

Tree Committee

November 4, 2015, Mason Library

I. Jess Wikle called the meeting to order at 5:17 PM. Present were members Beth Moser, Lisa Bozzuto, and Michael Wise; absent, Hilda Banks Shapiro. Also present: Kate McCormick, Craig Okerstrom-Lang.

II. Minutes of the meeting of October 7, 2015 were approved without objection.

III. Old business

A. Bylaw amendment

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

B. Elm trees on Main Street

The committee agreed to recommend planting only four Jefferson elms, and substituting for the other five (one Jefferson and four New Harmony) the selections proposed in the messages from Tom Ingersoll and Charles Schnell: one shingle oak (*Quercus imbricaria*), one northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*), two yellow buckeyes (*Aesculus flava* (octandra)) and one Kentucky coffeetree (*Gymnocladus dioica*, "Stately mManor", male).

C. Shad tree on Searles school property

McCormick requested that the committee clarify in writing any changes to the letter that had already been sent about the shad tree, and to acknowledge that the project planners have consulted with the committee about their landscaping plans.

IV. New business

A. Trees at Berkshire Hotel project

McCormick and Okerstrom-Lang explained the general plan for the Searles school property. The project is still in site plan review at the Planning Board, and landscaping is a work in progress. Riverwalk is involved in the species selections; their preferences will be most significant for the part of the project closest to the river. Okerstrom-Lang said he uses native- and non-native species, the latter because native species can't handle reflected heat. The oak near the bridge is now being retained, but that may remain to be decided. Concerns about overflow of rain gardens near the river have led to considering tree-box capture further away from the bank. Okerstrom-Lang said he is recommending black tupelo for the parking lot areas, although he is not sure they (or anything else) will work. Bozzuto inquired about maintenance plans. Okerstrom-Lang said Riverwalk will provide some definition about what would be acceptable. A red oak at the corner of Bridge Street will mirror the one at the Iredale corner of that block, although Okerstrom-Lang recommends a Japanese zelkova instead. On the north side, the property adjacent to the parking lot is owned by Berkshire Corporation; Riverwalk is working with them about some landscaping there to replace the pavement with plantings and parking for access to the W.E.B. Dubois garden. The existing shad is too close to the building to save, because of the regarding that will be necessary for drainage. Okerstrom-Lang recommends planting another new one nearby and not designating the current one as a "heritage tree". Bozzuto would like to consult with Mike Piretti about not designating the shad as a heritage tree. McCormick said that a continuance has been requested, to allow time to incorporate public comments and arrange a third-party consultation in response to Conservation Commission issues. The Selectboard will deal with the special permit application on December 16; the Planning Board will meet next for site plan review on December 10; another session with the Conservation Commission will be on November 18. Okerstrom-Lang asked whether the Tree Committee will have any written advice. McCormick asked that any letter about the shad tree go through the Select Board, and solicited suggestions about species choices.

Okerstrom-Lang mentioned hop hornbeam and also single-stem shad as natives that might work, although they have some trouble with reflected heat. Bozzuto pointed out other possibilities on the town's recommended trees list, such as yellowwood.

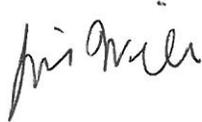
V. Citizen speak time

There were no citizens to speak.

VI. General

A. The next meeting will be December 2, 2015.

The meeting adjourned without objection at 6:05 PM.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M. Miller".