

# Montague Tree Advisory Committee

## Minutes

**Meeting:Montague Tree Advisory Committee** Place: Turners Falls Senior Center

Address: 62 5th St, Turners Falls, MA, 01376 Date: 9/12/2017 Time: 6:30 - 8:00

Committee present :Roberta Potter, David Detmold, David Harmon, Walker Korby, Zhaohong Wen

Community Present- Chriss Belmonte Representing the Shea Theater, Mollie Frielicher, Director of Urban and Community Forestry, DCR, Mary MacKie representing Eversource and Tom Sullivan.

**Committee not present:**, Julie Kumble, Michael Marcotrigiano, Leslie Brown

6:30 Chair opens meeting

6:35 Chriss Belmonte addressed the committee on behalf of the Shea Theater in regards to the apple tree which grows in front of the Theater on Avenue A, which is blocking some of the new marquee. The Shea is proposing to engage Ben Clark of Clarkdale's orchard to do some pruning at the appropriate pruning time. The Shea will seek the Tree Warden's permission, and the committee supports this approach.

6:45 Mollie Frielicher, State of MA. Director of Urban and Community Forestry for our area introduced herself, and gave a brief overview of the DCR Urban and Community Forestry program. She presented information about a Challenge Grant the DCR runs each year. The grants can range from \$1,000 to \$30,000, and can be used for: strategic tree plantings, staff training development of ordinances to become a "Tree City". One of the requirements of the grant is that the town celebrates an Arbor Day. The grants are a 50/50 grant,(or 75/25 for environmental justice programs) The deadline to apply is November 1, The "intent to apply" deadline is one month prior to the grant deadline.

Mollie is also available for town to use as a resource for example, helping with the development of tree ordinances, and for networking with other town tree committees.

7:15 Discussion of Eversource line clearing plan. Mary MacKie, a representative from Eversource introduced this topic with a brief presentation. The line clearing is part of the Transmission Right-of-way Reliability Program (TRRP), which will remove "incompatible vegetation" from the transmission line rights-of-way.

Following the presentation, a committee member ask why is there a need for wider transmission easements. Mary's answer was that the wider width is already standard practice in other states, and that recent storm damage and long outage times is evidence of the need for better maintenance.

The committee asked that attention be paid to the roadscape perhaps by planting hedges and shrubs. The committee was concerned about the impact to property owners as well. The committee also asked about how vegetation management will be done (will it be mechanical or chemical). Mostly this will be mechanical, Mary did not know if it would include any pesticide use or not, and said she would get back to us about it. Copies of a letter written by Committee member Michael Marcotrigiano, who was unable to attend this meeting, was presented to the committee expressing his views on the subject. (letter attached to this file electronically).

7:45 Discussion of open committee seat. Suzette Snow-Cobb has resigned from the committee. The committee discussed how they would go about filling an open seat. It was agreed that the committee would ask the Town manager to mention the open seat at the Selectmen's meeting, as part of his town update, and that anyone interested in joining the group send a letter of interest to the committee through the town manager. The committee will review the applicants and would make a recommendation to the Selectboard. David Detmold will speak with the Town Manager to review this plan. Montague resident Tom Sullivan addressed the committee to express his interest in the open seat.

**Items not anticipated within 48 hours of meeting. Votes may be taken**