# MINUTES of the City of Portsmouth Trees and Public Greenery Committee Meeting March 12, 2025

**Members Present**: Chair Patricia Bagley; Vice-Chair Michael Griffin; Director of Public Works Peter Rice; City Tree Supervisor/Arborist Maxwell Wiater; Members Dennis Souto, Michael Griffin, A. J. Dupere, Deborah Chag, and Scott McDermott

Members Excused: Assistant Mayor Joanna Kelley-Adams

Chair Bagley called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

# 1. Acceptance of the February 12 Meeting Minutes

The February 12 meeting minutes were **approved** as submitted.

# 2. Tree Removal Requests

There were no tree removal requests for March.

# 3. Arbor Day 2025: Recommendations or ideas for April 2025 celebration

Mr. Wiater said he found out that the City was donating a large piece of pink granite to former Chair Peter Loughlin as a bench for his tree farm. He said the intention was to give Mr. Loughlin the bench and to plant a tree on his tree farm on Arbor Day in celebration of that day. He said he would find out if Mr. Loughlin agreed to host Arbor Day at his tree farm and that he would select a tree and a location for the bench.

Ms. Chag suggested that the Committee consider areas that were different from typical parks for future Arbor Day celebrations, like a small city parcel or a development where everything was clearcut, as an example of the Committee's values. Mr. Wiater said it was a great idea but would depend on what the city had available. He said there were other options to use as a backup in case Mr. Loughlin's tree farm did not work out. He noted that the Robert J. Lister Academy recently moved to the Community Campus and had a maple sap boiler in the parking lot. He said a sugar maple could be planted and that it could be an educational opportunity. Mr. Dupere said he could get a sugar maple, the Green Mountain.

# 4. Tree Planting 2025 - Discussion on final order after all changes, and review of operations and sites

Chair Bagley said the list was a fabulous list of tree and a great resource. Mr. Wiater said there were only three substitutions other than caliper differences. He said one was a columnar tulip poplar that he would substitute for an alder. Chair Bagley asked where the

large trees would be planted. Mr. Wiater said it was a 50-50 mix of small to large trees for sites where there were no powerlines and that he decided on the planting sites based on what he read online and in publications, urban conditions, and other stresses. Mr. Souto said it was an incredible list and that he was impressed. It was further discussed. Chair Bagley said the Stewartia tree in the fenced-in area of the park on the corner of Marcy and State Streets looked like it needed some care. Mr. Wiater said he would check on it. He said the other substitutions on the list were five Galilean Dogwoods instead of five Celestial Dogwoods, and five Persian Ironwoods instead of the Red Fox trees. Ms. Chag asked about conifers. Mr. Waiter said he intended to plant at least three of them and had sites lined up for them. He said the trees would be delivered April 1 and placed in one of the City's garage bays so they would stay cool, with no lights. He said a half-day of planting would likely start April 1 and then on every workday until all 150 trees were planted. He said Dig Safe flags would be put out a few weeks before and that he would send the door hangers out. He said the trees would be maintained for two years and watered once a week during the spring, summer, and fall except in a drought situation, in which case they would be watered twice weekly.

Ms. Chag asked if trees would be planted in the cages on Islington Street. Mr. Rice said it would be in the spring. Chair Bagley asked how long the ID tags stayed on the trees. Mr. Wiater said they stayed as long as the staking remained, and it was further discussed.

# 5. New Business

Mr. Wiater said the Urban Forestry crew would be giving out saplings at the Sustainability Fair on April 11. He said they would do pollinator-friendly shrubs and trees and distribute them to residents.

### 6. Old Business

### • Update on Shearwater Drive tree removals

Mr. Wiater said the Shearwater Drive trees were no longer being considered for removal because the developer discovered that the gas line in that lot wasn't permitted to be there. He said the gas company was willing to relocate the gas line, so the trees would remain. He said the gas company would also pay for a small path cutting off the corners of that property to relocate the gas line. Ms. Chag said she would still like to have plantings beyond the trees on that corner. Mr. Wiater explained that the new gas line installation would require monitoring due to the silver maples in that area. He said the gas line would not get close to the honey locusts.

### • Update on Miller Avenue tree removals

Mr. Wiater said he asked Eric Eby, City Engineer of Parking, Traffic and Planning, to inspect the two trees. He said the linden treen near Lincoln Avenue and Miller Avenue posed no line-of-sight hazard, but the maple tree was a mixed bag. He said normally a tree is not considered to be a sight distance obstruction unless it is so large as to completely block the view of an oncoming vehicle, which the maple did, but only

because the privately-owned fence also forced drivers to pull closer to Miller Avenue than required. He said both the tree and the fence were blocking the line of sight but if the fence were removed, the tree would not be a line-of-sight issue. He said the fence did not meet a few ordinances. He said the two maples on the corner of Spring Street and around the corner on Miller Avenue would be pruned to ensure nothing blocked that line of sight.

## **Public Comment**

David Hudlin of 260 Miller Avenue was present via Zoom. He said he didn't think the property owner would want to take the fence down. He said he appreciated that the linden and silver maple would be pruned but still thought there was a safety issue. He said at the previous meeting, an engineering study was mentioned pertaining to the tree and line of sight. He said the other issue was that Miller Avenue was a heavily-traveled street and that a lot of drivers sped. He said the Miller Avenue residents had to back out of their driveways onto Miller Avenue, so it was a challenging street regardless of the line of sight. He said some other streets, like Aldrich Street, had permanent asphalt speed bumps, and he asked if those were installed because the residents were concerned about speed. He asked if the City could do something similar on Miller Avenue to slow the traffic speed and increase the safety of getting on and off Miller Avenue. Mr. Rice said the process typically started by sending a traffic calming request to the Traffic, Parking and Safety Committee. He said having multiple people sign a petition would help. He said the fire and police departments were not enthusiastic about speed tables and speed bumps and would likely overrule that request. He suggested that Mr. Hudlin reach out to Eric Eby at the next Traffic, Parking and Safety Committee meeting in April but thought the best thing to do was to formally make the request and get it into the system. He said there was a traffic calming request form on the City's website. Mr. Hudlin asked how Aldrich Street was chosen to have speed bumps and not Miller Avenue. Mr. Rice said part of it was that the police and fire department personnel used that street more frequently but also because the residents signed a petition and lobbied the City Council. He said the process went through several designs and changes and took 10-15 years. Mr. Rice suggested that Mr. Hudlin call him for further discussion and also contact Mr. Eby.

Ms. Chag said she noticed all the big and little trees in the South Cemetery that Mr. Griffin had been working on. She asked whether it was succession planting. Mr. Wiater said they would do it if they knew a tree would be removed soon, but they didn't need those planting sites because there were many other vacant sites that needed trees.

Next meeting: Wednesday, April 9, 2025

The meeting **adjourned** at 8:37 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault Trees and Greenery Committee Meeting Minutes Taker





	BUILDING CO	<b>VERAGE AREA</b>	
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	EXISTING	PROPOSED
RESIDENCE	792	1,315
PORCH	207	0
DECK	15	27
STAIRS	42	47
TOTAL (S.F.)	1,056	1,389
LOT AREA (S.F.)	3,025	3,025
BUILDING COVERAGE (%)	34.9%	45.9%

IMPERVIOUS COVERAGE AREA			
	EXISTING	PROPOSED	
RESIDENCE	792	1,315	
PORCH	207	0	
DECK	15	27	
STAIRS	42	47	
WALKWAY	230	0	
GRAVEL PARKING	18	60	
RETAINING WALL	0	11	
TOTAL (S.F.)	1,304	1460	
LOT AREA (S.F.)	3,025	3,025	
IMPERVIOUS COVERAGE (%)	43.1%	48.3%	



IRON PIPE FOUND 11/22/06 ----

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THE RICHARD M. BURBINE REVOCABLE TRUST

RICHARD M. BURBINE, TRUSTEE

THE LAURA M. BURBINE REVOCABLE TRUST

LAURA M. BURBINE, TRUSTEE

PORTSMOUTH, NH 03801 5085/1853

188 BROAD STREET

"STOP"

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N/F THE MICHAEL J. DeCRISTOFARO REVOCABLE TRUST OF 2015

MICHAEL J. DeCRISTOFARO, TRUSTEE

PO BOX 102

PORTSMOUTH, NH 03801 5622/476 "STOP" —



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"I CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED UNDER MY DIRECT SUPERVISION, THAT IT IS THE RESULT OF A FIELD SURVEY BY THIS OFFICE AND HAS AN ACCURACY OF THE CLOSED TRAVERSE THAT EXCEEDS THE PRECISION OF 1:15,000."

3.14.25

DATE



JOHN	R.	CHAGNON,	LLS





Client: Troy Blanchard Location: 205 Broad Street Portsmouth, NH 03801

Inspection Date: March 28th 2025

Inspector: Peter Lyon CTSP - Seacoast Tree Care - ISA Certified Arborist NY-6382A Tree Risk Assessment Qualified

Assessment Level - 2 advanced Visual / Rubber mallet / Resistograph Time Frame for this tree assessment: 3 years

Species: Northern Catalpa - Catalpa speciosa

DBH inches:	36.5 " DBH (diameter at breast height)
Estimated Height feet:	55 to 60 feet in height.
Estimated canopy width:	30 feet

The tree is located on the north side of 205 Broad Street, on Spring Street. This is a high-traffic residential area with homes, sidewalks, parked cars, and power lines in close proximity to the tree.

Tree Health Assessment

- Dead Branches: The presence of dead branches indicates a decline in the tree's health and increases the risk of branch failure. These branches can fall unexpectedly, especially during high winds or storms, posing a threat to people and property below.
- Previous Branch Failures: Evidence of previous branch failures suggests that the tree is structurally weak and prone to further breakage. This history of failure increases the likelihood of future incidents and highlights the tree's potential danger.
- Missing Bark on Center Leader: The missing bark on the center leader, particularly at a height of 40 to 50 feet, is a serious concern. This damage can expose the tree's inner wood to decay and pests, weakening its structure and making it more susceptible to collapse.
- The tree's location in close proximity to homes, parked cars, and potentially power and utility lines significantly amplifies the risks associated with its compromised structural integrity. If the tree or large branches were to fall, the potential consequences include:
- Property Damage: Falling branches or the trunk could cause significant damage to homes, vehicles, and other nearby structures.



- Personal Injury: People in the vicinity could be seriously injured or killed by falling branches or debris.
- Power Outages: If the tree falls on power lines, it could cause power outages in the area, disrupting daily life and essential services.
- Electrical Fires: Downed power lines can also create electrical hazards, potentially sparking fires that could cause further damage and endanger lives.
- Downed Lines: Fallen utility lines, such as cable or telephone lines, can also cause disruptions and create safety hazards.

Root and Trunk Stability Concerns:

- The tree's location has resulted in soil compaction, which can lead to root loss and instability. The installation of new road curbing and sidewalks may have further contributed to root loss and potential decay by damaging existing roots and restricting the tree's access to essential nutrients and water. These factors can weaken the tree's anchorage and increase the risk of it being uprooted or toppling over, especially during strong winds or storms.
- During the inspection, a rubber mallet was used to conduct a sounding test on the tree trunk. The hollow sound indicated potential decay within the trunk. To further investigate, a resistograph was used. Resistographs are tools that evaluate decay and other defects in tree stems and branches by using a small-diameter drilling needle driven at a constant speed.
- Five drilling locations were made around the base of the tree, approximately two feet above ground level. The results from the resistograph test indicated that the tree has a substantial amount of decay. (*Graph below*)



Five locations marked in red on the tree indicate where solid wood transitions to decay. The accompanying graph illustrates that the base of the tree has approximately 5 to 7 inches of sound wood.

<u>Summary</u>: Likelihood of failure - PROBABLE Likelihood of the failed tree part impacting a target - HIGH



The tree's location, root loss, central leader defect, and decay column within the trunk create an unreasonable risk of failure. This poses a potential threat to surrounding structures, vehicles, utilities, and pedestrians. Therefore, the recommended action is to remove the tree.

Glossary

Tree risk assessment has a unique set of terms with specific meanings. Definitions of all specific terms may be found in the International Society of Arboriculture's Best Management Practice for Tree Risk Assessment. Definitions of some of these terms used in this report are as follows:

The likelihood of failure may be categorized as:

<u>Imminent</u> - meaning that failure has started or could occur at any time.

<u>Probable</u> - meaning that failure may be expected under normal weather conditions within the next 3 years.

<u>Possible</u> - meaning that failure could occur, but is unlikely under normal weather conditions during that time frame.

<u>Improbable</u> - meaning that failure is not likely under normal weather conditions, and may not occur in severe weather conditions during that time frame.

The likelihood of the failed tree part impacting a target may be categorized as:

High - meaning that a failed tree or tree part will most likely impact a target.

<u>Medium</u> - meaning that a failed tree or tree part may or may not impact a target with equal likelihood.

Low - meaning that the failed tree or tree part is not likely to impact a target.

<u>Very low</u> - meaning that the chance of a failed tree or tree part impacting the target is remote.

Limitations of Tree Risk Assessments:

It is important for the tree owner or manager to know and understand that all trees pose some degree of risk from failure or other conditions. The information and recommendations within this report have been derived from the level of tree risk assessment identified in this report, using the information and practices outlined in the International Society of Arboriculture's Best Management Practices for Tree Risk Assessment, as well as the information available at the time of the inspection. However, the overall risk rating, the mitigation recommendations, or any other conclusions do not preclude the possibility of failure from undetected conditions, weather events, or other acts of man or nature. Trees can unpredictably fail even if no defects or other conditions are present. It is the responsibility of the tree owner or manager to schedule repeat or advanced assessments, determine actions, and implement follow up recommendations, monitoring and/or mitigation. Seacoast Tree Care can make no warranty or guarantee whatsoever regarding the safety of any tree, trees, or parts of trees, regardless of the level of tree risk assessment provided, the risk rating, or the residual risk rating after mitigation. This



information is solely for the use of the tree owner and manager to assist in the decision making process regarding the management of their tree or trees. Tree risk assessments are simply tools which should be used in conjunction with the owner or tree manager's knowledge, other information and observations related to the specific tree or trees discussed, and sound decision making.



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Project Title	<b>361 HANOVER</b>	361 HANOVER STREET PORTSMOUTH, NH		
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Landscape <i>A</i> Scale	Architect	1'-0"		
REV. DATE	DESCRIPTION			
NO. DATE	ISSUE NOTE			
Project Manager		Drawn By		
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Sheet Title	JOT HANG	JVLI(01.		
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