

**City of Essex Junction
Tree Advisory Committee
Minutes of Meeting
February 21, 2023**

Members Present: Nick Meyer, Nicole Klett, Warren Spinner, Rich Boyers
Guests: Max Seaton, Essex Junction Boy Scout Benjamin Edwards and his father.

I. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:10 pm by Nick.

II. Additions or Amendments to Agenda

No additions or amendments.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the January 16th meeting minutes was made by Warren, 2nd by Rich.

IV. Planting

Warren discussed planting for Spring 2023. He did a count of trees including 1 Celebration Maple, 2 Firefall Maples, 10 Matador Maples, 2 Red Maples, 12 Japanese Tree Lilacs, 1 Hackberry, and 9 Skyline Honey Locusts for a total of 37 trees at the Branch Out Burlington Nursery that are ready to be pulled. Others there but not ready for use as they are grown for about 3 years. He also has a list of locations including related to Emerald Ash Borer Replacement plans at Hayden Dr, Tyler Dr, Wilkinson Dr, Lavoie Dr, Cushing Dr, Lincoln St, Maple St behind Firebird, Maple St Park, corner of Educational and Drury Dr, Old Colchester Rd near hockey rink entrance, Pearl St near West St Ext, near Champlain Tractors on Pearl St, and Hiawatha School. Need logistics for getting the trees in location. Trees have to be dug up and transported. Looking into help with planting as the original planter has fallen through, prospects include landscaping companies, greenscape, public works, or other citizens. Nick had some concerns about maintenance and watering of this many trees esp as a workload for public works. The first year with the root system establishment is crucial and the watering plays a major role. Overall, planting and interplanting has been going well in terms of the Ash tree loss.

Ben and his father live on Lavoie Dr. and expressed interest in making sure that they have trees in their yard and neighborhood because of the benefits of trees. Mr. Edwards would like to bring up the tree replacement with his HOA. The Tree Committee has been very active in educating the neighborhood so that they are aware of the pest problem and loss of trees and can get involved with being proactive. There is a side of the street that is not considered city property and is left to the neighborhood to replace trees and maintain.

V. Arbor Day Celebration

Nick made contact with Hiawatha-Alice Weston. She has a group called the Earth Rangers. Nick can speak to the group in March and make plans to plant with them there. The Rangers

have tried to plant small seedlings and have not had success. Nick may need help with the ceremony on May 5th, Vermont's Arbor Day. There is a lot of open land and potential for planting at Hiawatha School.

VI. Crescent Connector Update

Nick and Warren updated group. Bid has been put out for building and won by Engineers Construction. A map was made years ago and it appears to be unchanged in terms of the landscaping plan. There are still trees planned for planting in bid. The connector will affect Park St near Namaste Garden restaurant and continue to Maple Street with areas to also include the railroad to Main Street/near the insurance building. Streetlights will be included to duplicate the current ones as they are now. There are sheets on landscaping in the plans with a 5 by 10 foot pit as planting area for trees. Community will take over landscaping but it is in the VTrans budget as of now. VTrans standards are being done per VTrans specs including soil. Two years to complete construction is allotted and the start has not been determined. Rick Hamlin will oversee for the city and the committee will review plans when official.

VII. Arbor Day Banner

Nick suggested a new banner to place at Five Corners to promote planting trees. It would be 6 by 3 feet and one was made by Vistaprint in the past. The cost is likely \$120 on vinyl with grommets. "City of Essex Junction. Celebrate Arbor Day. Plant a tree" is the working verbiage. Generic banner to reuse each year. We have reserved time the week of May 5th to hang the banner per Nick. Logo on file and Rich might have a copy. Nick will research and get a mockup to share.

VIII. Old/Other Business

-Tree Keeper Training Thursday April 6th at 6 pm is a solid date per Warren. This is a BOB event with an invite to Junction citizens. Nick and Warren can help welcome people and then the workshop would commence. Open to all committee members to participate. The event will be at 645 Pine Street and feature info on planting and caring for trees. This event is in alignment with March public education around planting trees. The committee could have a PSA that links back to a resource page and more instructions on how to plant a tree. BOB has a PSA used in the past that Warren will look into obtaining. Nicole and Nick agreed that it would be nice to add to the committee website and specifically under the heading Tree Resources place an article on planting a tree. Vermont Urban and Community Forestry website and Intl Society of Arboriculture also resources as well as the Arbor Day Foundation. Will forgo February PSA and aim for next year. Nicole will curate info for March and ask Ashley for guidance on web page and PSA announcement.

-Nick brought up needing identification for engaging with the public needing badges and Rich also suggested door hangers

-March 22nd is the date that Trustees are interested in the Tree Committee report from a few members.

-It would be beneficial to meet with New Community Development Director so we can update on committee work and acclimate to plans.

IX. Date for Next Meeting

The Committee will meet on March 21st at 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Nick made a motion to adjourn at 6:17pm, 2nd Rich.