

MINUTES of the
City of Portsmouth
Trees and Public Greenery Committee Meeting
October 13, 2021

Members Present: Richard Adams, Vice-Chairman; Peter Rice, Director of Public Works; A. J. Dupere, Patricia Bagley, Deborah Chag, Dennis Souto, and Michael Griffin; Arborist Foreman Chuck Baxter

Members Excused: Chairman Peter J. Loughlin

Note: Ms. Chag phoned in to attend the meeting. Chairman Loughlin was not at the meeting, and Vice-Chair Adams was Acting Chair.

Acting-Chair Adams called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

1. Acceptance of the Minutes of the September 18, 2021 Meeting

The minutes were approved as presented.

2. Tree Removal Requests

Note: the committee addressed the second item, 296 Richards Avenue, first because the resident who requested the tree's removal was present.

- **267 Cate Street – Norway maple, resident request**

Mr. Baxter said the tree had damage starting at the bottom of it and working its way up. He said it was also leaning toward the house and was an inch off the road, and that the plow damage from years before would be worse in years to come. He said the tree was a hazard and posed moderate risks, especially in a storm, and he recommended that it be removed and possibly replanted. He said he would reach out to see if the resident was interested in a tree grant.

Acting-Chair Adams asked for a motion. *Mr. Dupere moved to recommend removal, and Mr. Souto seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote.*

- **296 Richards Avenue - 2 crabapple trees, resident request**

Mr. Baxter said the two trees suffered from blight. He said they looked great in the spring but not anytime else, and he recommended removing them and replanting them in the spring. It was further discussed and decided that another species other than a crabapple tree would be planted.

Acting-Chair Adams asked for a motion. Mr. Souto *moved to recommend removal of the two trees, and Ms. Bagley seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote.*

- **566 Broad Street - red maple, resident request**

Mr. Baxter said he inspected the tree and realized that it had a poor future, with imminent failure on at least one of its large limbs. He said it was a good example of a large tree planted under a lot of utility wires. He said the tree also had a lot of decay. He recommended its removal.

Acting-Chair Adams asked for a motion. *Mr. Souto moved to recommend removal, and Ms. Bagley seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote.*

- **185 Thornton Street - honey locust, resident request**

Mr. Baxter said the tree had grown around high voltage wires and subsequently was heavily pruned and was left with two predominant stems with a lot of end weight. He said the tree was too far gone to prune further and recommended removing it and replanting it with one or two ornamental trees that were a standard 25-ft height. He noted that Eversource would do the work.

Acting-Chair Adams asked for a motion. *Ms. Bagley moved to recommend removal, which was seconded. by Mr. Souto. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote.*

3. Report on Little Harbor Road Tree Removal by Arborist Chuck Baxter

Mr. Baxter said the tree removals were complete and that the Northern Tree crew did an excellent job. He said the road looked great and that it didn't look like there had been a big loss of trees or canopy. He said all the non-profit commitments were kept. Mr. Rice said he received a note of thanks for a job well done by Scott Richardson's crew. He said the Department of Public Works (DPW) was scheduled to do road work on that particular section of road and would reclaim the roadway toward the end of October and do a binder coat of pavement. He said the residents had a lot of concerns about speeding on that road and that DPW would work with the Parking, Traffic and Safety Committee in the winter to come up with alternatives to do traffic calming along the road. He said he sent an information memo to the City Council but that it was part of DPW's regular pavement management program and that they would move forward.

4. Old Business

There was no old business.

5. New Business

Mr. Baxter introduced Elizabeth Cross, who was present to speak to the tree that her family was donating to the city in memory of her mother's love for and support of the Portsmouth Senior Center. Mr. Baxter read from a letter, stating that Ms. Cross' mother Buffy was a long-time advocate for the creation of the new senior center to support Portsmouth's aging population and

that she attended many activities, like field trips, tea parties, and senior lunches, to raise money for the new center. He said the donated tree would be a dogwood and would be planted in a nice grassy area behind the new senior center. Mr. Baxter said the city would plant the tree and incorporate it into their normal maintenance routine. Mr. Rice said it was appropriate to accept the donation to show that it had been acknowledged and appreciated.

*Mr. Rice moved to accept the donation, and Ms. Bagley seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

Ms. Bagley said the donation was a wonderful thing. The dogwood was further discussed.

Mr. Dupere said the Masonic Temple wanted to plant another tree near their parking lot to replace the very large beech that was taken down a few months ago. Mr. Rice said it was private property and that their agreement with the Temple did not require the city to plant or maintain trees and that any planting requests or decisions should be addressed directly to the Temple.

Mr. Rice said the Peirce Island Committee requested that Mr. Baxter brief them on the red pines that would be removed later this winter at a meeting to be held on October 19th at 6 p.m. in Conference Room A. Mr. Baxter asked if the tree removals had to be delayed. Mr. Rice said the intent was to notify the Peirce Island Committee of the tree removal schedule and not to re-discuss the removal, and he thought there would be other tree-related questions that would arise.

Mr. Griffin complimented Mr. Rice and the tree contractor on the great work done in planting 20 new trees on Banfield Road. Mr. Baxter noted that the tree selection was done in-house and that it was a great collaboration.

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 10, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault

Trees and Public Greenery Committee Recording Secretary