

**NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION REMOTE  
ONLINE MEETING  
MINUTES**

**Thursday, April 28, 2022 – 6:30 p.m.**

**Approved 5-5-2022**

**Present:** Jay McHale, Chair; Laura Robert, Vice Chair; Allison Burson; Bea Bezmalinovic, Secretary, Lisa Collins; Brandon Schmitt, Director

**Guests:** Al Ferrer, Soliva Jose, Shana Cashman, Mason Smith

**Public Speak:** No one spoke on a non-agenda item

**Tree Hearing:**

- Mr. Schmitt read the rules for tree removal and presented the list of trees the DPW has recommended to be removed.

214, 218 Cedar Street	Norway Maples (4)
239 -241 Walnut Street	48" Red Oak
275 Walnut Street	18" Norway Maple
57 Whittier RD	15" Norway
50 Emerson RD	15" Norway
81 Emerson RD	12" Linden
31 Arnold RD	24" White Oak

- The commission opened the review with 214 & 218 Cedar Street followed by a review of 239-241 Walnut Street and finally, the Oak at 31 Arnold.
- Mr. McHale asked Mr. Schmitt to summarize the status of the trees on Walnut St. Mr. Schmitt shared the reconstruction plans of Walnut Street and reviewed the poor condition of the two trees under consideration including limited soil volume around tree, sidewalk heaving, excessive epicormic growth indicating response to decay or other internal issues, fungal fruiting bodies at the base of the trees (also a sign of decay), girdling roots, and deformities in the trunk.
- Mr. McHale accepted public voice about the tree removal.
- **Jorge Soliva**, Cedar St. resident, called to object to the removal of the trees on Cedar St.
- **Shana Cashman**, 84 Whittier Street, objected the removal of trees on Emerson and Whittier Streets.
- **Mason Smith**, 50 Emerson Road, asked how the trees were selected for removal. Mr. Schmitt explained the communication process which follows Massachusetts State MGL 87, which requires a written notice on the tree at least seven days before the tree warden hearing.
- The NRC continued the discussion on the safety reasons, health of trees and the prospect of the upcoming road work that will affect the trees on Cedar Street.

- *After a motion was made and seconded, the board voted unanimously to approve the removal of a 18” Norway at 239-241 Walnut and 48” Red Oak at 275 Walnut.* As there was written objection received prior to the meeting, the Select Board will also need to approve the removals.

### **Liaison Reports:**

#### **Grass Lawn Equipment**

- Mr. McHale opened up with an update on the DPW’s ongoing conversion of landscaping equipment from gas to electric. He reviewed the DPW’s experience with electric equipment and indicated their satisfaction with electric mowers. Mr. McHale met with representatives from the DPW and Sustainable Wellesley to discuss efforts to encourage residents to reduce use of gas-powered lawn equipment. In April 2022, the Municipal Light Board received recommendations on its rebate program which includes a recommendation for a new rebate related to the conversion of gas to electric equipment. MLP will be offering a rebate is \$75 for mower conversion, \$25 for smaller equipment including hedge and string trimmers, leaf blower, and chain saw.

#### **Mayor Monarch Pledge**

- Ms. Bezmalinovic reviewed the [Mayors Monarch Pledge](#) sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation. The pledge asks that participants take steps to create habitat to protect the Monarch and educate residents about the importance of the monarch butterfly.
- **Pollinator Kits & No Mow May** - Ms. Bezmalinovic shared two updates: 1. NRC is working with [Sustainable Wellesley](#) to host a [Pollinator Kit sale](#), which will include milkweed. 2. The DPW is in support of a “No Mow May” experiment. There will be a no-mow and mowed zones at Simons Park and residents are encouraged to use the INaturalist App to take photos and post and share where they see pollinators at mowed or no mowed side.
- **Mobility Committee** – Ms. Burson said Sustainable Mobility Plan is complete and will go to the Select Board and one other committee for approval before it is released to the public. The new Sustainable Mobility Plan presents a holistic view of mobility including a range of modalities (walking, biking, shared rides, etc).
- **Trails Committee** – Ms. Robert announced the first Spring Walk is Saturday, April 30, 2022 at Caroline Brook Path at Maugus Ave. Other upcoming walks are [listed online](#). The Trails Committee is looking for a Scout Group to build a bog bridge at Boulder Brook.

#### **Climate Emergency**

- No Comments

#### **Directors Report**

- Mr. Schmitt updated the committee on the **Tree Canopy Assessment Software**. Mr. Schmitt asked for support on purchasing a three-year license on the software. Ms. Burson thanked Ms. Bezmalinovic and Mr. Schmitt for the work done and made a motion to approve the \$12,000 for the purchase of PlanIT Geo Tree Canopy software. Ms. Bezmalinovic seconded the motion and it was approved 5-0.
- Mr. Schmitt mentioned that the **Tree Planting Program** has started. Over 300 trees will be planted over the next few weeks. Residents who are interested can sign up and be added to the waiting list by emailing the NRC (nrc@wellesleyma.gov)
- **Tree Risk Assessment** – Mr. Schmitt took the ISA’s Qualified Tree Assessment Course and explained how tree risk is evaluated using that protocol. The board discussed developing standardized form for categorizing trees that are listed as trees to watch for removal.
- **Update on Field Utilization Study and Lawn Conversion, Lighting Retrofit** – Mr. Schmitt said the contract is ready but the funds are not available until seven days after Town meeting. The Lawn Conversion project contract is being reviewed and awaiting the start of that program, which could be in late July-August. Lighting Retrofit - Public Works will review the contract and sign it as that project moves forward.
- **Open Space Plan** – Mr. Schmitt is meeting with the Planning Board on Monday (5.2.2022) and the current draft is in the hands of the regional planning agency. The month of May it will be presented to the Select Board. Mr. Schmitt urged members for any further comments.
- **Permits – Wellesley Rocks** at Central Park was approved and they are asking to extend it to ClockTower Park – the commission chose to vote on the extension next week; **Café Mangal** was looking for outdoor dining on parkland. The Café Mangal permit was denied; a permit for the **Amateur Radio Event** at Simons Park was approved.
- **Bench Approval for Tom Zinck** – Ms. Collins met with the donor group about the location of the bench and after talking to DPW felt comfortable with the installation of the bench. *After a motion was made and seconded, the board voted unanimously to accept the gift of a memorial bench for Mr. Zinck, to be installed at Hunnewell Field on Smith Street.*

### **Board Calendar News**

- Mr. McHale shared a DPW monthly progress report which he would like to consider for the Natural Resources Commission. After an extended discussion, Mr. McHale suggested he will do more research on it and come back to the group with more information.

### **Approved Minutes**

*After a motion was made and seconded, the board voted unanimously to approve the 4.7.2022 minutes.*

### **Schedule Future Meetings**

- Mr. McHale reported that Schools is intending to meet on Tuesday (May 3, 2022) to approve a revised proposal for the Track and Field Lighting and asked if they can attend the NRC meeting on May 5. Mr. McHale said public involvement would take place at the following meeting.
- The board confirmed that upcoming NRC meetings will begin at 7 p.m.

**Adjourned:**

*The meeting adjourned at 9:47 p.m.*