

Minutes of the Land Management Committee for Lone Tree Hill
October 7, 2015
Board of Selectmen Room, Belmont Town Hall

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The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM

Members present: Michele Gougeon, Andy Healy, Tom Grimble, Harlan Carere, Jeffrey North, Lauren Meier and Chairman Ellen O'Brien Cushman

Members not present: Steve Kidder

Others present: Dave Ropes and Barbara Keene Briggs, of Tree Specialists, Inc., Radha Iyenger of Belmont Citizens Forum, Kit Dreier, Jeanne Mooney and Martha Moore from the JKR Memorial Conservation Fund

Lauren Meier introduced Tree Specialists, Inc with whom she is very familiar by professional association and experience
Dave Ropes provided the Powerpoint Presentation:

There are 2 double- rows of 165 White Pine trees in the Allee, 182 appear to be missing; the length of the Allee is 921 feet

The trees were planted in a rigid pattern of 10 apart running east to west to establish the Allee.

1. Structure - using industry standards for stability and safety – all trees are tagged for easy communication
2. Health – vigor, insect presence, decay spots, soil quality)
 - a. Findings – shallow rooted, fine sandy loam about 16" deep only. Wind will fell the trees if it finds a path into the Allee to create more damage
 - b. Low K, Mg, CA soil, not terribly fertile, not a strengthening soil
 - c. Weak wooded trees with heavy foliage susceptible to ice and snow damage
 - d. Some Heartwood (dark center), dead and sapwood is light outer rings
 - e. Stumps and slash are present and need to be removed
 - f. Fuller large canopy trees are better – live crown ratio provides more stability
 - g. Some drought stress
 - h. Vulnerable in pockets due to wind in the openings
 - i. Ticks present in the understory – safety issue for visitors
3. Steps for the Pine Allee
 - a. Stabilize the trees for public safety
 - i. Remove the trees with unacceptable level of stem decay
 - ii. Structural pruning to reduce the weight and balance the tree
 - iii. Need to manage this Allee , it's not the woods
 - iv. Determine amount of decay by size of tree, decay, hollow sounds when hammer – 50% of the middle wood
 - v. Pruning to change the physics and improve the weight values
 - b. Remove stumps and understory by and use selective herbicide applications for buckthorn and poison ivy, ultimately mowing the understory
 - i. Sandy soil – no real worry about compaction by using equipment. Minimal disturbance
 - ii. Recommend remove brush this fall, tree work/pruning in winter for soil
 - iii. Add wood chips
 - c. Improve soil by adding the woodchips and calcitic limestone amendments
 - d. Replanting strategy – using native seedlings harvested from the site
 - i. Plant early spring/march when seedlings are 2-3 ft high
 - ii. 10 feet apart? Discussion about overall long term health versus the historic 10 ft
 - iii. Plant in same places after grinding and removal of stumps
 - iv. Use hydrogel to give the roots a good start, add peat and organic material
 - e. How many trees?

- i. 20 ft ideal makes sense or triangulate but if all at 10ft, we could expect some failure as still establishing.
 - ii. 50 % mortality if from nursery and not watered, mass planting but for native seedlings, they see only 10% loss.
 - iii. Could prune to the desired height for new ones
 - iv. Only plant for desired pattern result – plant for the 20 ft and keep the aisle open, lower maintenance and pruning to keep the Allee corridor open
- f. Cut down the black locusts adjacent to the vernal pool – 10 ft clear/pull or cut; they range from 5 – 18 inches in diameter
- g. Priorities, removal and pruning:

i. High priority	115 trees	\$11,400
ii. Medium priority	33 trees	\$22,400
iii. Low Priority	128 trees	\$86,800
h. Tree removal adjacent	18 trees	<u>\$10,000 with chipping</u>
		<u>\$130,600</u>
- i. Rule of thumb use \$1000 per tree

Understory stump removal	\$19,500
Herbicide, brush removal	
Transplanting	\$10,738 (\$59 per tree if all replanted)

4. Conservation Commission approval would be required for work near vernal pool buffer
 - a. Flag the vernal pool
 - b. Meet with Conservation Agent, Mary Trudeau
 - c. Do the filing
 - d. Meet with commission for determination and notice of intent for the 18 trees, presume they are in the buffer
 - e. Staging and removal conditions are possible
 5. Could volunteers perform some of the work?
 - a. Brush removal
 - b. Wood chips
 - c. Planting the saplings
 - d. Watering and care
 6. Concerns about the budget – we don't have enough money saved
 - a. \$15K committee voted to authorize for public safety/hazard trees that have been identified
 - b. How will we pay for the rest of the recommended work?
 - i. Apply for grant to JKR Fund for balance of the project
 - ii. What does the committee want to do and when ? Up for discussion
- Discussion of the TTOR Monitoring Report, we agree with the findings, on track
 - Upper Coal Road Erosion control – next meeting
 - Herbicide treatments for control of invasive/competitive species by Polatin is on track, seeing good results as affirmed in the monitoring report
 - Ellen asks all to be aware of the Community Path Implementation Advisory committee work
 - Financial review Harlan will provide more detail for next meeting
 - Barn – moved to the next meeting
 - Belmont Serves – if someone wants to lead a group, please let Ellen know, she cannot attend this year
 - Voted 2 invoices for Polatin \$2415

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen O'Brien Cushman -Chairman, Land Management Committee for Lone Tree Hill