

Draft Minutes

TOWN OF GUILFORD Tree Advisory Board Minutes – 16th August, 2018

A regular meeting of the Tree Advisory Board was held on Thursday 16th August, 2018 at 4:00p.m. in the Town Hall with Chairman Shirley Girioni presiding.

Present: John Cunningham (Member at Large)
Shirley Girioni (Guilford Garden Club)
Estelle Nussbaum (Leete's Island Garden Club)
Sarah Torff (Guilford Conservation Commission)
Shavaun Towers (Member at Large)

Also present: Tree Warden Kevin Magee
Barbara Nugent (Guilford Garden Club)

The meeting was called to order at 4:00p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Cunningham made a motion to accept the Minutes of 10^h May, 2018. Mrs. Nussbaum seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. Mrs. Nussbaum made a motion to accept the Public Hearing Minutes of 5th June, 2018. Ms. Torff seconded the motion and it was carried with 3 votes in favor. Ms. Torff and Ms. Towers abstained since they were not present at the Public Hearing meeting.

Public Forum: There were no members of the public present.

Eversource Tree Work Update: Mr. Magee reported that Eversource had been trimming for several months. Basic trimming was completed and heavier cutting was now being done (ground to sky). Mrs. Girioni asked if there was any way to stop this and Mr. Magee replied that the Town could make that request. If tree branches were high enough above the wires the Town could request that these not be cut. Mrs. Girioni asked if "ground to sky" was necessary. Mr. Magee replied that after a bad spring storm where Maupas Road had been cut to that standard the road was passable whereas where the trees had not been trimmed the road had been closed by downed tree limbs and power lines. Mrs. Girioni noted that the Town of Greenwich had stricter cutting guidelines and said she would like to see TAB discuss this topic. Mr. Magee said that tree branches over 20 feet could be left untrimmed. Mr. Cunningham felt that would be good unless it affected the power system itself. Mr. Magee offered to email a list of roads that had been trimmed so the TAB members could inspect the roads for themselves. He added that initially the impact was unattractive but once the trees grew in a bit it looked better. At present Eversource was finishing up Maple Hill Road and a portion of the Sachem's Head area. Then work would move on to Tanner Marsh Road between Clapboard Hill Road, Goose Lane and Podunk Road.

Future Planting Locations: Mr. Magee gave the following report: **1) Fair Street:** A crab apple tree had been planted in front of 16 Fair Street. A pin oak was planted at 47 Fair Street (Nussbaum). Mrs. Nussbaum reported that she had ground down the tree stump in front of her house. She also mentioned that she would like a second tree planted at her house. **2) Town Green:** Three oaks were planted, one across from the Town Hall, one in front of the First Congregational Church and a memorial tree adjacent to St. George Church. **3) Park Street:** Mr. Magee said it was not possible to plant Redbud trees in front of Christ Episcopal Church because the trees that were shipped had to be

returned. Perhaps this planting can be done in the fall instead. A tree may be lost near the entrance to the Guilford Free Library. Mr. Magee mentioned that he had received a request from someone wishing to plant a memorial tree either on the Green or other town property. Mrs. Girioni asked Mrs. Nugent if there had been publicity on the memorial trees planted on the Green. Mrs. Nugent replied that it was hard to get articles published in the newspaper. Mr. Magee suggested placing an article in the Events publication. Mrs. Girioni reminded the Board that it had planned to write an article on the trees on the Green and she asked Ms. Towers to work with Nona Bloomer on this since several years ago Mrs. Bloomer wrote a history of the Green. **4) State Street:** Three tree lilacs were planted but there was an issue with the fourth tree which was relocated to Fair Street. The east side has been planted but the lower west side across from Union Street was problematic. It was suggested inviting neighbors to attend the TAB's November meeting in order to receive input on downtown tree planting. **5) Whitfield Street:** No trees were planted. Mrs. Girioni asked about a tree that had been cut down just south of #148. She asked if a tree could be planted in front of #148 but Mr. Magee said there was no room. Mr. Cunningham agreed saying there was no soil and it was a very problematic area. It may be possible to plant trees further south closer to the town marina. **6) Guilford Police Station:** A dogwood and red maple were planted. The red maple was donated as a late Arbor Day gift and the dogwood was funded by the Newcomers' Club.

Development of Guilford Tree Policy: Mrs. Girioni asked if the tree policy would be different to the tree ordinance and Mr. Magee replied yes. He said he would like to create something similar to the Town of Greenwich tree policy. Ms. Towers suggested Mr. Magee to go through the Greenwich policy and then the Board could review his edits.

Recommend Changes to Guilford Tree Ordinance: Ms. Towers circulated copies of a letter to the First Selectman regarding replacement of trees removed from municipal properties, and a proposed change to the tree ordinance to address this issue. She said the letter introduced the problems which then led to the ordinance changes. Mrs. Girioni recommended speaking to the new Town Engineer to receive her input first and agreed to do this with Ms. Towers. The Board approved the draft letter and proposed ordinance change. Regarding the roadwork project on Long Hill Road, Mrs. Girioni volunteered to speak to Bishop's Orchard to see if they would plant some trees to replace the ones that were removed. Mr. Cunningham thought a uniform block would look better but said it needed to be the right variety. He agreed to review the area and make recommendations. Mrs. Girioni said if Bishop's would not plant trees perhaps the Guilford Garden Club could do so.

Correspondence: 1) Jodie Lang, 128 Whitfield Street – Silver Maple & Elm Tree: Mr. Magee read a letter from Ms. Lang regarding the large trees in front of her house which she said she was told belonged to the town when she purchased her house. The letter stated in part: that in the past Ms. Lang had contacted the Town by email about removing the trees and received no response. However, Mr. Magee said he had explained the process to be followed to Ms. Lang and sent her the appropriate forms. He added that he had advised her about the Town's responsibility regarding trees and sent her an email that she could do pruning at her own expense. Ms. Lang said in a recent storm a large section had split off one of the trees and she felt they posed a danger and a liability. Mr. Magee said he had looked at the trees yesterday and felt the elm needed to be removed and one leader should be cut from the silver maple. **2) Susan Weiman, 66 High Street, – re maintenance of street trees along Whitfield Street stores:** Mr. Magee read an email from Ms. Weiman saying she was worried about the lack of attention given to the street trees, planters and signs lining the sidewalk and storefronts along the perimeter of the Green especially along Whitfield Street. Mr. Magee felt that the Town needed a town gardener. He recommended sending a letter to the First Selectman regarding

Ms. Weiman's concerns. Ms. Torff said if the Town wished to grow business it had to deal with this problem. **3) Reverend Ed Pantano, 65 Old Hwy/Route 79, Madison, CT 06443 – re proposed tree types on Guilford Green:** Reverend Pantano thanked the Town for the idyllic tranquility and simultaneously dynamic spontaneity of the Town Green but suggested rotating in other varieties of trees, particularly evergreens on the north end of the Green.

Other Business: 1) Refurbish Tree Grates on Whitfield Street: Mr. Cunningham said that a company would refurbish one grate so the Board would have an idea of cost but asked how the whole project would be paid for. Also perhaps instead of putting the grates back maybe a nice tree guard could be used with some groundcover which would add more green to the sidewalk. Mr. Cunningham noted that if there was a tree fund maybe some of this work could get done since the Town was overwhelmed. Mrs. Nussbaum thought the Leete's Island Garden Club could do some weeding.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40p.m.

The next meeting of the Tree Advisory Board will be held on Thursday 17th January, 2019 at 4:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Stewart
Recording Secretary