

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

**MINUTES**

**7:30 AM – Wednesday, September 13, 2017  
Portsmouth City Hall**

**Members Present:** Peter J. Loughlin, Chairman; Richard Adams, Vice-Chairman; Leslie Stevens; Peter Rice, Director of Public Works; Todd Croteau, Public Works General Foreman; Corin Hallowell, City Arborist; Joan Walker and Dan Umbro.

**Members Excused:** Dennis Souto, A. J. Dupere

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

**1. Acceptance of Minutes of the August 9, 2017 Meeting.**

*Vice-Chair Adams abstained from voting because he wasn't present at the August 9 meeting.*

*It was moved, seconded, and approved by unanimous vote to approve the August 9, 2017 minutes.*

**2. Tree Removal Requests:**

**1. 1 Plains Avenue – Mountain Ash – Requested by DPW:**

DPW representative Ryan Flynn stated that he was working on the sewer line project and said the line would damage the roots. He briefly discussed the sewer line process.

Mr. Hallowell said the Mountain Ash already had issues that would worsen if the root system got damaged. He recommended removing the tree and replacing it with possibly two trees in the spring.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Walker moved to recommend the removal of the tree, and Vice-Chair Adams seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.*

**2. Ceres and Bow Streets – 2 Crab Apple in planters – Requested by DPW:**

Mr. Hallowell stated that the remaining two trees were dying. (A third tree was previously voted for removal.)

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Walker moved to recommend the removal of the trees, and Ms. Stevens seconded.*

Ms. Stevens asked what would replace the trees. Mr. Hallowell said the soil would be replenished and that the site would probably be added to the spring planting list, at which time the species would be discussed. He recommended that deciduous trees be planted.

*The motion was approved by unanimous vote.*

3. 598 Kearsarge Way – Norway Maple – Requested by resident:

Mr. Hallowell said the tree was sitting just outside of a small alley and was decayed and dropping limbs, which concerned the resident. Ms. Walker noted that it was also damaging the arborvitae.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Vice-Chair Adams moved to recommend the removal of the tree, and Ms Walker seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.*

4. 85 Lawrence Street – Box Elder – Requested by DPW:

City resident Frank Clarkson of 85 Lawrence Street stated that he had not known about the notice and was surprised that he hadn't received one. He asked whether it was standard practice. Chairman Loughlin said it wasn't because it could be complicated. Mr. Clarkson said he was glad the tree would be removed because it had been rotting for a while. Mr. Hallowell said the tree would be removed and that they would grind the stump, and the site would be added to the spring planting list.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Rice moved to recommend the removal of the tree, and Mr. Umbro seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.*

5. 188 Broad Street – 2 Plum Trees – Requested by resident:

Mr. Hallowell stated that one plum tree was 90% dead and the other was on its way. He said the resident asked that they both be removed and replaced, and he agreed that they should be.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Vice-Chair Adams moved to recommend the removal of the two trees, and Ms. Walker seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.*

6. 127 International Drive – 1 Blue Spruce and 1 Plum – Requested by DPW:

Mr. Hallowell said that a construction project was taking place at Fire Station #3 and that the two trees were in the middle of it. He said that the spruce was under the wires and had been greatly reduced. Vice-Chair Adams noted that the tree was grossly misshapen. It was further discussed.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Stevens moved to recommend the removal of the tree, and Mr. Umbro seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.*

Chairman Loughlin suggested that a replacement tree be considered. Mr. Rice said he would discuss it with the Fire Department.

7. 35 Sherburne Road – Blue Spruce – Requested by DPW:

Mr. Hallowell said the tree was located in front of the school and blocked the entire front of the building. He suggested removing the tree to open up the school. He said the School Department was in favor of removing the tree. He also noted that the tree could be used as the City Christmas tree.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Vice-Chair Adams moved to recommend the removal of the tree and its temporary location, and Ms. Stevens seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.*

8. 360 Wibird Street – Norway maple – Requested by DPW:

Mr. Hallowell said he visited the Norway maple several times and that it was in serious decline and not worth maintaining. He suggested that it be removed and replaced.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Vice-Chair Adams moved to recommend the removal of the tree, and Ms. Stevens seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.*

**3. Tree Grant Program – Request 105 Thornton Street**

Mr. Hallowell said the resident requested that a tree be planted in the small right-of-way, which would set it away from the wires. He said the resident also agreed to own the tree after two years.

Chairman Loughlin asked where the Committee stood regarding terms of agreement. Mr. Hallowell noted that the Committee had previously discussed drafting an agreement when a request was received and that he was working on an application form. Mr. Rice suggested placing it on the City website. Chairman Loughlin noted that the Committee previously discussed the policy and that he could turn it into an agreement.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Walker moved to approve an application for a Tree Grant Program tree, and Ms. Stevens seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.*

**4. Discussion of Eversource Energy Proposal (Pevery Hill Road, West Road, Mirona Road, Constitution Avenue); Ian Farley, Regional Arborist for Eversource Energy**

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Croteau arrived.

Eversource representative Ian Farley was present to speak to the issue. He said he worked statewide on reliability-based tree trimming and removal projects. He said the project was concentrated on the backbone of each circuit. He explained how the circuits were built and noted that the circuit source was the Lafayette Road Substation. He said that 600 customers would lose power if that particular portion of the circuit were damaged. He said they were trying to identify trees within eight feet of the outside conductor that had the ability to grow to a height that would interfere with the electrical system, and that they wanted to reach out to property owners to have those trees removed. He said if they couldn't get permission to remove the trees, they would trim the branches that hung over the wires. He emphasized that they were trying to harden the system to prevent trees and branches from falling onto wires and had identified several City-owned trees.

Mr. Rice asked whether Eversource had the authority from the RSA to trim the trees within a 10-ft radius but not to cut them down. Mr. Farley said they were not working with the RSA and that Lewis Tree was responsible for determining who every property owner was and getting permission from them. He said the property owner had 45 days to respond before the work could be done.

Mr. Rice asked whether they did replacement trees. Mr. Farley said they sometimes did if it had a significant impact but that the funding was regulated by the Public Utility Commission. He said they tried to work with communities and offered replantings.

Vice-Chair Adams noted that a lot of people wondered why lines weren't placed underground like they were in European countries. Mr. Farley said the cost to do so was extraordinary and it was difficult to find where a fault was in the system. Mr. Hollowell said they did a survey of all the City's right-of-ways and found that there were twelve trees, half of which were covered in poison ivy, decayed, or in decline due to years of utility use. He noted that none of the trees were quality trees.

Mr. Rice requested a copy of the pruning schedule. He said that Peverly Hill Road would be reconfigured and that poles would have to be moved, so the City would need to know which trees would be removed or pruned. Mr. Farley said he would look into it.

Mr. Hollowell said the trees were already marked and that he would post them. Mr. Rice noted that the new Franklin Drive temporary line relocation hadn't been posted. Mr. Farley said he would work on it. Mr. Rice said it was on school property and that Eversource would need permission to do the work.

Mr. Farley further explained why Eversource had to do the trimming all at once, noting that they had to work within constraints set by the program funding and that they could execute enhanced tree trimming only once every four-to-five years on a circuit.

Mr. Farley said he would submit the electronic map to Mr. Hollowell.

## **5. Tree Trust Update/Status**

Chairman Loughlin said that he sent the update to the Acting City Manager, who said she would advise him before it went to the City Council. He said he also wrote a letter to David Steadman to thank him for the work he did at Goodwin Park.

## **6. 2018 Tree Planting**

Mr. Hollowell distributed copies of the tree planting list based on removals and resident requests. He noted that the list was close to the limit and asked the Committee to add any trees if necessary and submit their changes to him by the October meeting so that he could send out letters to residents. He said the Committee could visit the sites after the October meeting.

Vice-Chair Adams mentioned 188 Broad Street. Mr. Hollowell said he would add it to the list.

Vice-Chair Adams said that, in the past, the Committee recommended tree species. Mr. Hollowell recommended deciding sites first and sending out letters and then discussing the species. Vice-Chair Adams asked about trees that were under warranty. Mr. Hollowell said that three dead trees were replaced and also noted that Site Structures did a great job and would replace more trees in the spring.

## **7. Salt Impact on Sugar Maples**

Chairman Loughlin noted that Mr. Dupere said he would look at the trees and report on them at the October meeting.

**8. Old Business**

Ms. Walker noted that the Committee had discussed construction building permits and protection for street trees. Mr. Hollowell said he would put together a standard. Mr. Rice said DPW would reach out to the building inspectors as well.

Mr. Rice asked about the removal of the Norway maple at the entrance of Goodwin Park and whether they could move forward on it. Chairman Loughlin noted that Mr. Hollowell and the landscaper Robbie Woodburn recommended removal, which he agreed with. Mr. Rice said he would confirm whether or not they could move forward with it. The Committee further discussed whether there was a benefit to removing other trees to open up the park and doing a few at a time. Mr. Hollowell recommended doing it all at once, like the Committee previously decided. Vice-Chair Adams agreed, noting that it had been previously voted on.

**9. New Business**

Ms. Stevens said the new City website looked great but that a few changes under Trees and Greenery were needed. She suggested that the dated tree inventory project be removed and replaced with a description of what the Committee's purpose was. Mr. Rice said there should also be a link to the DPW and said he would look into it.

Chairman Loughlin asked why there weren't trees planted on the Ledgewood side of the Tuscan Kitchen restaurant. Mr. Rice said he would look at the site approval to see what happened.

Chairman Loughlin noted that the Market Street improvements were fantastic.

Ms. Walker said she received notices of all the 'Click and Fixes' when she accessed the site and was concerned about one in particular. Mr. Rice said it would go to the Committee eventually. Mr. Hollowell said the Norway maple was in decline and would be listed for removal on the October agenda.

**10. Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 11, 2017**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault  
Recording Secretary