noted that the tree was rotted about 25 feet up, which was the worst spot to have rot. Mr. Hallowell stated that he had found an extensive cavity and suggested removing the tree.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Stevens moved that the tree be removed,, and Mr. Dupree seconded. The motion was **approved** by unanimous vote.*

#### **274 Miller Avenue**

Mr. Croteau said that the City's Traffic Engineering department indicated that the tree did not have line of sight issues but did not feel that there was enough disruption to have the tree removed.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Vice-Chair Adams moved that the tree not be removed, and ms. Stevens seconded. The motion was **approved** by unanimous vote.*

#### **296 Peverly Hill Road**

The owner Mr. Donald Jones stated that he was concerned about the tree's canopy and limbs falling into the yard. Mr. Croteau agreed that the black cherry wasn't in great health. Vice-Chair Adams asked whether there were a lot of trees on Mr. Jones' property and whether the Black Cherry was a City tree, and Mr. Jones answered yes to both questions.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Souto moved that the tree be removed,, and Vice-Chair Adams seconded. The motion was **approved** by unanimous vote.*

#### **Portsmouth Public Library (tree is on the property lined by the small parking lot on the Richards Avenue side of the building).**

Mr. Croteau stated that this tree was removed last week and was justified due to its location and surrounding activities. Chairman Loughlin noted that a memo was circulated addressing the tree's tough shape

#### **260 Thornton Street**

Mr. Hallowell stated that there was a large cavity in the silver maple. Mr. Croteau added that more than 30% of the tree would be gone if they removed that section and the tree would eventually decay. He suggested removing the tree.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Vice-Chair Adams moved that the tree be removed, and Mr. Croteau seconded. The motion was **approved** by unanimous vote.*

### **295 Thornton Street**

Mr. Croteau stated that the tree was a small, dead one with a large cavity and suggested removing it.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Souto moved that the tree be removed, and Mr. Rice seconded. The motion was **approved** by unanimous vote.*

### **111 Willard Avenue (tree is on Ash Street)**

The owner Mr. Matt Hatem was present and stated that a branch had fallen on the yard recently, and he was concerned about the children. He added that three landscapers had told him that the tree should be removed. Mr. Croteau agreed that the large Ash had significant problems. Mr. Rice asked Mr. Hatem whether or not he would restore the fence, and Mr. Hatem replied that he would replace his portion.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Souto moved that the tree be removed, and Ms. Stevens seconded. The motion was **approved** by unanimous vote.*

### **3. Report on Tree Removal at 1039 South Street at Marston Street**

Chairman Loughlin stated that Messrs. Rice, Croteau, and Halloran had spent a lot of time on the tree and related issues about the property line and that he had received several phone calls about it. The owner and Urban Tree Removal were also concerned that the blasting on the hill would jeopardize the tree. It also leaned over the driveway. Chairman Loughlin said that everyone had voted to remove the tree and had sent a memo to the Committee, so the tree was removed.

### **4. Update on 2015 Spring Planting**

Mr. Croteau stated that there were two trees left to plant in the area. Mr. Hallowell noted that the contractor's planting standards did not meet those of the City and that the contractor had done such a mediocre job that the City had to replant three trees. The workers simply dug holes and threw the trees in. Mr. Rice asked if the specifications were clear enough, and Mr. Hallowell agreed. Mr. Rice suggested having more graphic details instead of just text so that the planters had better guidelines. Mr. Hallowell passed out a list of his recommendations, noting that the biggest problem was that the contractors were not removing the burlap. He said that 80% of the trees were planted too deeply and the root collars were not getting excavated. Mr. Souto suggested implementing the recommendations in the upcoming planting season.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Rice moved that the guidelines be incorporated into the City's specifications and that the pre-bid meeting be held. Mr. Souto seconded the motion. The motion was **approved** by unanimous vote.*

### **5. Subcommittee Report Regarding Status of Defoliation of Trees at Atlantic Heights**

Mr. Ed Valena of 67 Crescent Way stated that the Chinese elm in front of his house was unattractive and had no leaves on its branches. He passed around a branch of the tree and showed photos of the tree. Chairman Loughlin asked if the situation occurred elsewhere, and Mr. Dupere replied that it

wasn't and thought the tree could have Dutch elm disease and suggested digging out the trees with problems to see whether or not they had root issues. Mr. Hollowell thought it could be a burlap problem. Mr. Rice said that he was okay with digging up the tree and asked whether Mr. Hollowell could take photos of the tree when he dug it up to show at future contractor bids. Mr. Dupere agreed, adding that he would know if it was Dutch elm disease by peeling back the bark.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Souto moved that the tree be removed for analysis sometime in August, and Vice-Chair Adams seconded. The motion was **approved** by unanimous vote.*

The Committee also discussed trees that had winter moth. Mr. Hollowell said the trees were stressed due to the dry spring and suggested that they be monitored.

## **6. Old Business**

Ms. Stevens asked Mr. Croteau whether it would be helpful to send him the addresses of some of the older plantings that had died, and Mr. Croteau agreed. She also said that she followed up with Ms. Diane Stradling on Union Street by leaving a message but hadn't heard anything, so she thought the matter was resolved. No trees were planted as yet.

Mr. Hollowell discussed the deep root fertilizer gun that he had recently acquired and explained how it delivered the water into the roots and was more efficient than the bag method.

Vice-Chair Adams asked Mr. Croteau if the soil around the hemlock trees in Langdon Park had been decompressed, and Mr. Croteau said they were working on it. Vice-Chair Adams distributed photos of flourishing trees in Europe that were planted in stones used for public pavement.

Chairman Loughlin noted that two of the trees with tiny holes in the bank parking lot across from the fire station were doing well and had grown a lot in the past two years.

## **7. New Business**

There was no new business.

## **8. Next Meeting – Wednesday, August 12, 2015**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault  
Recording Secretary