



CITY OF SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

TREE COMMISSION

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KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
MAYOR

MINUTES OF THE SALEM TREE COMMISSION

FEBRUARY 24, 2020

On February 24, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. the Salem Tree Commission held a meeting at 98 Washington Street, Salem, MA.

1. Roll Call

In attendance were: Chair Darleen Melis, Vice Chair Kirt Rieder, Members: Joshua Arenstam, Curt Dragon, Charlotte Enfield, Paul L'Heureux, Rachel McCarter and David Rowand; Tree Warden Robert LeBlanc and Joanne Roomey, Commission Clerk. Absent was Naomi Cottrell.

2. Tree Warden's Report

- **Grant Updates**

- A grant has been submitted by the Tree Department, through the DPS and the Salem Planning Board, for FY2020 to request \$50,000 for CBDG monies for the planting of trees.
- The MVP grant has no new updates currently.
- No updates of additional information from the DCR on the Urban Challenge Grant for this year.

- **Planning Board:** A meeting was held for the stakeholders, involving the Derby St. walkway renovation and re-model. Some of the sidewalk design proposals have changed, due to the need to incorporate a bike lane in the road width. Some of the on-street parking spaces are being reviewed and a couple of roadway intersections may need to be modified due to some of the concerns raised at the meeting.

- **Tree Permits:** Right now, there is one (1) tree permit that has been issued for tree protection of trees within the rootzone of the proposed Salem Harbor Walkway Extension Project. This permit is for several trees located within the protected zone of Essex St. at Beattie Park and Webb St. and for three (3) birch trees located just behind the guard rail on Szetela Lane. This is a Salem Engineering project and is being run by the City.

- **Tree Removals/Stump Work:** In the past month a total of (35) stumps were ground out in preparation of future planting locations.

- **Purchasing Contracts for 2020:** There are two (2) tree related contracts out for bid right now. The first is for tree removal and stump grinding, that will be opened on Thursday, the week of February 24, 2020. The other is for tree planting and plant health care and that will be opened in the middle of March.
- The Tree City USA application is complete with signatures by the Mayor and we should be notified shortly on our recognition and designation. The Massachusetts event, sponsored by DCR, for all Towns and Cities will be held in Needham on May 7, 2020.
- The Proclamation for Arbor Day in Salem is ready for the Mayor's signature. The Proclamation will designate the last Friday of April 24, 2020. This coincides with the State.
- There are plans that are in the works to celebrate Arbor Day with the fifth graders at the Horace Mann Laboratory School on Friday, May 8, 2020. We will be handing out seedlings to all the kids in fifth grade at that school and propose planting a Sugar Maple tree nearby on the Salem High School campus. We will also then move to a site close by and plant the Arbor Day trees on the school grounds for those kids who do not have a yard in which to plant. Seedlings will be delivered to the other five elementary schools for each fifth grader to take one home.

3. **602 Loring Ave Project**

Tomasz Wabno, the developer at 602 Loring Ave, presented a quick overview of their project. Their site is difficult to develop due to the lack of visibility pulling out of the property onto Loring Ave. They have to drill and remove a rock face to allow for improved sight lines and to accommodate their parking lot. The land they are developing is within a City of Salem easement. They will purchase the parcel but need to cut down (27) trees to make the site design work. Their landscape plan replants only half of the trees on their property that they expect to remove. They are willing to pay into the City's Tree Replacement Fund for the balance of the trees that are scheduled for removal.

4. **Peabody Essex Museum presentation on "Blue Trees" exhibit for April 2020**

Jane M. Winchell, The Sarah Fraser Robbins Director/The Dotty Brown Art & Nature Center at the PEM gave a presentation regarding *The Blue Trees* installation exhibit for April 2020. Konstantin Dimopoulos is the artist for the exhibit. *The Blue Trees* installation is an environmental call to action. Using a biologically safe watercolor and a team of community volunteers, the artist will temporarily transform a selection of smooth-barked Ginkgo trees on PEM's campus and nearby to focus our attention on the growing issue of deforestation and other threats to trees around the globe. The harmless blue colorant will wash away over time, and the trees will gradually return to their natural state.

Why blue? Dimopoulos chose this color because blue trees do not exist in nature. By doing so, he compels us to take notice of these otherworldly trees and prompts a larger conversation about the role of trees in our local environment and elsewhere on the planet.

The installation on the Essex Street Walking Mall and on PEM's Axelrod Walkway is the 27th international *Blue Trees* installation by Dimopoulos and the first one in the Greater Boston area.

5. National Grid presentation on pruning plan for city trees

Lance Wade, Forestry Supervisor for NationalGrid gave a presentation regarding the plan for pruning city trees. He was accompanied by Neil Doran, Merrimack Forestry Supervisor and Faith Hassell, Program Manager for Community and Customers.

Mr. Wade spoke about trimming specifications, list of recommended trees to plant near power lines, two circuit maps, Asian Long Horned Beetle and Emerald Ash Borer flyers.

Mr. Wade talked about how many customers they serve and the service territory. He presented a safety message about protecting yourself from ticks. The objective of their program is to provide safe, reliable, electric service through a cost-effective vegetation management program.

In conclusion, Mr. Wade talked about the emphasis of safety with their crews. He went over Arbor Day, Earth Day and other volunteer events they participate in. Mr. Leblanc brought up Section 14 of Chapter 87 and that it needs to be followed. Mr. Leblanc requested that they have a certified Arborist consultant on site to monitor the trimming. Mr. LeBlanc will follow-up with the Commission regarding the agreement between the City and NationalGrid.

- 6. Remarks from the Public:** Lynn Fletcher, a professor in the Biology Department at Salem State attending the meeting. Ms. Fletcher advised the Tree Commission about the Tree Tenders program in Philadelphia (<https://phsonline.org/programs/tree-tenders/>) and thought that it would be wonderful to start something like that here. She also wants to volunteer to help new trees get established and strong for years to come.

- 7. Approve Minutes:** Mr. Rieder moved to approve the **January 27, 2020** minutes. Mr. Dragon seconded. The motion carried.

8. Tree Manual – SECTION V. STREET TREE SPECIES RECOMMENDATIONS

There will be a Tree Commission Meeting on February 27, 2020 for purposes of reviewing and editing Section V of the manual.

9. Century Tree Program

Planting the next generation of tall majestic trees in the lead-up to Salem 400 in 2026. Salem residents are invited to submit their suggestion for potential sites for Century Trees by emailing the location to centurytree@salem.com. The City's Tree Warden and Tree Commission will review the proposed locations to select the most appropriate ones for plantings that will grow and flourish throughout the 21st century. Each Century Tree will be designated with a plaque commemorating its planting. The spreadsheet listing the suggestions to date was reviewed.

10. **Discussion on the plan to educate public about Chapter 43:** The Board agreed to continue this discussion at the next meeting on March 16, 2020.
11. **New Business:** None
12. **Next Meeting Date:** March 16, 2020
13. **Adjournment:** Mr. Arenstam made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. L'Heureux. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Roomey
Commission Clerk

**Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A §18-25 and
City Ordinance Sections 2-2028 through 2-2033**