

Hamden Tree Commission
ZOOM Meeting of Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/91295330914>

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call in: 1 545 558-8956

Minutes

Commissioners in Attendance: Mr. Parlapiano, Mr. Montgomery, Ms. Sternberg, Ms. Nathanson, Mr. Cummings

Others in Attendance: HAT representative Ms. Hoffman, Interested Citizen Mr. Powers, Consulting Arborist Mr. Harris , Commission Clerk Ms. Tobin

Call to Order

Mr. Parlapiano called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Approval of minutes of regular meeting of July 21, 2020

Page 2, under Notable Trees, second to last sentence, change next to nest.

Mr. Montgomery made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 21st meeting as corrected. Ms. Nathanson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Public comments on agenda items

Ms. Hoffman mentioned that the solar facility is before the Siting Council. Ms. Hoffman said she attended the Governor's Council on Climate Change Equity in Environmental Justice meeting today (GC3).The Utility infrastructure group is working on technology to protect trees in relation to electrical distribution. All meetings are on Zoom. She will send Mr. Parlapiano the schedule in case commissioners are interested. The Forestry group already reported. Ms. Hoffman also thanked Mr. Parlapiano for sending the Tree Ordinance and Mr. Parlapiano confirmed that it was the latest version. He said the Ordinance is being reviewed by the Town Attorney Gruen and Assistant Town Attorney Sharkey.

Mr. Powers has several tree planting requests from people the Hamden Plains Friends group for the area of Woodin Street and Pine Rock Avenue. Mr. Montgomery said this is an important site which he would like to plant. Mr. Montgomery said he is planning for fall planting and has 35 people on the list, which is about the amount of money available. Some property line inspections will have to be done by the Engineering Department. Mr. Powers said he had one on the list last year that was postponed because of the property line issue.

Old Business

1. Tree Activity Report
 - Public Works: Trees planted/Removed/Pruned/Permits issues
 - UI Vegetation Management Status

Mr. Harris said there isn't a lot to talk about. Prior to the storm he continued to followup on the decommissioning of the power station near the Eli Whitney Museum. There are a number of trees coming down on Deepwood Drive. The Town took down two at the cul de sac. He drove up there after the storm and it wasn't too bad. He hasn't heard anything regarding the pole replacements. Mike Siciliano will call him tomorrow. There are several things to look at. Many trees fell down including on his property. Ms. Hoffman asked how many trees came down. Mr. Harris did not have an answer. He said the Ridge Road area was the hardest hit. Ms. Sternberg said a tree that was tagged to be removed came down across the street from her. Three streets in her neighborhood were completely closed. Ms. Nathanson said she had one on her house. Mr. Harris said he has been going to different yards trying to look for trees that should come down. He also said pruning and cabling works. He also mentioned the salt spray damage along the shoreline and the leaf scorching and drought. He mentioned that Sunday and Monday's rain was only 1/3 inch each day.

Mr. Parlapiano mentioned that he helped with trail cleaning. They did about 2.5 miles and found four trees down. Where you have a full canopy, no trees were down. When the wind has an avenue, it will take trees in its path down. United Illuminating had 150 downed poles, over 1,000 downed wires and 123,000 customers without power according to Mr. Montgomery. He said power was restored quickly in his neighborhood. United Illuminating coordinated well with Public Works.

Mr. Cummings mentioned there was discussion on Spring Glen's Facebook page regarding trees that fell having almost no roots. He mentioned paving practices and girdling roots on street trees and said you can't plant large trees between streets and sidewalks.

2. Notable Trees

Ms. Nathanson said the information on the crepe myrtle was sent out for August. She has a catalpa for September. The Commission started the Notable Tree program four years ago this month. Ms. Nathanson mentioned a beautiful ginko on Gilbert Road off of Circular Avenue for October. Mr. Montgomery said he is looking for more ginko. He has an appointment tomorrow to measure the catalpa. A Hemlock on Ingram street was mentioned. Ms. Nathanson and Mr. Montgomery will touch base.

3. Tree Planting Requests

Mr. Montgomery has a list of 35 trees. Some will need engineering inspections. Mr. Powers will give Mr. Montgomery his list. Mr. Montgomery noted there is less stock this year than last year. He will not be planting cherry trees. He mentioned paper bark maple, fagus silvatica, yellow wood, and red maples. Mr. Montgomery mentioned that some recently planted trees are under

drought stress. Ms. Sternberg mentioned the dogwoods in front of the Whitneyville Library have been hit hard with string trimmers. The Bassett Park dogwoods have also been hit by string trimmers. Mr. Montgomery mentioned that Fairfield uses plastic poultry mesh to protect their trees. Spending money on trees and letting this happen is like throwing money out the window. Mr. Parlapiano said we should try to get Public Works to change their trimming method. Mr. Montgomery said we should wrap the trees to protect them or volcano them. There was discussion of the trees on Brookside Drive.

4. Educational Outreach

Mr. Parlapiano said the link to Discover the Forest is now on our web site. He said he has done a lot of on line programs this summer and wondered if commissioners had any ideas. He mentioned tree identification with leaves. He said some groups are doing outdoor programs. Mr. Parlapiano said he would like to run this by Mayor Leng. Mr. Montgomery suggested a Spring Glen tree walk. Mr. Hoffman thought that was a great idea. People could submit their questions. Ms. Hoffman also mentioned a workshop on trees that would be good to plant in Hamden. Ms. Nathanson mentioned native species. Mr. Montgomery mentioned trying to put together a little book of trees that might be available and what the options are. Ms. Hoffman mentioned that URI sent one of the HAT members its tree list. Mr. Montgomery mentioned URI planted two large tulip trees in Edgewood Park with a 3 x 5 tag describing the tree and a little about URI.

5. Other Old Business

Mr. Parlapiano said there is progress on the Tree Ordinance. As mentioned earlier in the meeting, Town Attorney Gruen has it in her hands and is reviewing it with Assistant Town Attorney Sharkey. The Commission approved its latest version on January 8, 2020. Mr. Parlapiano asked if a subcommittee of the Commission would be willing to meet with her or Mr. Sharkey. There has been no feedback yet from Planning & Zoning, Engineering or Public Works.

Regarding the Solar Farm, the application is now before the Siting Council, and they sent a letter to the Town of Hamden. We have until September 6th to comment on the proposal. Mr. Montgomery said they don't have the information to give us regarding how to comment yet. Mr. Montgomery said there are five wetlands on the site. He said it is not a bad site, but it needs wetland protection. He mentioned that it is a connection to a wild life corridor and the tributary to Eaton Brook. He also mentioned its proximity to the Naugatuck State Forest. He will make some comments to Town Planner Dan Kops. Mr. Parlapiano said we passed a motion to send a letter of concern to the Siting Council at a previous meeting. Ms. Nathanson said removal of trees will contribute to additional flooding in an area already prone to flooding. Mr. Montgomery will send a list of his concerns to Mr. Parlapiano. Mr. Parlapiano will draft and circulate a letter to commissioners for comment before the September 6th deadline.

New Business

1. Storm Impact
Discussed earlier in meeting.

2. Other New Business

There was no additional new business.

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Parlapiano asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Nathanson so moved. Mr. Montgomery seconded the motion The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Submitted by: _____