

Draft Minutes

TOWN OF GUILFORD
Tree Advisory Board
Minutes – 20th August, 2020

A regular meeting of the Tree Advisory Board was held on Thursday 20th August, 2020 at 4:00p.m. in the Town Hall with Chairman Shirley Girioni presiding.

Present: John Cunningham (Member at Large)
 Shirley Girioni (Guilford Garden Club)
 Shavaun Towers (Member at Large)

Also present: Tree Warden Kevin Magee

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

The meeting was called to order at 4:05p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Cunningham made a motion to accept the Minutes of 20th February, 2020. Mrs. Girioni seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. Mr. Cunningham made a motion to accept the Minutes of 11th June, 2020. Mrs. Girioni seconded the motion and it was carried with two votes in favor. Ms. Towers abstained since she was not present at the June meeting.

Tree Planting Update: Mr. Magee reported that at the end of June 7 Pin Oaks were planted on State Street. A resident at 108 State Street had complained about the trees in front of her house as she had wanted something with smaller leaves. Mr. Magee pointed out that the trees had been planted for community character. A pink Horse Chestnut was planted on the northwest corner of the Green. Another memorial tree was planted on the Green across from the Town Hall. This donor was upset because he could not attend this planting due to COVID-19. A cherry tree was planted on the Woodruff Property as a second pink Horse Chestnut was unavailable. A second Okame cherry was planted at 69 Whitfield Street. Mr. Cunningham asked if the trees were being watered weekly and Mr. Magee replied yes. A total of 11 trees were planted.

Mrs. Girioni said she had received a telephone call from Sarah McCulloch's daughter who wished to have some sort of memorial and plaque on the Green for her mother. Mrs. Girioni told her this would not be possible but that perhaps a bench could be installed somewhere. Mrs. Girioni explained that Mrs. McCulloch had written Guilford's Walking Guide, had chaired the Guilford Preservation Alliance and had been a strong historical preservationist. It was noted that the Parks & Recreation Department had specific criteria for the number of benches at Town parks and guidelines on memorials. Mrs. Girioni said she would have Mrs. McCulloch's daughter contact P&R.

Upcoming Tree Plantings: Mr. Magee mentioned that several trees on Whitfield Street were coming down. Mr. Cunningham recommended waiting until the next meeting to see what came down before making decisions on future plantings and the Board agreed. Ms. Colonese stated that the Guilford Garden Club had \$15,000 available. No grants were received. She said she had tried to put out some publicity without success. Mr. Magee added that one donation had come in to the Town in memory of a former employee. Ms. Thain asked if the cost for purchase/planting was still \$500. Mr. Magee replied yes.

First Selectman Matt Hoey joined the meeting at 4:35p.m. He stated that the donor of the tree planted across from the Town Hall had been upset because he could not attend the planting and wished to be reimbursed for his donation. After discussion Mr. Hoey said he was able to have the donor agree to being reimbursed for half the cost of the tree (\$250) and to have another tree planted which he could attend. Mr. Hoey said \$750 would be transferred from the Tree Warden's budget into the Tree Fund. The donor said there was a dead tree on Broad Street but Mr. Magee said he would have to look into that. The Board agreed to this resolution of this matter. The tree will be planted next spring. Mr. Hoey left the meeting at 4:45p.m.

Eversource Tree Work Update: Mrs. Girioni queried the tree stump at 1 Whitfield Street. Mr. Magee replied that Public Works was busy clearing up damage after Tropical Storm Isaias. Mrs. Girioni asked what percentage of Guilford lost power during the storm. Mr. Magee replied approximately 70%. However, he believed that the tree trimming work carried out by Eversource had helped. Mrs. Girioni queried current work. Mr. Magee replied that Eversource was cutting on Route 77 from Stepstone Hill Road south to the Green and some side areas, Goose Lane, Sunrise area, Sperry Drive and Saw Mill Road as part of the bridge replacement project there. Mr. Magee mentioned that trees were planted in front of the bus yard but these had not done very well. Mrs. Girioni said not to forget lower Long Hill Road.

The Board agreed to add to the agenda #36 High Street and #82 State Street.

#36 High Street: Mrs. Girioni said this property owner had called her regarding two maples that were uprooting his lawn. She said she checked this but did not see any problems with the lawn. Mr. Cunningham said he felt this street was a little over planted so it was a bit dark. He thought the solution would be to trim the trees not remove them. There were 2 Norway Maples on the street which was one too many. Mr. Magee said these trees had not been pruned properly so they had entered the utility wires. Mr. Cunningham recommended keeping the trees on the non-wire side. Ms. Towers noted that the maples should not have been planted. Mr. Cunningham agreed saying they became too big and were more a tree for a park. Ms. Towers said they were shallow-rooted and added that the whole street should be evaluated since the situation could not be solved by fixing one problem. Mr. Cunningham recommended making an inventory and then deciding what action to take – a plan and strategy was needed for the whole street. Ms. Towers noted that now was not the right time to thin the trees. She mentioned that there was a very damaged Maple at the corner by #66 High Street. Mr. Magee said he would look at this. Mr. Cunningham stated that he would conduct an inventory of the street before the Board's next meeting.

#82 State Street: Mr. Cunningham said the tree here was a Norway Maple and it was too big for the space and had lifted the sidewalk. Ms. Towers felt it should probably be removed as it was the wrong tree for the location. Mr. Cunningham suggested planting a new tree next spring.

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

Other Business: 1) Refurbish Tree Grates on Whitfield Street: Mrs. Girioni queried the location of the grant money. Mr. Magee replied that it was in an account. This work was going to be done this week but is now behind due to TS Isaias. Mr. Cunningham added that this was a bigger project than it seemed as it was more than just refurbishing the soil.

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

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.

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

The next meeting of the Tree Advisory Board will be held on Thursday 19th November, 2020 at 4:00p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Stewart
Recording Secretary