

FINAL

City of Lebanon
Tree Advisory Board
Minutes, May 2, 2022 at 5:30pm
City Hall Meeting Council Chambers first and then Room 2: LebanonNH.gov/Live

MEMBERS PRESENT (7/7): Kathleen Corrigan, Charlie DePuy, Andrew Garthwaite, Kelsey Haigh, Susan Johnson, Mary Maxfield, Sarah Riley

MEMBERS ABSENT (0/7): All present

STAFF PRESENT: Present in person: Kristine Flythe (Recreation Program Director, Lebanon Recreation Department); present via teleconference:

STAFF NOT PRESENT: Paul Coates (Director of Lebanon Recreation Department)

GUEST: Everett Hammond from the Department of Public Works

1. CALL TO ORDER: Andrew Garthwaite called the meeting to order at about 5:35 pm.
2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes from our last meeting on April 4 were not distributed, therefore they cannot be approved until our next meeting.
3. SPECIAL DISCUSSION WITH EVERETT HAMMOND (Lebanon DPW)
 - a. DPW tree budget low, maybe \$10K/yr
 - i. Therefore there is little money for either planting or cutting down
 - ii. No money for dealing with disease
 - b. DPW responsibilities:
 - i. Most DPW work is removing dying or dead trees or trimming branches that are causing problems (e.g. The trees in front of the Mascoma Savings Bank were recently removed because of heaving soil and sidewalks around the trees.)
 - ii. Any tree in the right of way is the city's responsibility. (Notetaker's side note: Public right-of-way means the area on, below, or above a public roadway, highway, street, public sidewalk, alley, waterway, or utility easement in which the municipality has an interest. is the city's responsibility.)
 - iii. Homeowners' responsibilities are still a matter requiring research.
 - iv. The city doesn't have a comprehensive right-of-way map. That would be really helpful.

- v. MapCity GIS maps for sewers, drains, water are better organized but not perfect.
- c. Other questions:
 - i. Does Heather of Liberty Utilities have a sense of rights-of-way?
 - Kristine will ask.
 - ii. How might the Tree Advisory Board (TAB) get involved in city tree issues at a more planning or proactive level than a reactive crisis level? (For example, during current road work near the CCBA, a tree was almost cut down until Kristine called.)
 - Andrew is starting a list of “significant trees” in Lebanon and invites us all to add to it.
 - Sarah suggested that the TAB could propose to the City Council an ordinance with criteria for what gets cut down. Or maybe we could be squeaky wheels so that work gets done *around* a tree.
 - iii. Does DPW have an inventory of trees?
 - Everett: No. Focused on utilities.
 - iv. Susan: How about in winter with plowing?
 - Everett: Having bump outs for trees is a pain and even dangerous for drivers. For crosswalks, that’s different and okay. Trees and utility poles have to be 8 feet from the side of the road in a 25-30 mph zone. The amount of set-back is categorized by speed limit. This is set by state. This would be done by GIS people.
 - v. Charlie: Looking at residential streets, curbs seem to be going in everywhere. Are curbs a way to protect trees or for general safety purposes?
 - Everett: Neither. The current curbs are being put there for drainage, water, and sewage problems.
 - An aside from Sarah: Curbs are not good for drainage. Maybe not the best way to protect trees.
 - Everett: The curb projects in Lebanon are almost all done. The trees to be planted tomorrow by the Mascoma Bank (by Colburn Park) will be planted with no mulch. Rather they will be planted surrounded by granite cobbles with a design that will allow a path for water.
 - vi. Kelsey: City trees present tough problems. The current volume of soil, for example, is very low.
 - Charlie: Could the excavations be deeper?
 - Kelsey: Roots often grow horizontally.
 - Everett: In that 5 foot grass strip between the sidewalk and road, eventually you’re going to get sidewalk heaves.
 - Everett: Small trees with low branches are a problem on busy sidewalks.
 - vii. So who pays the bill for planting trees?
 - Libraries, schools

- Trees are often the last thing considered.
 - The Mascoma Bank trees were actually included in the DPW budget.
 - viii. Charlie: Is there a policy that if a tree is going to be cut down, it will automatically be replaced?
 - DPW doesn't have a dedicated tree person or policy.
 - d. A recap of important unanswered questions or needs:
 - i. What trees does the city own (right-of-way) vs what landowners own, especially in urban environments? Knowing where the rights-of-way are is nuanced (e.g. I might own it from my land to the center line down the middle of the road, but there is still a right-of-way.)
 - Portsmouth, Concord, and Nashua all have different approaches to ROW. Dupere suggested that Lebanon decide where we are and where we want to be.
 - ii. Doing an inventory of our urban trees. Especially urgent with ash trees. An inventory would be important because we need to know what trees we can influence.
 - iii. One of our goals is planting trees in urban areas. We need to coordinate with the city to plan this.
 - Everett said it could be with him.
 - iv. Charlie: Should we have a tree ordinance to help us set policies?
 - Homework before next meeting: Look up tree ordinances from other municipalities.
4. OLD BUSINESS:
- a. North Westboro Park
 - i. We think we should have input into this. We expect the city should ask for our input here.
 - ii. Concern expressed that the design for the work planned there is by a city engineer, not a landscape architect. None of the suggested for species to be planted came from the revitalization committee. Shoreland Protection Act regulates vegetation removal within 250 foot buffer of the waterbody. Someone took down the shoreline trees. The city seems frustrated with how things have progressed in that area.
 - iii. We have to figure out where from our world that new plantings can be budgeted.
 - Ron Rhodes (with Conn. River group, helped with Mascoma River cleanup) offered to speak with us.
 - Funding sources: NH Charitable Foundation
 - The requirement that Lebanon fix the shoreline is from the state.
 - Leb Rec Dept is hoping volunteers can do the plantings.
 - The plan is for trees to have 1-inch trunks.
 - Someone from the Ottauquechee tree workshop is being sent to talk with us.
 - b. Public Meetings

- i. Definition: What determines whether an event or communication is classified as a “public meeting” or not is whether there is a quorum.
 - There are 7 of us on the Tree Advisory Board, so 4 would be a quorum.
 - ii. Allowed: Email bcc’ing info within the whole group.
 - iii. Not allowed: Conversationally going back and forth with that info.
 - iv. Allowed: subcommittees or working groups of less than 4. Examples of possible working groups:
 - Urban heat island group: Charlie and Mary
 - Westboro: Susan and Kelsey
 - Tree warden: Andrew and Kathleen
 - Tree ordinance group: Susan, Kelsey, and Sarah
 - The tree warden could enforce the future tree ordinance
- c. Tree warden
- i. Kathleen: How big should our list of job expectations be, given that it’s a volunteer, part time position?
 - We all agree that this position could entail a massive amount of work.
 - Maybe we should be doing some of this...
 - Perhaps we could invite the prospective tree warden(s) to our next meeting

5. NEW BUSINESS: None

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Some of us should go to the May 9 Planning Board meeting about the housing/building projects proposed for Mechanic and Foundry Streets.

7. NEXT MEETING: Monday 6/5/22 at 5:30pm.

8. ADJOURNMENT: At about 7:11pm, Kelsey moved to adjourn, Sarah seconded. All approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Maxfield
Recording Secretary