

## **LORAX Task Force Meeting**

### **Draft Minutes**

**August 29, 2016, 6:30 PM, City Council Chambers**

**Next Meeting will be on Monday, September 26, 6:30 PM in City Council Chambers**

### **Agenda for 9/26 Meeting:**

Tree budget goals: maintenance, stump removal, and tree planting

Assess existing waiting list for trees, stumps, maintenance (SD will do an estimate based on his Ward 7 survey)

### **Attendees:**

**Committee Members:** Chairman David Eppley, Councillor Steven Dibble, Paul L'Heureux, Ron Malioneck, Joanne Mizioch, Rick Rennard, Kirt Rieder, Flora Tonthat, Barbara Warren, Polly Wilbert,

**Observers:** Roberta Clement, Michael Coleman, Jacqueline Ford, Danielle Hanrahan, Sandi Power, Frank Silva, Mary Anne Silva, Liz Vago

**Invited Guest:** Mass In Motion, Russell Findley

Chairman Eppley reviewed the meeting agenda (from 7-18-16 minutes)

1. Finalize Plan for September 29<sup>th</sup> Kick Off/Publicity Event 4-6 PM at Farmer's Market/Old Town Hall (Subcommittee: Clement, Tonthat, Vago)
2. Understanding present process for tree planning/planting (Councillor Dibble/Ron Malioneck)
3. Recommendation from Sub-Committee (Rennard, Rieder, Warren) on \$25,000 study components
4. Mass in Motion follow up on \$3-5K grant (work by intern, See Click Fix modification)
5. Survey re tree sites / Entrance Corridors, etc.
6. Update on any grant of Gateway Cities monies (from Planning Dept./Ron Malioneck)
7. Report from Danielle Hanrahan on Historic Tree Protections/Preservation research, esp. on private property

FT: Presented flyer for September 29 kickoff event. Date/time are confirmed w/Debra Greel (Old Town Hall use), Mayor Driscoll's scheduler, Councillor David Eppley, and Jim McAllister, who will make a presentation. There will be no sponsors for the September event. Cookies and lemonade may be offered. Reception will be upstairs at Old Town Hall.

Flyers, stickers, funding available through Mayor's office as confirmed by Chairman Eppley. A bigger event will be held in the spring. There will also be planting of a tree in the spring.

### **Proposed 9/29 Program:**

Welcome

What is LORAX?

Introduce Mayor Driscoll (She will speak about the City's commitment to trees)

LORAX Chair Councillor David Eppley

Presentation about how trees have shaped the city/Salem Historian Jim McAllister

SD: Requested distribution of flyers to Council and others for publicity

MS: Suggested that flyer be shared with SATV for rolling onscreen bulletin board.

BW: Be specific in flyer about where things are going to take place.

SD: Process that we do now (reference experience w/city) in terms of planting and maintaining trees.

RM: Budget we have to work with, year-to-year accumulated tree planting list. Contact abutting home owner to find out if the homeowner wants a tree. Have a working list, which changes all the time. 21-25 plantings in certain areas each year and then add to that if we get additional monies. Requests from city councillors, Mayor, which are added to the list. List can be 3-4 years long. We don't have enough funding right now. It's a limited list. CDBG monies of about \$3-4K, additional 15-16 trees planted in low/mod income areas, which are covered by CDBG monies.

BW: Met w/Dave Knowlton and Mass In Motion about the National Grid Partnership Challenge grant, deadline for submission 11/01. Letter of intent submitted by Tom Devine in the Planning Dept. for \$30K grant for tree inventory and management plan. Cost estimates would come out of inventory. City/Planning Dept. will also look for additional funding. Natgional Grid grant requires matching monies.

BW: Mass in Motion study: \$5K, NE Civil Engineering did the work through a task order under their current city contract. Used City GIS. Tree inventory started database in GIS format. Focused on four entrance corridors as a sample to demonstrate what inventory would look like in a larger study. Setting up database took most of the time. 746 trees surveyed including from Rick Rennard's data. 348 trees were GPS'd and added to 245 trees from Rick's earlier list. Reviewed what assessment contained. Open tree pits, etc.

Recommendation from subcommittee to finish this survey with the \$30K National Grid grant.

RR: Question about whether condition of trees was included. BW: Yes.

KR: Is it plausible that work under the \$30K would cover the entire city? Questioned engineering vs tree people making tree assessments.

BW: Arborists would be more expensive.

KR: \$30K study would not be comprehensive

BW: City match would bring it to \$55,000.

BW: Can volunteers be trained to do work???? (Much discussed.) Who will be doing it? Written into the grant. Intern with a landscape background did the demonstration assessment funded by Mass in Motion.

BW: We don't have that many tree species. 15 species.

DE: A great net positive for the city. Planning is our goal. Not just maintenance. We need to be realistic about what we can get accomplished. I am cool with that. Not just the deficit and presence of trees.

LV: Inventory is great. Drought this summer has impacted us. If we spend money on this survey, we have no plan and no money for trees. After survey, we can make the case that we have to find funds to plant trees, and we must have the political will to fix this.

BW: You won't understand the needs if you haven't mapped it.

DE: Identify the deficits and then identify the plan, then incumbent on the City administration to fund the plan.

PW: Comments about timing, planting cycles, vis a vis budgeting.

DE: Full time arborist needed, make case to City Council and Administration to get our feet wet.

FT: Used the entrance corridors as a pilot. A chunk at a time and in parallel.

DE: Take up this discussion at our next meeting. New committee to make decisions. A new concentration. Formulate a cogent budget proposal to the Administration for this fiscal year ending June 2017. Then '17-18 have additional information for spring budget discussions in early 2017.

RR: Rick and David Eppley to form a sub-committee on the finance of this plan.

DE: Our job is to come up with recommendations to the City Council/Administration. Money through Mayor's office, through Planning Dept. Donations go into the general fund. (like a 501c3)

BW: Where does the money go so that it is earmarked for trees?

LV: Mechanism exists because it's already done for park bench donations.

SD: Maintenance of trees. Is our tree staff big enough? Do we need a second bucket truck? A long waiting list now for maintenance. Ways to help Ron get the trees maintained. How to get to the list? Whole bunch of maintenance that isn't happening. Mulching trees a big issue. City not mulching new trees. (best practices) Loves gator bags. Home owners will water. We need to do a better job on educating the public. Maintenance in general. We are losing more and more. Trees planted over last 5-10 years need maintenance.

FT: Discussion about test composite material in downtown tree wells. Very expensive. \$250/each tree pit. Porous. Flexipane (KR)

DE: Some concerns about using the composite, which is recycled tires.

SD: Uses it in playgrounds. Should not be used with new trees. Heats up. Protects tree roots from foot traffic.

RM: No. 6 DCR grant ??? Lynn 3-year program, focuses on home owners. Pushed strongly for Town of Danvers, Beverly, Swampscott, set up similarly one truck, two guys. Look at how much is subbed out to a contractor. Street by street. Last 10 years never able to accomplish maintenance of trees because of one truck/two guys. Have a contractor come in and make a proposal for maintenance work for 2018.

DE: However LORAX can help do that, the better it is.

RM: Will bring in bids from other towns for our next meeting.

SP: Get a budget from contractors.

DE: Use this forum to advocate for a dependable budget line item for trees every year.

SP: Gateway monies?

RM: Meeting re Gateway. Salem is next on their agenda. General contractors will do the work. Anyone that wants to get involved, including education, the grant will be for 2017-18.

BW: Tom Devine letter for National Grid grant includes budgeting assistance.

SD: How many trees are on the waiting list, how many pruning, how many stumps ???? What is the ball park number? How long is the waiting list to get to the work?

RM: We could handle the load when Ron first started. See Click Fix, will never catch up. List changes every day.

SD: Just give me numbers.

BW: Those are exemplified by the MiM study numbers.

RM: 250 stumps done in 2 years.

DE: Do a group, come up with a maintenance plan from planting to fire place. We need to identify budgeting for that.

MS: Recommended to Ron that Salem identify an area in city as a learning zone for Essex Tech students. Submit a form for work that needs to be done. Get Salem into Essex Tech queue. Even if it doesn't happen until next year.

BW: See Click Fix, put in a request adopt- a-tree with database items, going up on See Click Fix.

DH: Reached out to local historical societies and Newton (urban forestry dept./active program for city trees and for new developments). Newton had planned to implement an historic tree preservation program on private land, but didn't have staff/funding and scrapped it. Other communities' historical societies thought it was a good idea, but no ability to make it happen because of lack of funding and manpower.

MAPC could assist with a pilot program. Meet with an MAPC rep. to draft ordinance, legal issues, knowledgeable group? Meet with city representative; Salem is part of MAPC, so can benefit from MAPC expertise. No other community has moved forward on this kind of plan.

DE: Does MAPC have any recommendations for preserving historic trees? MAPC come to do a presentation for LORAX? Policies and best practices. (Rick and Ron at that meeting) Training opportunities.

BW: Conway School might be a resource for this, but very likely MAPC would not be because they are a planning organization.

DE: What resources are out there re historic trees? (Asking Ron/Rick) Historic public trees. (Greenlawn, Charter, Broad St., and other historic cemeteries)

RR: Bad year with the drought. We aren't the only community facing damage. Hard for so many public trees to water.

SP: Old trees, Gardner, elm trees. Concerned that there is no representation on this committee from many of the neighborhood associations because their input would be valuable to the LORAX effort.

DE: Technically all of the assns. are represented through NIAC by Flora.

**DE: Next meeting: Monday, 9/26, at 6:30 PM**

LV: Timeline for making recommendations to the city. Hear more about financial part of this. What is Ron's wish list? Prioritize. Then go to the City with a cogent plan.

**Agenda for Sept. 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting:**

Budget goals: maintenance and tree planting

Identify existing waiting list for trees, stumps (SD will do tabulation from his Ward 7 survey)