

Tree Committee

March 5, 2014, Mason Library

I. Chairman Dennis Gibbons called the meeting to order at 5:20 PM; present were members Dennis Gibbons, Lisa Bozzuto, Maria Ahlin, Jess Wikle, Hilda Shapiro, Steve Adams and Michael Wise. Absent: Laurie Epstein, Beth Moser, Susan Sheridan and tree warden Michael Piretti.

II. Draft minutes from the meeting of January 8, 2013 were approved without objection.

III. Old business

A. Tree inventory update

Gibbons, Bozzuto and Molly Freilicher inventoried Stockbridge Road from the sycamore to Belcher Square, the east side to the crabapples at Gans and Micheles (beyond that, there are no town trees on that side) and then across the street from the park; there are few public trees from Shiro back up to the stoplight. Gibbons and Freilicher also inventoried around Belcher Square, where there are some maples and a honey locust. From there to Domaney's, there are no town trees (and few opportunities for them). The inventory of those sections along the street is complete. So far, the inventory lists 54 trees. They did not do the cemetery. Gibbons has encountered some resistance to putting the free software, iTree, and the data onto a town computer. The concern seems to be about committee members accessing other items that might be on a DPW computer. The solution should be to store the data on a cloud server; indeed, that seems to be how Molly is doing it now on a DCR tablet. There should be an account for the town's trees, under the town's control and accessible to the committee. Bozzuto suggested using some of the funds Moser said were available from the now-defunct committee to buy a tablet for the use of the tree committee.

B. DCR grant letter of intent and inventory plan

Ahlin reported difficulty getting responses from the town tree warden and DPW about locations and approvals for planting. DOT responded to inquiries more quickly, indeed on the same day. Nominally, there is a \$5000 charge to access state property for such purposes, but DOT assured that the fee would be waived. The committee reviewed a draft application prepared by Ahlin and Bozzuto (with some editorial assistance from Wise). DOT would like to do a site visit once we have decided where we want to plant. Buzzuto suggested small trees and shrubs. Gibbons suggested something more substantial in open spaces, such as in front of The Cove, by Thompson Brook, next to Shiro and beside Asia Barong. Wikle presented an aerial photo overlay as the basis for discussion of possibilities taken from the list of approved trees. The rights of way here are under state jurisdiction. Decision about how large a grant to ask for is deferred until planning gets further along.

C. Arbor Day 2014

Shapiro reported on coordinating with schools and the Renaissance Art Center for Arbor Day-related programs. Gibbons will ask for donation of a gingko or other tree, perhaps to plant in the cemetery along State Road. Bozzuto will contact Moser about doing a press release.

IV. Other business

A. Tree City USA

Gibbons reported that the Tree City designation, for 2013, is in order. The Arbor Day Foundation has the current application.

B. Comment on Main Street

Adams reported on recent item in the Berkshire Record. The author evidently did not do much research. For example: it is not all hybrids, there will be two levels of tree mass. The town manager told Gibbons the article was coming up, and Gibbons gave her the committee's response to Mickey Friedman's article. There is probably no need for a formal response, but members should be ready to respond to inquiries.

C. Resignation

Steve Adams read to the Committee his letter of resignation, noting his appreciation for the work the committee has done, on the Main Street project, getting Tree City USA designation, doing Arbor Day programs and starting an inventory to support planting and maintenance, and noting the frustration of getting little support from DPW and the town tree warden.

V. The next meeting will be April 2, 2014.

VI. The chair adjourned the meeting without objection at 6:25 PM.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Michael DeWise". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.