

TOWN of SHELBURNE TREE COMMITTEE
Minutes of January 13, 2021 Meeting

Members in attendance: Gail Henderson-King, David Hall, Ann Milovsoroff, Tod Warner, Thea Platt, Kelly Moreton

1. **Call to Order** – Meeting called to order at 7:07 PM.
2. **Review Agenda** – Agenda approved as presented.
3. **Consider approval of minutes from December 9, 2020** – Minutes unanimously approved.
4. **Citizen Participation (Opportunity for public comment on any Committee Business that is not included on this agenda)** – No one present.
5. **Shade Tree Preservation Plan** – Dave reviewed why this is now important. The State legislature recently amended the VT Tree Warden statutes, which now require that all towns have a Shade Tree Preservation Plan in place. Because we have already done much work on other tree management plans, we asked Elise Schadler from Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) to review our documents so we could hopefully re-arrange these to fit the new requirements. This is when we rediscovered the phrase “easier said than done”. Elise and Joanne Garton are helping us by reviewing our existing Tree Management Plan to see if it can be edited to conform with State requirements. Ideally, what is created Elise and Joanne could use Shelburne’s Shade Tree Preservation Plan as a template for other towns in VT that need assistance. This is often referred to in the business environment as a win-win. It was also noted that the new requirements include the Select board holding a public meeting as part of this process. As Elise and Joanne began looking at Shelburne’s documents including the Tree Policy, they had a series of questions. It was agreed that the Shade Tree Preservation Plan should include or reference as appendices existing documents: Tree Management Plan, Tree Policy, Tree Inventory Report, and EAB Management Plan. Thea thought that this might be a good opportunity to introduce some of the ideas we have been passing around the table. An “Adopt a Tree” program similar to our Memorial Tree program, and a favorite/oldest/most interesting tree contest are several of these ideas. The plan needs to be simple for people to understand and the idea of keeping it all under one document would be good. Gail will follow up with Elise and Joanne to give them feedback and help figure out a path forward with the Shade Tree Preservation Plan.

Kelly recommended having all of our current reports and documents added to the Town website. Gail will follow up on this.

6. **Ash Tree on Other Public Lands in Shelburne** – Committee members discussed the fact that there are many Ash trees on Town property that were not included in our EAB inventory. These would include our Natural Areas, the Cemetery, and various sites where town trees abut private property. Dave has already been called by residents for some of these spots, which have mature Ash trees that may impact residences if they were to fall after becoming infected. It was suggested that we invite members of the Natural Resources Committee and Cemetery Committee to a future meeting to discuss these issues. Gail will ask Lee Krohn about whether Town staff should also be included in this discussion.
7. **Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan/FY 2021 Budget Recommendations** – It was noted that the Select Board has responded to our EAB report by adding a line item to the Town Budget currently proposed with the requested \$28,800 for the coming year. Even though the Tree Conservation line item is proposed to be reduced by more than half its FY 2020 approved budget to \$6,300. Dave felt that he can still work with other departments budgeted areas for necessary tree work.
8. **Public Education and Outreach / Fundraising** – Kelly put together some thoughts on public education and outreach for our committee. She and Thea agreed to work on this together. The Shelburne News has changed management over the years and is no longer as reliable as it was in the past for printing articles and information. Kelly suggested moving our outreach efforts to Front Porch Forum. She has proposed to start a regular posting here post haste. Gail asked committee members to start thinking of ideas for upcoming Arbor Day and our need to have an “activity” for our Tree City designation. New members asked why Tree City designation was important which we discussed. Our Tree City USA designation application needs to be done by 2/12, which Gail will do online.
9. **Tree Warden Report** – Most issues were already discussed earlier. GMP has not gotten back to Dave about their Ash tree plans. It has been noted that it would be folly to invest in inoculating a tree such as the large specimen White Ash at the entrance to Shelburne Supermarket if GMP has already decided to cut it down. Dave also mentioned that it is not too early to start thinking about Spring planting. Always the optimist! Congratulations given to Ann for her Branch Out Burlington Award. Dave also gave an update that the teacher at Shelburne Community School has connected with Kyle at Branch Out Burlington and seem to be moving on interplanting at the school property.

10. Other Business – Gail mentioned that the Planning Commission has asked us to attend their meeting tomorrow night where proposed changes to bylaws and zoning issues will be discussed. She has a previous commitment and cannot attend. Dave offered his time unless it snows.

Kelly suggested that we include a new section in our monthly agenda to make note of the previous month's accomplishments. This way, when it comes time to make our annual Committee Report, it would be much easier to just cut/paste directly from the minutes.

11. Adjourn – Meeting Adjourned at 8:28 PM!

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tod Warner, Secretary.

Approved by Shelburne Tree Committee on _____

DRAFT