

Draft Minutes
LORAX Task Force
Tuesday, June 21st, 2016

Updated 6/29/16

Attending:

Committee Members: Chair: David Eppley, Ward 7 Councillor Steve Dibble, Paul L'Heureux, Joanne Mizioch, Rick Rennard, Kirt Rieder, Flora Tonthat, Barbara Warren, Polly Wilbert

Observers: Roberta Clement, Michael Coleman, Sandi Power, Frank and Mary Ann Silva, Christine Turnbull, Liz Vago, Philip Yates

Next LORAX Task Force Meeting: Monday, July 18th, at 6:30 PM, City Council Chambers

Deadline for Materials for Next Meeting Distribution: EoD, Thursday, July 14th, by email to Polly Wilbert at pwilbert2@gmail.com

Goals for July 18th Meeting:

1. Chairman Eppley noted that we need to focus on utilizing the \$5,000 in Mass in Motion monies that must be spent by Sept. 1st, and to quantify the needs for the city, possibly using this money toward hiring a student intern for data entry from Rick Rennard's master list. (Barbara Warren will see if she has a staff person who would be interested in doing this work.)
2. The price of a tree for the tree donation brochure needs to be confirmed and Polly is to contact Ron Malioneck for that amount. The cost of tags/plaques also needs to be clarified. (See information received from Ron in text of minutes.)
3. Chairman Eppley asked Barbara Warren, Kirt Rieder, and Rick Rennard to meet to consider the best kind of study to undertake for the \$25,000 that has been budgeted and that they meet before our July 18th meeting. He suggested that we need to make use of GIS capabilities and Barbara Warren concurred that we should use that technology for mapping of trees, empty pits, stumps. Rick Rennard asked what does GIS/Engineering have now? Use symbols to show what is there or needed.
4. Chairman Eppley advocated for a tree planting by late September/Columbus Day to kick off fundraising and for publicity purposes. A subcommittee was formed to plan for publicity, fundraising planning, and a tree planting for publicity: Subcommittee: Roberta Clement, Flora Tonthat, Liz Vago

Minutes/June 21, 2016 Meeting:

Chairman Eppley read a report from Ron Malioneck (who was unable to attend the meeting)

First, we have the new tree truck in the DPW yard. We are about a week out on paperwork and registration. So this is great news.

Secondly, myself and John Tomasz, along with Planning, met with a representative from the State's program, "Gateway City Trees and Parks". A very promising venture for Salem, of what looks like a three year program of planting trees. As well as a maintenance program for these planted trees. This involves the city, homeowners and contractors coming together in this planting program.

Sounds like the State sets most of all this in motion. I will keep us all updated when we receive more info and time frames.

Ward 7 Councillor Steve Dibble, who was unable to attend the Task Force's first meeting, introduced himself by referencing his experience in charge of Salem's tree planting program. He noted that as the new Ward 7 councillor, he has recently walked Ward 7 with neighbors to inventory tree conditions in the ward with 400-500

tree issues being identified. He has also met with residents of the Village at Vinnin Square, and they are planning to add trees to the islands at nearby intersections. They would also like to extend the Forest River Conservation Area trail to the Vinnin Square area for access from that neighborhood. Councillor Dibble will be leading a walk in the Forest River Conservation Area this Sunday, June 26th, 10AM. If you want to join this walk, please meet at the trailhead at the back of the Harrison Road parking lot. The walk will take about an hour and a half.

Councillor Dibble advocated for a full-time qualified tree warden and that the city put in place a systematic tree management system so that care of city trees is like clockwork. He further recommended training for city staff so that they know how to care for trees, including tree warden training opportunities.

Chairman Eppley noted that during the budget process he received commitment from the mayor for funding for the tree effort (there was a placeholder of \$5,000 for trees in the just passed budget) and he is looking to this task force for recommendations for the final amount to be budgeted. He suggested a realistic but liberal view of what we're looking for. In response to a question from Barbara Warren, he noted that this additional amount would be allocated from the city's free cash account.

Polly Wilbert distributed the sub-committee's draft brochure for donations for trees. Discussion took place on tree plaques, attachment of plaques to trees ((Rick Rennard recommended against nailing/bolting plaques to trees because of the risk of frost cracks from bolts). How should donations for tree memorials be recognized? Central monument for aggregating donation recognition? Flora Tonthat recommended a safe way to tag trees and an internet component. Steve Dibble noted that a corded tree tag could be applied without the promise of long-term display. Chairman Eppley suggested that there could be an Arbor Day ceremony with temporary signs displayed for donations. Councillor Dibble referenced an informal memorial tree ceremony that could take place at the donated tree, where the donors could put mulch around newly planted tree.

Councillor Dibble recommended that we seek a 2-year warranty for new trees.

In addressing the need for an appropriate donation amount for the donation brochure, Rick Rennard referenced the cost of the tree (3 – 3.5 inch) plus 3x that amount to plant the tree plus a potential \$50 for plaque. Kirt Rieder referenced donation amounts (lower) asked by other cities.

Councillor Dibble suggested that wording be put in the brochure about timing of tree plantings for spring and fall rounds. He suggested that the donated amount include the cost of the tree, cost to plant, and maintenance, plus plaque. Chairman Eppley offered that a revolving fund for maintenance of trees be established.

Brief discussion took place about the ability to specify siting of trees, the types of trees allowed, and it was agreed that resident interest should be engaged through the choice of a tree, pending city approval for both the tree and location. It was again noted that trees can be planted within 20 feet of the curb. Chairman Eppley summarized that you can specify a tree in front of your house, with city approval, but that the site and type of tree would be left to the ultimate discretion of the tree warden (and that this language needs to be added to the donation brochure).

Paul L'Heureux referenced tree donations at the schools in memory of class members, teachers, class anniversaries, and family members who have passed on. Schools always accept these donations, meet with the family, and select trees together, based on cost and in keeping with landscaping to create a suitable memorial. Chairman Eppley suggested working with the Parent/Teacher Organizations to advocate for tree donations.

Roberta Clement reported on the work that she and Michael Coleman have done to identify organizations to contact for tree donations: Chamber, Historic Salem, etc. They also suggested going into the schools to make presentations about trees and tree donations. She noted that this advocacy element of the Task Force program would require follow up, including emails and publicity efforts.

Mary Ann Silva recommended using SATV as a publicity tool, with something like a 10-minute program running throughout the day. Flora Tonthat proposed a website, either on the city's site or as a standalone. Chairman Eppley reflected that this component of the effort would need a web guru to provide content for the site, along with using social media (Facebook) and that there would need to be a dedicated person to do assigned tasks for this effort.

Kirt Rieder referenced the web sites of the City of Cambridge and Ft. Collins, Colorado. Polly Wilbert urged that we need to keep any components of our efforts as simple as possible to add to the possibility of success. Chairman Eppley stated that there needs to be a budget of some kind, including the cost of a full-time arborist.

Kirt Rieder noted that he had emailed links to tree inventory programs, some were municipal, and some were private advocacy groups, with private efforts potentially being quicker/cheaper.

Chairman Eppley reported that \$25,000 for a tree survey was passed in the just passed budget, plus \$5,000 from Mass in Motion, which needs to be spent prior to Sept. 1. We need to inventory what we're missing, as opposed to what we have. Rick Rennard confirmed that we need to identify the open tree pits and to fill those up before we undertake any other inventory work. Kirt Rieder advocated a digital effort as opposed to a paper file to map the open tree pits, and then to plan in a few years incremental targeted improvements to the wards, using mapping. Liz Vago inquired about the need to train people to assist in an inventory.

Philip Yates noted that the Federal St. Neighborhood Association inventories their trees already. He also brought up that he doesn't want a tree in front of his house because of parking issues in his short narrow street (Gifford Court). Rick Rennard confirmed that if a resident doesn't want a tree, you don't get a tree because the tree won't be taken care of.

Flora Tonthat inquired about rescuing trees that need trimming before they get to a point where they are damaged beyond repair or have grown inappropriately. Chairman Eppley noted that this returns us to the city's limited funding and the need for the Task Force to quantify what the city needs to budget for the ongoing tree program.

Liz Vago noted that some of the new trees that have been planted recently are tilted and need to be straightened. These were generally trees that were not staked when they were planted. She asked that the shade tree department staff look again at the newly planted trees on Lafayette between Ocean and Willow and near Engine House Pizza on lower Lafayette.

Rick Rennard advocated that we focus first on tree wells that are empty. First steps are to fill up holes in the ground with new trees. In most cases, where there is an empty tree pit, most people want a tree. He also noted that in conjunction with this effort we need to focus on the issue of stumps, and that 2-3 times a year we need to remove 15-20 stumps, and that stump removal must be kept up with.

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2. The price of a tree for the tree donation brochure needs to be confirmed and Polly is to contact Ron Malioneck for that amount. The cost of tags/plaques also needs to be clarified.

Depending on the contract with the landscape company who would be planting the donated tree, the cost would be between 300 to 500. Different cities and towns just plant and stake and put a

water bag, then they are done. Others do all that and come back repeatedly, (say every one or two weeks) to refresh the water bag and check on the tree. So looking at that, the approx. costs would be:

About \$300 for the tree, 500 for planting and maintaining, then a suggested price of 200 into the maintenance fund.

I have no prices for the plaque as we don't deal with those. I would also not want to see anything nailed into a young tree.

Secondly, nurseries generally give one year warranty. Ron Malioneck

3. Chairman Eppley asked Barbara Warren, Kirt Rieder, and Rick Rennard to meet to consider the best kind of study to undertake for the \$25,000 that has been budgeted and that they meet together before our next meeting. He suggested that we need to have GIS involvement and Barbara Warren concurred that we should use that technology for mapping of trees, empty pits, stumps. Rick Rennard asked what does GIS/Engineering have now? Use symbols to show what is there or needed.
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Relevant links (offered by Kirt Rieder):

Commemorative Tree Programs:

Cambridge, MA

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/ourservices/urbanforestry/citystreetplantingprograms/commemorativeplanting>

Ft. Collins, CO

<http://www.fcgov.com/forestry/living-tribute-form.pdf?1296770461> (\$185/each)

<http://www.fcgov.com/forestry/tribute.php>

Five different approaches to the question of quantifying and understanding where things stand, as a basis for moving forward with advocacy for more trees and improved funding. Many of these cite similar quandaries to those obstacles articulated in our first meeting.

Cambridge MA

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/ourservices/urbanforestry/treeinventory>

control click for:

2011 tree inventory report(pdf)

Partially completed with interns, and ultimately very sophisticated in terms of mapping

Somerville MA

<http://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/parks-and-open-space/urban-forest/inventory>

<http://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/parks-and-open-space/urban-forest/inventoryplan>

Davey Resource Group, a private consultant

Chicago Region Trees Initiative

<http://www.mortonarb.org/science-conservation/chicago-region-trees-initiative>
arboretum & regionally based effort

Newton MA

http://www.newtonconservators.org/street_trees.htm
An interested non-governmental advocacy group

New York City

<http://www.treesny.org/>
private consortium

Attachments

**Requested: Draft tree ordinance from Rick Rennard: Requested scan of document from Chair
LORAX Task Force Contact List updated as of 6-21-16**