

Tree Committee

April 2, 2014, Mason Library

I. Chairman Dennis Gibbons called the meeting to order at 5:16 PM; present were members Dennis Gibbons, Lisa Bozzuto, Maria Ahlin, Laurie Epstein, Beth Moser, Jess Wikle, Hilda Shapiro, Michael Wise and tree warden Michael Piretti. Absent: Susan Sheridan.

II. Draft minutes from the meeting of March 5, 2013 were approved without objection.

III. Old business

A. DCR grant letter of intent and inventory plan

Gibbons met with Kevin Whalen and DOT, looking at Stockbridge Road from Belcher Square to McDonalds. The right of way, where DOT approval is required, is a narrow strip; beyond that, businesses have to approve. DOT is not excited about trees under the power lines, even short ones. And DOT does not want trees in the strip between the sidewalk and the road! Because of frost heave risk to the sidewalk. DOT will take down the ailing ash with the scarred base by Four Brothers. Around Shiro, the town records will need to be consulted to determine who owns the surrounding parcels. The Cove may be the only spot where something could be planted on the DOT-controlled spot. From there up to Berkshire Home, there aren't many opportunities. A shrub could be forgotten, and could obscure signs; a Sargent crab would probably be too tall. At Asia Barong and NAPA, there isn't much room. Berkshire Bank has more space; we would have to ask. The new 528 Café has planted some crabapples already. Gibbons and Bozzuto will take another walk along this route for ideas. In general, there isn't as much opportunity along this strip as we had hoped.

B. Arbor Day 2014

Shapiro reported on her talk with Kate Malone Smith at Monument Valley. She has 22 students doing art project for Arbor Day. Shapiro will check about where they are going: probably Mason Library. At Berkshire Bank, there will be items done by students at the Renaissance Art Centry by Jennifer House. Other items for a press release: the exhibit that Gibbons has in the library lobby, and the new information on the committee website. Piretti has not heard from the Eric Houpt, who usually volunteers maintenance on Arbor Day; Piretti will check with him. Gibbons checked with DPW to confirm the site for the ginkgo that Gibbons intends to plant, donated by Wards if Greg agrees. Gibbons also plans to prune some things along Stockbridge Road. Gibbons will go to the Select Board next week for the proclamation for this year.

C. Inventory

Gibbons reported that the committee may get a laptop or tablet for doing the inventory. The Parks Commission supports the project and has made some contacts on our behalf.

D. National Grid plantings, and others

Piretti reported that Joe Sokul has been tied up with the Main Street Bidding process, so he has not had time to focus on replacements for the three that have not survived. Piretti suggested somewhat different locations for a couple of them, such as along Main Street south of Searles (rather than Park Street, which has quite a few along the stretch where the dead one is). Bozzuto, Gibbons and Moser suggested along the street at the Mahaiwe Cemetery; both sides there are town land. Piretti also noted that the recycling center plantings are not being maintained; these may be responsibility of DPW or the Parks Commission.

IV. New business

A. Education display in library

Gibbons reported on the result of looking for a place to display the pamphlets that Adams had obtained. They are on a case in the Mason Library lobby, along with material about the ash borer problem, books that are available (and some of his own) that comprise a reading list which will go on the web page, and some illustrative specimens. Bozutto will accept suggestions for the booklist and transmit it Jennifer Bailly.

B. Main Street project

Piretti reported on the state of the bidding process. Gibbons suggested adding something to the library display responding to the item in the Record that was inaccurate, about such things as use of hybrids and the replacement of the tree wall, and otherwise being ready to educate the town about how the streetscape has evolved over the last hundred years. Bozzuto suggested starting to compile a list of what the town and the committee have planted and posting it on the website.

V. The next meeting will be May 7, 2014.

VI. The chair adjourned the meeting without objection at 6:01 PM.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael D. Wise". The signature is written in a cursive style with a checkmark at the beginning.