

March 3, 2020  
Stoneham Tree Committee  
Stoneham Town Hall, 35 Central St., 2nd Floor Conference Room

RECORD OF DISCUSSION - NO VOTES TAKEN DUE TO LACK OF QUORUM

Attendees: Jim Previte, Susan Keeler, Nhai Coh

Also attending: Erin Wortman

Discussion with Erin Wortman, Director of Planning and Community Development

Discussion commenced at 6:05PM. Erin was asked to describe her job as Director of Planning and Community Development. She was initially hired as a Town Planner, a position that had been unfilled for the prior 13 years. Over time, various other duties were added in addition to those of a planner. Overall, what the responsibilities have in common is the focus on creation of a well designed community, for now and into the future. This includes aspects beyond just zoning and building, but also things like climate and transportation. A discussion took place relative to an upcoming event which will focus upon the Town's vulnerability in today's climate. The Tree Committee may be asked to participate. There is a Federal program called a Hazard Mitigation Plan. The firm of Weston and Sampson was hired to undertake the planning of this, and the process will enable the Town to apply for capital grants. The Commonwealth then has a process called an MVP planning process in which action items to mitigate the hazards are submitted. If we qualify as an MVP community, the Town would be able to apply for MVP grants. Something that Erin is working on for the future is called a "road diet", which is a traffic calming measure that could involve the tightening of lanes in the road. This could possibly result in more planting areas. Erin will keep us in mind and forward any potential grants for trees that come across her desk to us. She mentioned that we are currently an "EJ" (environmental justice) community, and that designation may help us to qualify for grants. We also discussed section 24-5 of the tree bylaw, which is the tree planting requirement for builders etc. constructing multiple housing units. There is currently no enforcement mechanism. Erin suggested speaking with the Planning Board about incorporating something into their rules and regulations which would create a condition requiring a landscaping plan. The discussion ended at 7PM.