

Tree Task Force Minutes
December 7, 2023
Town Hall Conference Room
6:00

Attendance Kristen Dorsey, Marc Miller (final meeting), Susan Cherbuliez (final meeting), Tyler Kolle;
Absent Eric Horne

Updates

Spring/Summer 2023 Tree Treatments-

Email received on 12/4 from Earl, "I was able to get some information from Mike Hughes. The treatment was for Emerald ash borer protection on town properties and parks." Not the level of detail we hoped for, but just move forward and include "Invasive (pest and plant) Monitoring" section when drafting our Management Plan. Kristen did respond with the following, " -Assuming he found no evidence of infestation (yay); and that he did not look at street trees as well (properties are : Memorial / Gorman / Library / Town Hall / Safety Building... ?) - curious whether inoculation is something that needs to occur on a regular schedule . Wondering about the need to treat BTM late Winter '24, especially at Gorman Park - did he provide any advisement on that?"

Tree Revenue Account Tree Ordinance/Zoning Amendments

-Our TC 12/5 presentation to town council was comprehensive in detail regarding the purpose for adopting a Tree Ordinance and the proposed Zoning amendments; also gave brief history of TTF for the two new councillors and town manager. Due to a mistake by Kristen, the TC did not have copies of both documents in their meeting materials. Confusion expressed by John Egan about the order in which the Tree Ordinance is being processed - shared by TTF as well; unclear what happened with it in the ~year before it was reviewed by the town attorney. This lack of clarity continues, not much guidance was given to us i conclusion of our presentation. Eric requested establishment of Tree Revenue Account, also left adrift. Kristen will write to the new town manager/cc Caroline.

[*update* : Kristen spoke at the Planning Board meeting the following evening, 12/8, and they did receive copies of each document in time. They will take up the Zoning amendments with the oversight of Cecilia.]

ROW

-We had another discussion around difficulty ascertaining parking lot ownership/ ROW measurement- seems that Freeport only does surveys on an "as needed" (development proposal) basis. Long-existing, idle parking lots become mystery spaces. In an 11/6 email from Barbara Guffin, Complete Streets chair, "Regarding your question about the 'resource that Complete Streets references to determine the location and specifications of the town Right-of-Ways' I have not used a document. My understanding is that the roads in Freeport are defined at a set width such that the public-right-of-way is determined by a measurement from the center line to the designated width. I have copied Adam Bliss and others on this email to confirm." We know from Earl that different roads have different widths, so Complete Streets relies heavily on Adam's access to the needed information. TTF will need to rely on the street list provided by Tammy at DPW = compilation of centerline offsets street-by street; which is primitive, since not based on survey, but at least gives us a starting place for site potential.

-Lack of human capacity at Town Hall, will need to put IT projects such as AUTI tree inventory program and ArcGIS ("Cloud-based software to create and share interactive web maps...interact with data, zoom in, and search on the map. Use smart, data-driven mapping styles and intuitive analysis tools to gain location intelligence.") as 'long-range' projects in our Work Plan, be manual for now.

Climate Action Plan Workshops Canopy Strategies>Goals. There was a great deal of support by attendees for regulations and municipal leadership that set climate action standards. Green infrastructure appeared often in discussions and on "Actions" lists within each of the Strategy Areas. Tyler will continue to monitor Complete Streets activity through agendas, minutes, attendance at cross-cutting meetings; Kristen gets updates on Downtown Vision at FSAB meetings.

New Business

Momentum Grant- overseen by FEDC = for "improvements to the streetscape"/ open until 31 December / offering grants \$2500 to \$5000 / "Richardson (FEDC) expects the improvements to happen 'by spring.'" / have marketed the grants with an article in MaineBiz, also listed on the Town website, and the Chamber website. A project proposal is likely to be submitted by Mandy McPherson and local artists that may peripherally support our work, in the way of 'tree walks' that integrate local historical/ climate-related / ecosystem information for passersby or users of public green spaces.

Park and Ride - Group agreed to request that Earl get permission from DOT to expand/diversify plantings in the Spring and beyond, to develop a species-diverse landscape at P & R. Carrie Seaver is still our contact at Maine Beer for volunteer partnerships.

2023-'24 draft Work Plan- Revised last meeting's version and "finalized", although this is living document.

Public Tree Management Plan- Susan strongly advised that we use the *Northeast Center for Urban & Community Forestry Holdsworth Natural Resource Center. University of Massachusetts Amherst, A GUIDE: DEVELOPING A STREET AND PARK TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN.* (USDA Forest Service) We extracted the main elements for an outline, and identified "Key Players". Will continue this project at our January meeting.

Next Meeting

January 4, 2024- We may consider changing the regular schedule day and/or time to accommodate Eric's Nordic coaching obligation.

Next Steps

Follow-up with town staff re: ordinances and Revenue Account.

Identify our 2024 planting goals / add to Work Plan

Take a relook at our ordinances' language using the attorney's samples from Auburn and Augusta.

Continue drafting the Management Plan

Minutes Submitted

by Kristen Dorsey, 12/11/23