

Montague Tree Advisory Committee

Minutes

Minutes from: 2/27/2017 **Place:** Turners Falls Senior Center

Address: 62 5th St, Turners Falls, MA, 01376 **Time:** 6:30 - 8:00

Committee Attendees: Michael Marcotrigiano, David Detmold, David Harmon, Suzette Snow-Cobb, Roberta Potter

Committee not present: Leslie Brown, Walker Korby, Julie Kumble

Community present: Edite Cunha, Suzanne Lomanto, Zhaohong Wen

6:45 -Chair opened meeting. Chair recommended Edite Cunha to act as meeting facilitator, approved by group consensus. Committee and community members introduced themselves.

6:50 Minutes for 10/12/16 and 1/25/17 approved

6:55 Arbor Day-Possible outreach project discussed. S. Snow-Cobs expressed interest in a small event such as a tree planting. D. Detmold expressed interest in a larger event which might include: readings at the three libraries (Linda Hickman, Montague Library Director is reported to be enthusiastic about this idea), outreach at the public schools (D. Detmold sent a letter to the schools, has not heard a reply), showing a film (possibly at the Shea Theater or Brick House), and an event at Skinner Park (possibly in conjunction with Turners Falls Riverculture. M. Marcotrigiano brought up a talk he has given titled "How Not to Kill A Tree" for homeowners about tree care, and also spoke about doing a question/answer session. R. Potter offered the use of the Turners Falls Senior Center for the event, if desired. After much discussion, the group came to a consensus that Montague Tree Committee will do an Arbor Day event on Saturday, April 29th at 2:00 that will include Michael Marcotrigiano and may also include other events. The Arbor Day event will be discussed again at the next meeting.

7:30 Discussion regarding the town's tree by-laws

Part A- D. Detmold informed the committee of a complaint a neighbor had brought to him regarding the removal of two large Evergreen trees on the boundary between his and a neighbor's property. A discussion about what by-laws or other guidelines might apply in a private property situation. M. Marcotrigiano stated his belief that the property rights of a tree belong to the the person on whose property the center of the tree is on, and that branches that overhang a property line can trimmed by the owner of the infringed property. No bylaws were known by the committee to cover this issue. There was recognition of the frustration caused by this situation. D. Detmold made the suggestion that this be looked at when the committee works on recommendations for updating the town's tree bylaws.

Part B- D.Harmon spoke about a desire for the Tree Committee to begin the process of researching and writing recommendations for updating the Town's tree by-laws. The committee decided that at the next meeting, when more members were hopefully present, a by-law subcommittee of three people will be formed. In the meantime, individual members were encouraged to look into different town bylaws on their own, and D. Harmon will specifically look for copies of the Town of Amherst's tree bylaws, as well as those used by New York City and Chicago (sited as examples of cities that have successful street tree plans).

7:50 - Millers Falls - Possible demonstration project discussed. The Committee remains interested in working on a "demonstration Project" in the village of Millers Falls. There was some discussion regarding where it might happen (in neighborhoods and/or business district) and different ways that input from residents and businesses could be gathered. Millers Falls resident Zhaohong Wen spoke about her desire to see the downtown area cleaned up and new trees planted. As a first step, the committee felt it needed more information about what the town is planning for Millers Falls development. D.Harmon will ask for a meeting with The Town planner to gather this information.

8:10 - F.C.T.S. Tree Nursery (shade tree nursery at Franklin Tech School) update.
No new information provided.

- **Next meeting: March 29th from 6:30 - 8:00 at the Montague Center Fire Station (28 Old Sunderland Road. Montague Ma 01351)**
- **Meeting adjourned.**

David Harmon, Corresponding Secretary
Montague Tree Advisory Committee