

**Trees and Public Greenery Committee
City of Portsmouth**

MINUTES

**8:00 a.m. – Wednesday, August 14, 2019
Portsmouth City Hall, 4th Floor, City Manager’s Conference Room**

Members Present: Peter J. Loughlin, Chairman; Richard Adams, Vice-Chairman; Peter Rice, Director of Public Works; City Arborist Corin Hallowell; Dennis Souto; A. J. Dupere, Dan Umbro, and Michael Griffin

Members Excused: None

Also Present: City Land Use Compliance Agent Vincent Hayes and City Arborist Chuck Baxter

Vice-Chairman Adams called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

1. Acceptance of Minutes of the July 10, 2019 Meeting

*It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to **approve** the July 10, 2019 minutes as submitted.*

2. Tree Removal Request

1. 2 Green Ash - 3 Pleasant Street, landowner’s request.

3. Robbi Woodburn regarding McNabb project at 3 Pleasant Street, Daniel, and Penhallow Streets.

Items 2 and 3 were addressed together. Landscape designer Robbi Woodburn, developer Mark McNabb, and project engineer John Chagnon were present to address the items. Ms. Woodburn reviewed the plan, stating that the project proposed to widen the sidewalk, which would necessitate the two ash trees being removed and replaced. She said the trees were not in good shape and would be replaced with two Zelkova trees.

Mr. Hallowell said the trees weren’t in terrible shape but would be difficult to save during the construction phase. Ms. Woodburn said there would be subsurface support for the trees and that they would remove the curb to extend the sidewalk. Mr. McNabb further explained that there would be a new trench for a water line and that everything would be ripped up for a new base and new level encompassing asphalt and brick.

At this point, Chairman Loughlin arrived at the meeting.

Chairman Loughlin said he was in favor of the plan, noting that if the trees weren't replaced right away, the City would have to do it at their expense in a few years. Mr. Griffin asked if the sidewalk extension fit into the Market Square Redevelopment Master Plan. Mr. Rice said he didn't think it would change the decision to remove the trees, and he agreed with Chairman Loughlin that it was better to remove and replace the trees now.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Rice moved to **recommend** removal of the two trees and to replace them with the specified trees. Vice-Chair Adams seconded.*

*The motion **passed** unanimously.*

***Action Item:** Mr. Rice will discuss with City staff whether Silva cells should be added.*

4. David Allen, Special City Engineering Consultant, and Phillip Corbett of CMA Engineers to discuss landscape plans for athletic field complex west of present City Public Works facilities.

Phillip Corbett of CMA Engineers and Mike Moonam of Weston and Sampson were present. Mr. Corbett stated that CMA Engineers were working with the City on the design for the recreational fields adjacent to Public Works. He reviewed the project's background, noting that five parcels would be consolidated. He said the plan was to develop two large synthetic turf fields with an adjacent gravel parking lot and would include regional stormwater facilities for the upper Sagamore Creek Watershed and a future transfer station. He said there would be minimal wetland impacts but that a few trees would be impacted along the area's fringe.

Mr. Hallowell suggested that the tree species choices be changed to more appropriate ones. A site walk was also discussed. In response to Mr. Griffin's question, Mr. Corbett said the pond was man-made and he explained where the water went.

***Action Item:** Mr. Hallowell will send a list of recommended tree species to the Committee for review.*

5. Altus Engineering regarding 200 Chase Drive/Michael Soucy Drive.

Landscape designer Robbi Woodburn and Cory Belden of Altus Engineering were present. Ms. Woodburn reviewed the site plan. She pointed out that there was a grove of trees off to the side of the project, and that she and the project developers had discussed what could be done to lighten up the view and help the trees. She said that two trees were overgrown and could be removed. She also pointed out that there was lots of deadwood and that the other trees could be pruned as an alternative to removing all the trees. She proposed that the City remove the two overgrown trees and that the developer prune the rest of the trees and clean up the deadwood.

Mr. Baxter said it made sense to remove the two trees for the health of the grove. He said he discussed the issue with arborist consultant David Steadman, and he recommended

that Mr. Steadman prune the grove of trees and that the City take care of removing the deadwood. Ms. Woodburn said a permanent barrier would be placed on the property line.

Mr. Rice said he wanted to ensure that the project gave clear direction to the contractors on how to protect the existing trees and that it was documented. He said he would discuss it with Planning Director Juliet Walker and noted that City Land Use Compliance Agent Vincent Hayes would also monitor the project. Mr. Belden said the project team would review the plans with Mr. Rice and Ms. Walker and that they would also go before the Planning Board and the Technical Advisory Committee. Chairman Loughlin said the Committee would vote on removing the two trees at the September meeting. Mr. Baxter recommended that the pruning be done in the dormant season to resist disease and that it be noted in the contract.

***Action Item:** Mr. Rice will discuss the protection of existing trees by the contractors with Planning Director Juliet Walker.*

6. Old Business

There was no old business.

7. New Business

Mr. Rice said he received a call from the owner of Cava restaurant, who wanted to add a solarium to their patio. He said the existing honey locust would have to be removed because its root system was in the patio.

Mr. Hallowell suggested doing a site walk at West Road after the September meeting to view the proposed athletic field complex.

Vice-Chair Adams asked whether the red maple with a memorial plaque on it at the post office was on City property. Mr. Hallowell said he didn't know. Vice-Chair Adams said there was a chain screwed into the tree, which would ensure the tree's death. He noted that there was talk of removing the tree for the McIntyre project.

***Action Item:** Mr. Hallowell will find out whether the Committee should be involved in the possible removal of the red maple.*

8. Next meeting: Wednesday, September 11, 2019

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
Committee Recording Secretary