

City of Concord
Conservation Commission
Tree Subcommittee

Minutes
October 26, 2023 Meeting
Council Chambers, City Hall Annex, 43 Green Street

In Attendance:

Subcommittee Members: John Regan, Zib Corell, Craig Tufts, Tom Daigle, Peter Breu, Liz McKinley, Councilor Stacey Brown.

Absent: Rick Chormann, Ted Diers (Chair)

Staff: Heather Shank (Planning), Jim Major (General Services)

1. Call to Order.

Zib Corell acted as chair in the absence of Ted Diers. The meeting was called to order at 8:05 AM.

2. Minutes of September 21, 2023.

The meeting minutes for the meeting held on September 21, 2023, were unanimously approved with an amendment to note that Rick Chormann is a Tree Subcommittee member and should be listed as absent.

3. Farmers' Market Recap

The group discussed the experiences with the farmers' market this year and how the subcommittee could improve its engagement. Key conclusions from the discussion include that spring is a good time to be present at the farmers' market because it is tree planting season and trees are on people's minds. Summer was also thought as a good time, as the idea of shade trees are more appealing in summer heat. It seemed that the fall markets this year were less productive for the subcommittee in terms of the number and quality of interactions as compared to spring and summer. It was agreed that next season the subcommittee would focus on having a presence at spring and summer markets.

In addition to having a presence at farmers' markets, it was noted that the subcommittee had an offer to participate in a radio show on trees on WKXL, a local AM radio station.

4. Tree Planting on the Heights

The group reported on the walk that was held to seek tree planting locations on the Heights along roads that are planned for paving next summer. There were over 50 possible locations identified, with the subcommittee noting that some appeared very promising. The group discussed how to get the list together so that Community Forester Ryan can weigh in on each location for suitability for tree planting.

It was noted that Engineering may do a public meeting in advance of the paving. General Services will be sending letters to all addresses along the roads to be paved. Jim Major noted that he could include a message about tree planting in this letter. It would also be possible to send specific letters to specific addresses if their property was identified as

being a candidate for tree planting. Mr. Major anticipated the letters may be sent in the December/January timeframe.

It was noted that the sandy soils are extremely well drained and can be a challenge for tree survival.

It was noted that Pembroke Street from Branch Turnpike to Loudon Road may not be included in the paving this season in anticipation of a sewer expansion project that may require digging up the road.

5. Ongoing/Follow-Up Items

- a. School Board – Tom reiterated that the school board is preoccupied with the issue of construction of a new middle school, so now is not the best time to engage them on trees. Tom will ease off on communications with the school in the near term, but we can continue to seek grant funding, donations, or projects.

The group also discussed the Broken Ground site that is a possible location for a new middle school, noting that it would mean clearing a forested lot.

- b. Tree Inventory – The group noted how recent or planned developments in Concord have been or may be removing a substantial number of trees or clearing open spaces of trees. Brief discussion occurred on the tree inventory and whether it should be expanded beyond downtown, or updated and enhanced. There was discussion about zoning and site plan regulation options for preserving trees in advance of new development. A hypothetical option could be to require developers to tally the number of trees to be removed against new trees planted on their development site. There was discussion on how such a regulatory change would require support from City Council, and how it may be perceived by the business community. This may be a topic to explore at a future meeting.
- c. Tree Champion Report – This item was tabled in the absence of Mr. Diers. It was noted that some of the group may need to assist Mr. Diers with this work to keep it moving.
- d. Tree Tours- Councilor Brown reported on a tree advocacy tour she put on with a scout group, starting at the Arch in front of the State House. Councilor Brown reported it was a great event.

Discussion ensued on past tree tour efforts and how we might move forward with tree tours. It was agreed the committee would work toward getting content and materials together so committee members could host tree tours or have materials for self-guided tours.

- e. Grant Status- Liz McKinley reported that there may be applications for small grants for schools. Last year all 11 applications were awarded, but this year may be different. Awards will be based in part on needs and past successes.

6. Other Business

- a. The idea of the subcommittee getting a tour of the state nursery in Boscawen came up. The group thought it was an excellent idea and would pursue options. It was noted that they may need volunteers for seed sourcing.
- b. It was noted that the New Hampshire State Historical Society recently planted trees on its property to replace aging trees that had been removed.

7. Next Meeting: November 30, 2023 at 8 AM.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 AM

Respectfully Submitted,
Craig Tufts