

Hamden Tree Commission

Meeting of Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom
Meeting ID: 943 5350 9087, Password: conifer, Call in: 646 558-8656
Minutes

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

Others in Attendance: Legislative Council Representative Mr. Macdowall,
Consulting Arborist Mr. Harris, Commission Clerk Ms. Tobin

Call to Order

Mr. Parlapiano called the meeting to order at 6:46 p.m.

Approval of minutes of regular meeting of October 20, 2020

There were several edits to the minutes of October 20, 2020, as follows:

1st pg. Second paragraph starting with Ms. Hoffman: insert after Projects Streetscapes generally originate with Economic Development.

1st pg. Third paragraph beginning with Mr. Montgomery, third line, remove some areas and insert the tree pits. Remove next sentence and use: The trees planted on Whitney and Dixwell Avenues are under the jurisdiction of the state.

Pg. 2, second paragraph under Old Business, line beginning with mentioned, Capitalize Superintendent of Trees and insert Parkways.

Page 3, second paragraph change tense – planted three trees, the Town took down one that will be replaced in the spring.

**Ms. Nathanson made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2020 meeting as amended.
Ms.**

Old Business

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

Mr. Harris reported that he followed up on a complaint that Asplundh took down a tree. They are not reporting to him. He called Mr. McConnell and got no response. He tracked down some of the work planners who advised that they are working on areas with black or brown pins on the map where ACRT went back to review the circuit and found numerous areas that Asplundh had marked done that were not done. They went back to complete the work that was supposed to be done previously. They did not get a new permit. We give a one year permit, and they are mostly dated 2018. Of the 25 trees needing to be done, they have completed 20. They sent him the list of the remaining five. There was a complaint about a pruning job on a private tree and he checked and found it to be a good pruning job.

Mr. Harris mentioned that United Illuminating has pulled two crews out of the Whitneyville sub-station that is being decommissioned. He also mentioned that he gets reports from Lewis Tree. Lewis Tree crews are far superior and far more receptive. Mr. Parlapiano said the permit situation bothers him. Mr. Harris said it is blatantly against the law. Asplundh just doesn't seem to get it.

Mr. Parlapiano mentioned poor pruning jobs on Filbert Street. Mr. Cummings said poor trimming has been a problem.

Mr. Harris said Mike Siciliano calls him a lot to review trees. There are so many trees he has his hands full. Mr. Harris mentioned tree damage in Ms. Sternberg's neighborhood. He also mentioned some big hollow cottonwoods on Arents Street.,

Mr. Montgomery mentioned a drone video showing trees, stumps and branches all over Town. There was more damage than in the 2018 tornado. The Department of Arts, Culture and Marketing provided the video.

Mr. Harris mentioned the pin oak and said he would like to do a resistograph on it. He doesn't want to see another notable tree go down.

Other Old Business

On October 20th the Siting Council posted a response to the concerns expressed by Planning and Zoning and Inland Wetlands. They didn't address the points the Hamden Tree Commission made about addressing the cost of carbon dioxide. They said the wetlands were not of great value. They did acknowledge receipt of the Commission's letter. Mr. Parlapiano said they received the Storm Water Management Report today and it consisted of 127 pages. Mr. Montgomery said they did not address the down stream damage. Mr. Montgomery said this project is being used for carbon credits and can't be done on state or government owned lands. A hedge fund is providing capital. Today was an important meeting of the siting council. The intervenors and applicants could tell their stories and ask each other questions. Planning and Zoning did not join the session. Tonight members of the public can make comments and are limited to three minutes per person.

2. Notable Trees

Mr. Nathanson's memorandum regarding the pin oak as a notable tree for November was discussed. Several revisions were made. There was discussion on the distinctive shape of the pin oak and that fact that it grows in areas that were flooded or have poorly drained soil. The pin oak does not have a big tap root, grows fast and thrives in urban conditions. It is also the most widely planted oak.

There was discussion on a tree at the corner of Gordon Street and Park Avenue. Someone painted SLOW on it in bright orange paint. Mr. Parlapiano thinks the tree is a red maple. Mr.

Macdowall will talk to Public Works to see what they suggest. A tree wrap was mentioned but not a good idea because it would hold moisture. Mr. Parlapiano said this is a violation of state law, it is graffiti, it brings down property values. Statute 2365 is part of the Tree Warden Statute. The tree is Town owned and there are penalties for defacing a public tree. Mr. Parlapiano will do the write up and Mr. Harris will do an appraisal.

Mr. Macdowall had to leave the meeting but he updated the Commission on the status of the investigation of the tree warden position in the Charter. Town Attorney Gruen has been out of the office for a time and has just returned to the office. She is currently looking into it.

3. Tree Planting

Regarding tree planting, Mr. Montgomery said the list grows by one or two each month. He is hopeful that Public Works will do the planting in the spring. There was discussion on the removal of uprooted tree stumps/trunks. Mr. Sternberg said there is one across the street from her house.

4. Educational Programs/Ideas

Nothing to report

5. New Business

Review and approval of the proposed 2021 calendar.

Ms. Nathanson made a motion to approve the proposed Hamden Tree Commission meeting schedule for 2021. Mr. Montgomery seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

1. Other New Business

There was no additional new business.

Adjournment

Mr. Cummings made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Sternberg seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Submitted by: _____