MINUTES of the
City of Portsmouth
Trees and Public Greenery Committee Meeting
November 9, 2022

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

Members Excused: City Arborist Maxwell Wiater

Also Present: Eric Eby, City Engineer

Chairman Loughlin called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

1. Acceptance of the Minutes of the October 12 meeting.

The minutes were unanimously **approved** as presented.

2. Tree Removal Requests

20 Georges Terrace: Homeowner request, safety issue, fair health, linden, removal suggested by the city. Tree was pruned last year for weight reduction, but the tear that started in the union of a lower limb has spread toward the base.

Ms. Bagley moved to recommend removal of the linden, seconded by Ms. Chag. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

South St and Marcy St island: City request, poor health, crabapple, removal suggested by the city. Tree has had significant leader failures, and general condition and canopy have been in decline. New tree will be planted at site as part of 400 for 400 in spring.

Mr. Dupere moved to recommend removal of the tree, seconded by Mr. Griffin. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

1299 Islington St: Developer request, fair health, ash, removal suggested by the city. Removal of tree will facilitate the development of site, improve line of sight clearance, and is located near power lines. Tree is mostly on city ROW.

After discussion, Mr. Dupere moved to recommend removal of the tree, seconded by Mr. Souto. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Parrott Ave Parking Lot: City request, poor health, 3 lindens, removal suggested by the city. These trees have been in poor health for a long time. We would like these removed so we can plant more appropriate trees here next spring.

Mr. Souto moved to recommend removal of the trees, seconded by Mr. Dupere. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

14 Laurel Ct: Homeowner request, fair health, black cherry, removal not recommended by the city. Tree is located on a wood lot behind the new development of Laurel Ct. Two leaders from one base. Some basal damage exists. Due to the location/environment and general health of tree, removal does not seem necessary at this point in time. If the health of the tree declines or the tree shows other signs of likely failure, removal will occur.

Mr. Dupere said the tree would be removed. There was no need for a vote.

3. Red Oak tree at proposed Bagel Restaurant, 361 Islington St

Chairman Loughlin said the red oak was thriving. He said he sent an email to the property owner asking that the tree be protected, but the property owner said he was selling the property. He said he then spoke to the Chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee and said the tree should be protected. Mr. Eby said the tree would make the development of the property more difficult but thought the tree should stay. A bumpout was discussed. Ms. Bagley noted that the Historic District Commission recommended that a screen be placed near the tree. Mr. Rice said the tree was beautiful but the site had been languishing for years and that it was in the best interest of the city to move forward and free up the property so that it can be developed. He said he would vote to remove it. Mr. Eby said he'd like the tree to be preserved if possible.

Ms. Bagley moved that the Tree Committee encourage that the tree be preserved if possible, seconded by Ms. Chag. The motion passed by a vote of 7 to 1, with Mr. Rice voting in opposition.

Mr. Rice noted that part of the Islington Street project from Dover Street to Cornwall Street was bid and awarded and that improvements would be seen throughout Goodwin Park.

4. Update from City Arborist Maxwell Wiater

Mr. Rice said Mr. Wiater was absent because he was taking a course. He said Mr. Wiater ordered the 200 trees for the city's planting and thought it would take place in the second week of April. Mr. Dupere and he and Mr. Wiater reviewed the list again. He discussed which tree species were confirmed and said they had a total of 289 trees and asked whether the list should be shortened. Mr. Rice said he planned to reach out to some citizens. He noted that Mr. Wiater was concerned that 200 trees were a lot. He said he anticipated expanding the grant program and putting the trees in areas that benefit the public. Ms. Chag asked that Mr. Rice share the timeline with the committee in the future, and it was further discussed.

5. Tree Planting for the City's 400th

Mr. Dupere said a tree would be planted at the Wentworth-Coolidge mansion.

Chairman Loughlin said a South Street resident had requested that a tree be removed owing to sight line issues, but it wasn't listed on the agenda. Mr. Eby said the tree didn't have a great impact on sight lines and didn't think it was justified to remove it. Mr. Rice said the tree removal should perhaps be included at the next meeting since it was noticed. Chairman Loughlin said the tree was set far back from the road and he wasn't convinced that it should be removed.

Mr. Rice said the committee acknowledged the potential safety issues and had asked Mr. Eby to review it, which he did. He said the results were that they did not support the claim that there was a safety issue involved. He said the request could either be tabled or put on the December meeting agenda.

Mr. Rice moved to that the matter be placed on the December agenda, seconded by Mr. Griffin. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Old Business

There was no old business.

7. New Business

Mr. Griffin noted that some trees on Constitution Avenue were being removed and asked if Mr. Wiater was aware of it. Mr. Rice said Mr. Wiater was very busy and backlogged.

Mr. Rice said the hedge on the corner of Broad and South Streets was obscuring traffic and that the city would trim it back a bit.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 14, 2022

The meeting **adjourned** at 8:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
Trees and Public Greenery Committee Recording Secretary