

Nantucket Tree Advisory Committee

Posted meeting of June 27, 2024 at 3:00 PM

DPW Conference room, 188 Madaket Rd, with
Zoom Connectivity

Attendance: Dave Champoux (Tree Warden), Mary Longacre, Judy Deutsch, Ben Champoux (via zoom), Whitfield Bourne; Scott Williams DPW Staff, Charlie Polachi, DPW Staff.

1. Call to Order

Dave Champoux called the 6/27/2024 meeting to order at 3:00pm and noted all in attendance.

2. Committee acceptance of agenda

The agenda was unanimously accepted.

3. Committee approval of the minutes

No minutes to approve.

4. Announcements

None

5. Public Comment/ Discussion

None

6. Citizen/Departmental Requests

Nancy Martin of 41 West Chester Street appeared before the committee to request the removal of or assistance with the Silver Linden on the corner of her property. Dave emphasized that the committee is not in the business of taking down health trees, which this Linden is and has been very healthy since it was planted in the early 80's. The discussion turned to questions about maintaining the tree for proper visibility lines and the removal of the suckers. The decision was made to remove the black fabric around the tree trunk, and to prune what can be done from the ground.

7. Old Business

39 Hooper Farm Rd Mitigation:

Dave stated that he had received an estimate for 5-6" Prinston Elms of \$3500.00 each. The decision was made to write a letter to the property owner and request a mitigation payment of \$14000.00 (\$7000 for each tree and an additional \$7000 to cover shipping and installation costs) to be deposited in the tree account at Surfing Hydrangea, with the understanding that the trees would be planted at the end construction on the property.

14 West Creek Road:

Charlie updated the committee that town admin denied the request to get on a Select Board agenda and that the committee should reach out to the property owner first to inquire on their intent. Charlie to draft the letter to the property owner.

Mary brought up that there is no clear procedure in place for when the Select Board grants the Appeal of a tree removal, and the committee should draft a policy.

Town Bylaw update:

The Committee voiced their disappointment of town council response to not support the Committee request to change the town bylaws and mitigation fees. Ben states that we need to garner more support from other town departments, commission and committees such as PLUS and HDC. Mary

GIS mapping update:

The plan moving forward will be to combine that mapping data that the town has and combine it with the grant scope and hire a firm to complete the mapping and inventory.

Stump grinding/tree planting :

Dave asked for an update on the stump griding and tree planting. Charlie responded that there were some issues with the responses to the IFB, disqualifying all who responded and will need to be reissued the IFB. And planting cannot occur until the stumps have been removed.

8. New Business

Mary shared with the group that she has taken Dale's tree list and has started photographing and documenting the trees and there location and will be uploading it to the web. Once these trees have been identified we should prepare a letter to the current homeowner to let them know that these trees are Town trees and that they are special. It was also discussed that some of the missing trees may not have been planted as the list may have been potential locations.

Mary ready through her thoughts on the tree removal policy. They are as follows:

1. The remediation funds must be received by the Town BEFORE the tree can be cut down. (Otherwise the Town might get stiffed and have to sue to be paid.) The remediation funds must be earmarked for the Tree Fund, not disappear into the General Fund.
2. The permission to remove the tree is tied to the specific project that necessitates the removal. If the project is not initiated by the owner/petitioner, the tree can't be removed. If the remediation funds were already paid in this case, they should be refunded.
3. The permission is not transferable to an amended project – if they are changing the project then they can incorporate changes that spare the tree or come back to explain why they didn't. If the remediation funds were already paid in this case, they should be refunded.
4. The permission is not transferable to another owner of the property, including family transfers. Any sale or transfer revokes the permission to remove the tree on the grounds that the new owner should be made aware by the seller of the tree's status as a Town Tree and can plan accordingly. If the remediation funds were already paid in this case, they should be refunded.
5. The tree can't be removed until the Town Arborist is able to document the size and species of the tree for the purposes of calculating the remediation amount. The owner should sign off on the Town Arborist's measurement to prevent disputes. The Town Arborist will expedite the appraisal so as not to unnecessarily delay the removal.

Mary stressed the need for a form that can be signed by the home owner, which will give the select board guidance as a lot of the discussion was “what can we do” which should not be contributing to the mitigation, it should be set by the Tree Advisory Committee.

The conversation briefly turned to a discussion about Emerald Ash borer monitoring and Dutch Elm disease.

At 3:55 Emily Molden joined the zoom call. She was welcomed to the Tree Committee and will officially join the committee for the July Meeting. She is looking forward to talking about the mapping project and the grant funding. Whit asked about the tree tours and she stated that the tree tours are continuing. Emily also stated that they are looking to do some updates to the tree tour brochures and are looking to create a separate tour for the Sconset area.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 with a motion from Mary which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by:

Charlie Polachi

Next meeting scheduled for July 18th at 3:00 PM in the DPW conference room with Zoom available.