



## CITY OF SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

### TREE COMMISSION

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KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL  
MAYOR

### MINUTES OF THE SALEM TREE COMMISSION

**JANUARY 27, 2020**

On January 27, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. the Salem Tree Commission held a meeting at 98 Washington Street, Salem, MA.

#### **1. Roll Call**

In attendance were: Chair Darleen Melis, Vice Chair Kirt Rieder, Members: Naomi Cottrell, Curt Dragon, Charlotte Enfield, Paul L'Heureux, Rachel McCarter, Tree Warden Robert LeBlanc and Joanne Roomey, Commission Clerk. Absent were: Joshua Arenstam and David Rowand.

#### **2. Tree Warden's Report**

- **Grant Updates**

- A meeting was held with Jane Guy from the Planning Department about the CBDG grant program. A list of street locations was presented to her and she has approved approximately (18) locations out of the estimated (30) trees that can be funded through this grant in the specified neighborhoods in the City.
- An application will be submitted by February 14 for the same project through the same grant program for next year.
- The MVP grant has no new updates currently.
- No updates of additional information from the DCR on the Urban Challenge Grant for this year.

- **Planning Board**

Last Thursday there was a permitting "One Stop" presentation for some of the development projects scheduled for startup within the next year. These include the following:

- 160 Federal St., St. James School
- 15-17 Hawthorne Blvd., St. Mary's School
- 53 Mason St.
- Highland Ave/ Barnes Rd. Project.
- 602 Loring Ave

- **Tree Permits:** Right now, there are no permits out for tree removals or tree work. I anticipate that there will be several once there is a tree hearing for the Derby St. sidewalk project and the project on Loring Ave., once the trees are inventoried and the total caliper inches are agreed upon.
- **Tree Removals/Stump Work:** In the past week a total of (35) stumps were identified, reviewed for Dig Safe and ground to a depth of 8-10" below grade. These open pits can be utilized as potential planting sites for spring tree plantings. A list of (4) trees and (1) for pruning was contracted and completed in the past month.
- **Purchasing Contracts for 2020:** Presently, the Purchasing Department has (2) tree department related contracts that are getting ready to be put out for competitive bidding through the City. One will be for emergency tree removal services, crane work and stump grinding services. The second contract is for tree planting and maintenance services, combining a separate bid for tree purchasing as part of the bid and to have the option to purchase and install materials from the selected vendor. This contract will also address two-times-a-week watering for the trees planted and the performance of the service will be confirmed by GPS tracking.
- **Finances and Budget for FY2021**
  - The fiscal year budget is being worked on for the mayor's approval. The Tree Department has (1) line item and it encompasses all things related to tree care and maintenance.
  - The line item # 14112-5391, had a beginning balance as of July 1<sup>st</sup> of \$250,000. The word from the Director of Public Works is that line will be level funded for FY 2121.
  - Presently, that line item has a balance of \$99,558.00. Encumbrances of \$150,442.00 were spent on Fall plantings, high-risk removals, tree equipment maintenance and emergency services related to (2) storms in October.
  - The next fiscal year will begin on July 1<sup>st</sup>, and the plan for the utilization of funds are as follows:
    - 40% tree planting and immediate tree care: (\$100,000)
    - 35% for tree removals of high-risk trees: (\$ 87,500)\*
    - 15% for emergency tree services and rentals: (\$ 37,500)
    - 10% for equipment maintenance repairs: (\$ 25,000)
    - \*Any unused balance of this line item may be used to plant trees.
    - Salaries and fuel are not included in the Tree Department budget.
  - Examples of the past (2) fiscal years 2018 and 2019 are as follows:
    - 2018: \$ 52,696 expended on line item # 14112-5391
    - 2019: \$ 154,992 expended on line # 14112-5391

- **Additional Notes:** The PEM has engaged an artist to do an outdoor exhibit. They are requesting permission to paint trees blue on the Essex St. mall in front of the PEM. The vibrant blue color is a watercolor paint that will eventually wash off or the artist can be required to wash the trees clean at the end of the exhibit. A PEM representative will speak on the matter at the February 24 meeting.

**3. Salem Engineering Department, Jay Carroll, Assistant City Engineer - Plans for sidewalks on Derby Street**

Salem Engineering Department presented an overview of the current Derby Street design to the Tree Commission in preparation for a tree removal hearing. The limits for the upcoming reconstruction project are from Kosciusko Street to Blaney Street. The project will include new ADA compliant sidewalks and ramps, corner bumpouts at intersections, new lighting and new bike accommodations. At this point, the design shows saving all trees except four. Two of the four trees are being removed due to health of the tree while the remaining two are being removed to provide ADA compliant sidewalks. After the project, there will be a net gain of 10 trees in the neighborhood.

Mr. Carroll noted to the Tree Commission that the latest project plans have yet to be reviewed with the stakeholders and abutters so there is possibility of additional trees included in request for removal based on those upcoming discussions.

- 4. Remarks from the Public:** Mark Tuttle attended the meeting; he is a lifelong resident of Salem and is concerned for the loss of trees.
- 5. Approve Minutes:** Mr. Dragon moved to approve the **December 12, 2019** minutes. Mr. Rieder seconded. The motion carried.
- 6. Presentation by Naomi Cottrell on National Grid tree damage**

Ms. Cottrell had a conversation with the Arlington Tree Warden regarding gas leak compensation. She stated that the Arlington Tree Warden has a Gas Sentry Detector that identifies leaking methane gas. He checks areas that are potential tree planting sites. If he detects a leak, he notifies National Grid immediately, once the leak is fixed, they can plant.

If there is a tree in Town that is in decline and maybe affected by a leak, he checks around the root zone. If a leak is located, he notifies National Grid and submits a claim form (from their web site). Arlington has a \$375 per (DBH) inch value on their Public Shade Trees. For example, if the tree is 24" (DBH) X \$375 = \$9,000, that is the claim amount that he submits for the tree. National Grid will dispatch their arborist and they will meet on site for review. Typically, National Grid makes an offer for reimbursement, pending on the amount the Tree Warden accepts.

**7. Tree Manual – SECTION VIII to SECTION X, Pages 17 - 23**

Chair Darleen Melis presented the comments and edits by Board members Ms. Enfield, Ms. Cottrell and Mr. Dragon regarding Section VIII to Section X, pages 17 through 23 of the draft Tree Manual. Chair Melis will update the Tree Manual to reflect the Boards' changes.

**8. Century Tree Program**

Planting the next generation of heritage trees in the lead-up to Salem 400 in 2026. Salem residents are invited to submit their suggestion for potential sites for Century Trees by emailing the location to [centurytree@salem.com](mailto:centurytree@salem.com). The City's Tree Warden will review the proposed locations to select the most appropriate ones for plantings that will grow and flourish throughout the 21st century and, potentially, beyond. Each Century Tree will be designated with a plaque commemorating its planting.

**9. Discussion on the plan to educate public about Chapter 43:** The Board agreed to continue this discussion at the next meeting on February 24, 2020.

**10. New Business:** None

**11. Next Meeting Date:** February 24, 2020

**12. Adjournment**

Mr. Rieder made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Dragon. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Roomey  
Commission Clerk