

Draft Minutes

TOWN OF GUILFORD  
Tree Advisory Board  
Minutes – 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2021

The Tree Advisory Board held a virtual regular meeting on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2021 at 4:00p.m. with Chairman Shirley Girioni presiding.

Present: John Cunningham (Member at Large)  
Shirley Girioni (Guilford Garden Club)  
Caroline Herrick (Leete’s Island Garden Club)  
Shavaun Towers (Member at Large)

Also present: Tree Warden Kevin Magee

Liaison to Tree Advisory Board Dottie Colonese (Guilford Garden Club)

Absent: Patricia Keegan (Guilford Conservation Commission)

The meeting was called to order at 4:10p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Cunningham made a motion to accept the Minutes of 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2020. Ms. Towers seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

**Spring 2021 Tree Plantings:** Mr. Magee provided the following possible locations:- Fair Street: #64, #47; Broad Street - #53; State Street between North Street and Route One; possibly North Street itself; also below Route One the first house on the west side; #82 State Street; two locations on the north end of the Green where a Norway Maple was removed; adjacent to St. George Church; in front of the Town Hall where a sugar maple came down; Whitfield Street: #142, #148, #176, #199; Graves Avenue - #41. Mr. Magee said TAB should decide what it wished to do based on available funding. Mrs. Girioni reminded the Board that a memorial donation of \$500 had been made for Walter Weissenborn, possibly to replace the tree in front of St. George Church. Regarding funding Ms. Colonese said the Guilford Garden Club had \$13,653.49 but would not want to spend all of its funds. Mr. Cunningham pointed out that not every location had to be planted in one season and recommended spending \$5,000 in the spring. Mr. Magee noted that donations had been received for two other trees and estimated a total of 13 trees could be planted. Mrs. Girioni asked Mr. Cunningham and Ms. Towers to decide on planting locations, noting that there should be a coherent plan. Ms. Colonese said the Guilford Garden Club had had a guest speaker who recommended Winter Hawthorne as a good street tree. Ms. Towers said it would have to be a thornless variety and noted that they were prone to disease. Mr. Cunningham thought the speaker may have meant a Washington Hawthorne. He said they were hard to find and also grew wider than they were tall, as much as 20ft. wide if not pruned. Mr. Cunningham said it was better to have a tree where the branch structure was vase-shaped with the highest part of a tree over the sidewalk rather than spreading out. Mr. Magee asked if this variety could go on the Green or in a park setting. Ms.

Towers replied a park setting and agreed with Mr. Cunningham's comments about the shape of the tree. She added that it was a beautiful tree which did not get planted enough.

**High Street Tree Work:** Mr. Magee stated that he was waiting to meet on site with Eversource's arborist. Mr. Cunningham said he had made a site visit and found that almost all the trees on the north side were Norway Maples which had been planted far too close together. He said he was not recommending they all be removed which would upset the property owners. Instead he felt there should be selective removal on the utility wire side of the street. This would help the remaining trees and perhaps Eversource could find a way to open the middle of the trees directly below the wires. Mr. Cunningham also said there were two trees which were partially dead and should be removed. He offered to meet Mr. Magee on site so the worst trees on the wire side could be tagged with suggestions made regarding removal. On the south side of the street Mr. Cunningham said there were a lot of elms which was good and they seemed to be healthy. He recommended removing trees before beginning any planting. Mr. Magee agreed and said that the property owners would have to be contacted first. Mr. Cunningham also offered to meet with Mr. Magee and Eversource on site.

**Eversource Tree Work Update:** Mr. Magee stated that an Eversource representative was unable to attend today's meeting but he hoped to have her come to a future meeting. He showed a map of the proposed cutting areas. This would include State Street, Little Meadow Road, Hoop Pole Road, Hart Road, Northwood Drive and Lake Drive, the northern section of Great Hill Road and Cook's Lane. There will be approximately 43 miles of SMT (standard maintenance trimming) and 9 miles of BB METT (backbone trimming) for a total of 53.27 miles. Mrs. Girioni felt this was a lot of trimming. Ms. Towers said it looked, in terms of prioritization, that Eversource was getting down to some minor streets that had not been addressed in the past but it did seem to be a lot of mileage. Mr. Magee noted that he could have an Eversource representative attend a meeting before the Town agreed to this work. Mr. Cunningham felt the work was acceptable and that Eversource did a good job. He said if Mr. Magee approved this then he would also approve it. Ms. Herrick said one could not judge just by the amount of mileage, but that it depended on the size of the cutting and Ms. Towers agreed. Mrs. Girioni said it was good to meet with Eversource occasionally so they knew the Town was overseeing their proposals. She asked Mr. Magee to set up a meeting.

**Tree Removal Violation Seniff 16 Fair Street:** Mr. Magee said in the course of landscaping this property a crab apple tree was removed which the Town had planted in 2018. Mr. Magee said this came to light last September and in talking to the contractor he had said he would be planting new trees but this work has not been done so a violation letter was sent today. He said according to his notes the tree was a 2½" red crab apple and based on the statutes he was levying a fine of \$650. Mrs. Girioni asked if the tree was in decline. Ms. Colonese replied no, as she had been taking care of it. Mr. Magee said that earlier the Town had requested that two trees be planted but this was never done. Now the contractor may say that if he is planting two trees elsewhere he should not have to pay the fine. However, irrespective of this, Mr. Magee felt the fine should be paid and the Board agreed. He added that in future he would be asking for a bond when trees were supposed to be replanted.

**Development of Guilford Tree Policy:** Ms. Towers said she was still working on this project.

**Other Business: 1) Refurbish Tree Grates on Whitfield Street:** Mr. Magee reported that the soil in the planters had been redone just after Thanksgiving and some of the material had been removed down to the top of the root zone. Refurbishing the grates may be tied in to a sidewalk project. Mr. Cunningham said this work was not an emergency and although it would be better if it was done it would require funding. Mr. Magee said there was one grate where the tree was growing in to it so he might need assistance from Public Works. Ms. Herrick said it looked as though some of the trees on Whitfield Street were growing into the wires in front of Mix Design store (#25) and Breakwater Books (#81). Mr. Magee said the wires were communications not electricity so this should not hurt anything. Mr. Cunningham recommended removing the Bradford Pear trees. Mr. Magee said a plan was needed for future planting in front of the stores.

**Public Forum:** Ms. Colonese said someone had brought to her attention an article published in the New Haven register regarding notable trees and said she would like to do something similar in Guilford but would need TAB's expertise. She added that the tree commission in Hamden ran a notable tree of the month project and said she would be willing to do this. People are asked to nominate a tree that is special or has an interesting history. Mrs. Girioni said state forester Mike Pochan and former Tree Warden Leslie Kane had listed every notable tree in the down town right-of-way and a copy of this was in the Guilford Free Library. A pomegranate tree on State Street was listed as notable. Ms. Herrick stated that the Leete's Island Garden Club would be happy to participate in this project. Ms. Towers recommended looking at the notable trees of Connecticut first which should be online.

**Approval of Bills:** Ms. Towers made a motion to approve the following bill: Katharine Stewart, secretarial services. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

Ms. Herrick made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:55p.m. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

The next meeting of the Tree Advisory Board will be held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 at 4:00p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Stewart  
Recording Secretary