

**MINUTES of the
City of Portsmouth
Trees and Public Greenery Committee Meeting
January 11, 2023**

Members Present: Chairman Peter Loughlin; Vice-Chair Richard Adams; Peter Rice, Director of Public Works; Joanna Kelley, City Assistant Mayor; City Arborist Maxwell Wiater; Members Michael Griffin, Dennis Souto, A.J. Dupere, Patricia Bagley, and Deborah Chag

Members Excused: None.

Also Present: Patrick Crimmins and Alex Sellar of Tigie and Bond

Chairman Loughlin called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

1. Acceptance of the Minutes of the December 14, 2022 meeting.

The December 14, 2022 meeting minutes were unanimously **approved** as presented.

2. Tree Removal Requests

- **Pease Wastewater Treatment Plant (2 maples):** City request, poor health, maple, removals suggested by city. One maple near buildings has wounding and decay present throughout the main leader. Leaders have been failing in recent storms. Another maple near the parking lot is structurally compromised with significant wounding at attachment points of leaders.

Mr. Wiater said the Wastewater Treatment Plant personnel requested that two maples in their parking area be removed. He said one maple between two of the plant's buildings was in rough shape and had limb failures and open wounds and he thought it would be safer to remove the tree, considering the area. Vice-Chair Adams said he and Ms. Chag went out to the area to look at the trees but couldn't find them and also noted that the place was closed.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Griffin moved to recommend removal of the two maples, seconded by Mr. Dupere. The motion **passed** by a vote of 5-0, with two abstentions.*

- **Prescott Park, State St Parking Lot:** City request, poor health, maple, removal suggested by city. Tree is in poor health, many dead branches at the top of the tree, and basal damage present.

Mr. Souto said the whole row of trees going down to the water was in rough shape. Mr. Wiater said he was doing a lot of dead wood pruning on the trees but they were starting to look tired. It was further discussed. Ms. Chag asked if the city could be more proactive in a high-traffic area such as that. Mr. Wiater said they planned to replace some trees in certain portions of the park but were presently just mitigating the situation for now.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Bagley moved to recommend removal of the tree, seconded by Mr. Souto. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote.*

- **South Mill Pond Parking Lot:** City request, poor health, linden, removal suggested by city. Tree has clear issues including decay and structural inadequacies. When considering the use area, it is appropriate for removal.

Mr. Wiater said a lot of the linden's limbs had fallen and recommended that the tree be removed in the spring with the area would be cleaned up and other trees would be replaced.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Bagley recommended removal of the tree, seconded by Ms. Chag. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote.*

- **182 Colonial Dr:** City request, fair health, linden, removal suggested by city. Tree was subject to significant storm damage and utility clearance pruning.

Mr. Wiater said the linden had some pruning done to it by the utility company and had significant limb failures. He noted that it wasn't part of the sidewalk removal project but that what was left of the tree wasn't worth retaining. It was further discussed.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Bagley moved to recommend the removal of the tree, seconded by Ms. Chag. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote.*

- **170 Colonial Dr:** City request, fair health, linden, removal suggested by city. Tree was subject to utility clearance pruning, and what remains is growing down toward the ground.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Bagley moved to recommend the removal of the tree, seconded by Ms. Chag. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote.*

3. Public Right-of-Way Planting Requests

- Portsmouth Regional Hospital parking lot development: Alex Sellar, of Tighe & Bond, is seeking approval to fulfill Condition 1.11 of the Site Plan Review Regulations of selected species to be planted in the right of way at 444 Borthwick Ave. Plantings in the public Right of Way must receive approval from the Trees and Greenery Committee.

Patrick Crimmins and Alex Sellar of Tighe and Bond were present on behalf of the hospital. Mr. Sellar said they had coordinated the species and removal of four trees with Mr. Wiater as part of their site plan approval. He said the two species were the swamp white oak and the Kentucky coffeetree, which were chosen because they were trees that tolerated urban conditions like drought, salty soils, excessive sunlight, and so on.

Chairman Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Dupere moved to grant approval for planting the trees, seconded by Ms. Chag. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote.*

4. Follow-up on tree removal requests for 107-109 Union Street

Mr. Wiater said the city was planning on keeping those trees for now. He was asked if someone contacted the resident. Mr. Rice said the City staff would reach out to the resident and that he would appreciate that the committee not contact residents about planned actions because if a statement were made by a committee member that wasn't correct, there could be consequences because the resident could say that the committee said something different. It was further discussed.

5. Evergreen Identification Presentation by AJ Dupre, Urban Forester

Mr. Dupere gave a brief presentation on how to identify different types of evergreens that are common in Maine and NH. He showed samples of a variety of different evergreen branches and explained ways of identifying them. He said he wrote a training book that was available on line and would soon be posted on the city website.

6. Update from City Arborist Maxwell Wiater

Mr. Wiater said an arborist technician was hired. Mr. Loughlin praised Public Works management for the very high quality of employees who deal with trees and greenery.

7. Tree Planting for the City's 400th

Mr. Wiater said he was working on the 400th Anniversary planting project and trying to get all the retrenchment pruning done. The recent nor'easter was discussed and Mr. Wiater said only one tree in Portsmouth had to be removed.

Mr. Rice showed a video of which steps were necessary to correctly plant a tree, including how to select the site, what to wear, what tools to use, and how to plant and maintain the tree. He said it would be posted on the city's website soon. The city's tree equity score of Number 81 in the nation was discussed. Chairman Loughlin briefly discussed the history of tree planting in Portsmouth.

8. Old Business

There was no old business.

9. New Business

Mr. Griffin said there was a large dead pine in the Spinnaker Point parking lot. Mr. Wiater said he was aware of it.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 8, 2023

The meeting **adjourned** at 8:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
Trees and Public Greenery Committee Recording Secretary