

LORAX Draft Minutes
Monday, June 26, 2017
120 Washington St.

Attendees: Chairman Councillor David Eppley, Kirt Rieder, Barbara Warren, Polly Wilbert

Observers: Darleen Melis, Sandi Powers, John Hayes

Next meeting on **Monday, July 10th, 6:30 PM in City Council chambers**

Everyone spoke a bit about their background. Professor Hayes spoke about his background and involvement with Salem's renewable energy task force.

Councillor Eppley spoke about the Council's (unanimously voted) moratorium on utility tree pruning. Rick Rennard was not getting calls returned from National Grid's pruning crews. Dan Stafford, NG rep. has been engaged and NG wants to do a public education forum. Public hearing with the Public Health, Safety, and the Environment Committee of the City Council with NG, forestry team, work crews, Rick Rennard. NG says that they will follow a community's tree manual.

Rick Rennard's updated tree manual will be needed. Concern about realistic ability to get an updated comprehensive manual by year end.

BW: Setback questions re troubleshooting examples.

DM/DE: Large new construction projects come before PB/ZBA, need a tree ordinance to give teeth to tree planting and mitigation requirements, requisite number of trees required on site or absence or losses made up for as a credit toward trees elsewhere. We can do a great deal on the residential side, but we need to give the PB/ZBA power to require trees during planning.

NRCC / PUD – specific requirements for trees. Example: Re-do of 120 Washington from offices to residential condos before PB, nothing was presented about trees. Single family homes in developments, trees are required, in parking lots trees required, but in other development situations, trees are not specifically required.

KR: Big projects need to be mandated to provide specific amounts of trees or payment into a fund. Planning Dept. needs to reconcile language to amend zoning law as necessary.

SP: What set the number of trees for 120 Washington?

KR: Rick Rennard determined number of trees.

BW/DM: Language re setback needs to be clarified.

DE: Exempt language/Believes there is no appetite by City Council to have this tree ordinance involve single family homes

BW: We're not touching residential unless major construction or demolition....

DE: Exempt under a set number of units (5?)

BW: Zoning map as reference tool: Discussion that zoning map isn't really reflective of residential housing that is exempt.

DM: Curb lawn adjacent to residential is public property.

DE: We do want to control commercial and industrial, and residential, but only over certain residential unit amount.

DM: Large developments have to come before PB, example Jefferson Station at Salem Station.

DE: Salem Oil and Grease, Flynnntan , ZBA and Planning Board have power to make them plant trees during site review.

KR: PB has been successful in getting large developments to plant trees.

DM: PB needs something to underpin the enforcement for trees. Need to draft some ordinance language.

General discussion of development examples of residential and tree planting.

Language re maintenance of trees over time.... in residential examples.

Discussion of examples: would double house need to come in for permission to cut down a tree?

KR: Five units yes, but discuss drift down to four.... If property turned into condos to create amount of parking needed. ... Cutting down trees to create parking.

Discussion re residential property perspectives: DE: "participate in the civic environment" tree required for 10 years

Discussion of education needed if street trees are not wanted then broader impact on city.

SP: financing eligibility example re 4 vs 5 residential units....

Condo vs apts. Make sure Beth Rennard goes over exempt language with a fine tooth comb: Condo association qualifies as a lot owner, not individual condo owners.

Discussion of concerns re renovation “policing” actions. Aggrieved parties most likely to be neighbors....

Examples: Developer with 1-4 family selling within 18 months after ownership, exempt under present draft ordinance language.

John Hayes: Heritage tree question..... Fairfield/Cabot....tree near corner.

DE: Buy in needed from property owners / old owner/new owner..... to incentivize care for older trees....

KR: The other cities whose ordinance language we have reviewed have not covered heritage trees....

DE: \$60,000 Inventory Project: New England Civil Engineering has contract..... using volunteers.... Getting Salem State students involved. Dividing up city. Inventory to be complete by next June 30th. Also doing canopy cover assessment: high vs low canopy cover (satellite images)

BW: Chris Burke is doing a book on historic trees in Salem. Spoke about example of 289 Derby St. (developer wanted to build a drive through bank at 289, then turn Century bank site into condos (eastern cottonwood there in setback would have needed to be protected).....

BW: Setback concerns..... discussion re setbacks for new construction.....

Process to get to final language....

Review ordinance and send any draft or edited language to Darleen (Darleen.melis@verizon.net) for **next meeting on Monday, July 10th, 6:30 PM in City Council chambers**