

February 06,2020

Stoneham Tree Committee Meeting,

Stoneham Town Hall, 35 Central Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Attendees - Sue Keeler, Paul Mazzotta, Dave Goodberg, Nhai Cao, Jeanne Grieve, Jim Previte

Also Attending - Brett Gonsalves, DPW Director

Meeting convened at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda Item 1: Discussion with DPW Director Brett Gonsalves - Chairman Keeler started the discussion by asking "How can the Tree Committee help the DPW?" Comments were made that the TC advocates for maintaining trees. Mr. Gonsalves added that the DPW provides a process for cutting down trees. Jim Previte is the point man for trees. The MWRA project has given Stoneham \$40,000 dedicated to plant trees. Mr. Gonsalves estimated that at \$350 per tree, that will enable about 140 trees over several years. He suggests starting along Oak Street which was greatly impacted by the MWRA project. It was suggested that because of manpower constraints at the DPW, contracting out the tree planting should be looked into. If a tree planting project cost is \$5000 or less, three quotes are required, but no public bidding process is needed.

When questions were asked about a dedicated group in the DPW for trees, Mr. Gonsalves reported that he only knows of two communities with Forestry departments and that manpower is short in his department. When asked about volunteers helping with new tree watering, the TC was told that liability concerns restrict non-DPW access to equipment. Discussion about how to allocate time of contractors and dealing with a tree budget was left as an open question. Currently, there does not appear to be a line item in the Budget for trees. There is a line item in the DPW budget for Parks and Rec. Mr. Gonsalves suggested that in future, the Town Administrator needs to set up a funding process for a tree budget.

Returning to the matter of tree planting, Mr. Gonsalves proposed that instead of limiting planting of public trees to grass strips between sidewalks and the street, that public trees might be allowed to be planted on private resident's property within 15 feet of the street if the resident requests a tree. If the tree is planted on private property, it would be the resident's responsibility to maintain the tree. He offered to create a Tree Request Form with information about utility location, suitable tree location, care, maintenance, and a short list of kinds of trees. This offer should be explained and published or advertised to Stoneham residents in newspapers, flyers and on-line. Private requests from residents would be analyzed and prioritized. A survey of Oak Street residents for tree locations and interest in having a tree needs to be made. It was suggested that a limit of 25 trees should be ordered, purchased and planted in the Spring. Additional trees can be ordered and planted in the Fall.

Mr. Gonsalves will send a suggested Tree Request Form to Sue. A subcommittee of Jim, Dave and Sue

was formed to review and expedite this process since the Spring planting time is quickly approaching and trees need to be selected and purchased and public locations need to be identified.

Agenda Item 2: Approve Minutes - Sue detailed the addition to the January meeting notes of the attendance of a Stoneham resident at the January TC meeting. A motion was made to accept the notes subject to the addition; the motion was seconded and unanimously passed.

Agenda Item 3: Grants subcommittee - clarify task- Grants are to be identified to be sure we qualify, to discuss feasibility, to bring the Grants back to the TC and then pass along to the Stoneham Grant Writer. Jim reported that Mass Releaf grants are 50 - 50. Both Eversource and Mass Releaf trees are 2.5 "to 3" diameter trees.

Agenda Item 4: Map, logo - David Goodberg - Dave projected a sample Google Doc to show features of the product. He then projected his Stoneham Tree Map and explained how to use it. TC members received the demo with great enthusiasm and positivity.

Agenda Item 5: Tree Warden's Conference - Jim Previte - Jim reviewed some of what went on in the Conference and brought the TC ArborDay folders for ordering trees, books on trees, and information on a kids' poster contest.

Agenda Item 6: Non deliberative items and/or scheduling -

- Sue reported that Erin Wortman, the Town Planner will attend a special March 3rd evening meeting with the TC and that Megan Day will attend a meeting in April or May.
- Sue reported that Dava is still pursuing the Stockwell Account, but that it is not looking positive.
- Jim reported that Ash Borers have been detected in Auburn and that the problem of pests and invasive species is growing.
- Jeanne reported that she will attend a Superintendent's meeting on Thursday, Feb. 13, with all school principals to introduce the Tree Committee and advocate for school emphasis on trees. Jim will attend too.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.