

City of Concord
Conservation Commission
Tree Sub-Committee

Minutes of May 25, 2023 Meeting
Council Chambers, City Hall Annex, 43 Green Street

In Attendance:

Subcommittee Members: Ted Diers (Chair), John Regan, Zib Corell, Jim Major, Tom Daigle, Craig Tufts, Liz McKinley

Absent: Peter Breu and Stacey Brown

Staff: Beth Fenstermacher (Planning), Stefanie Brenton (PIO), Alicen Twardosky (Planning), Jim Major (General Services – Highway)

1. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at 8:06.

2. Minutes of April 19, 2023.

The minutes of April 19 were unanimously approved with no changes.

Ms. Corell noted that the agenda did not mention discussing the Heights as an underserved community, and this was discussed last month as a future agenda item. She wanted to bring it up so it doesn't get forgotten.

Motioned by: Mr. Regan Seconded by: Ms. Corell

3. Farmer's Market update

- a. Zib and Stacey set up at the Farmers Market on 5/20, and handed out all of the seedlings that were left over from the tree workshop. She was able to engage people with the giveaway, and she did not ask where people were from. She felt that focusing on the subject matter was helpful in engaging them, not worrying about where they were coming from geographically. She let the Committee know to "find your hook" when engaging the audience since there is no longer a giveaway.

She is in possession of the display materials, Ted will pick them for his round on June 3rd. Ms. Breton suggested doing a QR scan code to the instructional video on their website from the workshop. Ted will use one of the containerized trees leftover from the workshop for the display. She is working with David Gill to identify planting locations for the other remaining trees. Ms. Fenstermacher will provide literature for Market Days as needed.

- b. Ted will work the 6/3 Farmers' Market, and John will work 6/17. John encouraged others to join him.

4. Ongoing / Follow Up Items

- a. Follow up from City Council presentation

Mr. Diers stated this was a good discussion. There were a couple of discussions that arose. First, there was an exchange with Councilor Kretovic about doing a joint meeting with Heritage Commission as well as the Golf Course Advisory Committee. This is an excellent possibility as the next course of reach-out targets. Beth noted that the staff from the Golf Course Advisory Committee already reached out to schedule a joint meeting – members confirmed **10/12 at 8:00 a.m.** at Beaver Meadow Golf Course.

Mr. Regan referenced the Council agenda and feedback, it seemed a list of tasks that would be a workplan for the coming year of things like the Sustainable Tree Program, the foundation to getting things in the ground. He encourages continuing the outreach and school stuff, and the beginning of new things like meeting with the Heritage Committee and the opportunity for grants for projects in the Heights. Ted would like to see the Tree Tour take on a more official presence. He suggested working with the Heritage Commission would be a great opportunity to establish that.

Ted also mentioned that during the Council meeting the Mayor brought up needing more trees in public spaces. Mr. Diers took this opportunity to bring up Bicentennial Square, which is currently in need of care. They discussed new developments in the City and the amount of greenspace (common space). Mr. Diers felt it important to not out-pace the capacity of the Committee. The Sustainable Tree Program is likely to max out and the Committee should consider how to take the next step, possibly through contracting out.

Discussion about the Heights: It was discussed that the newer commercial property developments on Loudon Rd. are well greened. There needs to be outreach to property owners to see if a tree-planting program can be established.

Mr. Diers stated that the first thing that typically gets cut out of development budgets is trees. Consideration is being made for raising funds for these areas. Mr. Tufts reminded the Committee that whenever a donation comes in towards a project, it can be packaged to cover a certain aspect of that project. Therefore, if the funding states trees will be planted, it can't be cut from the project. Whenever there is a large project, the Committee should support doing something innovative regarding tree planting. Mr. Major mentioned there \$5,000 in the CIP for the 2023 FY and unsure of the 2024 FY amount until the budget gets passed. Mr. Diers mentions the ongoing issue of finding locations to plant trees, example S. State St. He suggested possibly using the new sidewalk areas (ex. Pembroke Rd.) to establish some tree plantings, especially in front of peoples' homes. Target the community impacted by paving projects. Mr. Major stated that public meetings don't get held regarding sidewalks being constructed, instead public notices are sent. His paving crew also will knock on doors to advise abutters. Mr. Major offered to put literature in with the General Services mailings to spread the word.

b. School Board (Tom)

Matt Cashman responded to Mr. Daigle but they have been missing each other. Mr. Daigle is working to get Mr. Cashman's thoughts on the talking points discussed last month. Mr. Daigle may attend an upcoming capital facilities subcommittee meeting.

Ms. McKinley announced that the tree planting grant was awarded to Concord High School and Abbot Downing School. The plantings at the high school is scheduled for June 8th starting at 1:30 with a group of students (3 trees). Hannah McBride, the master gardener, will also be helping with the effort. June 16th they will be doing the plantings at Abbott Downing in the afternoon. Mr. Regan offered his services of watering the new trees during the months that no one is around to maintain sustainability of the trees. Stress was given to

creating good relationship and communication between the Committee and various school administrations in an effort to preserve trees.

c. Tree Champion Award (Ted)

Mr. Diers is hoping to get together with Tim Sink tomorrow to work on this. John mentioned that Ted had indicated this award would be given at a Council meeting next year and asked if instead it could be done sooner.

d. Blossom Hill Tree tour map (Stacey)

There are 23 trees on the tour that have been geocoded by Mr. Tufts. It would be easy to do the cemetery tour without leaving the walking path. There is a request for a one-page description of what tree tours are. Ms. Fenstermacher will forward the flyer from Ms. Brown to Mr. Diers. He will see if a short narrative can be developed to reflect the purpose and how it is being created. Mr. Diers mentioned discussing with key stake holders and elected officials is important.

e. Grant opportunities update (John & Liz)

Ms. McKinley stated they are still working on the application and qualifications for the grant through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Liz mentioned that the grant through the BIL will focus on three communities across the State in underserved areas. She clarified that the IRA Grant is 100% for underserved communities. This is the one the Heights project would fall under. June 1st is the cutoff and requires a big project to qualify. The committee previously determined that the City would not go after that grant at this time.

John mentioned that a back-burner item is Unutil funding grant around August. He will reach out to Heather at Unutil as a follow-up closer to that date.

5. Other Business

- a. Beth mentioned an email from Jeff Evans (Energy & Environment Advisory Committee) as a follow up from the Stock Take mentioning tree canopy and initiatives in other states. Ms. Fenstermacher responded through Heather Shank regarding everything that the City and tree subcommittee have done, and suggesting collaboration or a joint meeting. Ms. Fenstermacher will forward this email to Mr. Diers.

Ms. McKinley mentioned the I-Tree Eco or I-Tree Design as options to forecast the impact of tree planting in certain areas. Mr. Diers suggested an aerial approach for the entire City, not just site specific. Ms. Corell noted that with more and more intense development, the City needs to be intentional to fulfill the Master Plan's recommendations to include greenspace in designs and reduce urban heat

- b. Mr. Diers & Mr. Tufts will be attending the Five Rivers Conservation Plan meeting on 6/5. Conservation Commission members will also attend. No one from the City Staff or Council members will be able to attend because it is on the same night as the final City Budget public hearing.
- c. Suggestion to send a thank you letter to Bob Allen at Eversource. Mr. Regan will draft one and forward it on to Ms. Fenstermacher.
- d. Ms. Corell asked for whether we plan to meet during the summer months be added to the June agenda.

6. Next Meeting: June 29th, 2023 @ 8:00 a.m.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alicen Twardosky
Administrative Specialist II

DRAFT