11.14.2022

Shade Tree Committee Meeting Minutes for November

The Zoom meeting was called to order at 16:30 pm by Chair Eva Hoffman and attended by: Jay Marcotte (Director of DPW and Acting Tree Warden), Mike Santoro (Assistant Director of DPW and Acting Tree Warden), Lucia Gates, Eva Hoffman, Chris Arthur, Michael Chesson, DeNee Reiton Skipper, Molly Aalyson, Gregory Piotrowicz and Adam Howe.

There were 4 members attending so there was a quorum for the meeting.

The **October** Minutes were approved as amended.

Tree Warden report.

- 32 trees have been planted under the Commemorative Tree Program and the plaque has been well received.

- Mike Chesson sent a thank you to the Jay and Mike for trimming the trees around Richardson Farm so the signs could be seen.

- Jay Marcotte mentioned that the Inventory Project has shown that Belmont has around 8,500 trees, far fewer than the 10,000 trees that were counted in 1983. He will send Eva the files from the 1983 count. The areas include cemeteries, parks, playgrounds, schools and common green spaces. Private roads are not going to be included in the count.

- Jay also mentioned that he has asked for an increase in budget for tree planting and will continue to make a Capital request. He said that he sees tree planting as an important capital investment.

- The Con Com (Conservation Committee) is a policy body that reviews potential projects for storm water and wetlands and they are not a funding organization.

- DeNee mentioned the "Venerable Tree List," which is on the website and needs to be updated.

- Molly asked that the Belmont Hill School be left on the agenda to revisit to see what modifications have occurred for the parking being designed. It was said that the Community Preservation Committee is looking at acquiring the land through Eminent Domain. Molly mentioned that the McLean Property was also overbuilt in the initial design stages, and through engagement, the design allowed areas like Lone Tree Hill for public use. She thought that this might be similar. The Community Preservation Committee, which is state run will not fund tree planting unless it is a part of a larger green space renovation.

Matt Shurman, Guest Speaker talked about the City of Watertown Green Infrastructure Program Presentation:https://www.watertowndpw.org/DocumentCenter/View/162/Green-Infrastructure-for-a-Healthier-Charles-River-Presentation---June-21-2016-PDF?bidId=

- Matt gave a PP presentation on the program, beginning with describing what Stormwater is and how small changes can make a big difference in the amount of "first flush" polluted water going in to the storm drainage system and out to the Charles River.

- Green Infrastructure mimics natural processes to treat stormwater as close to the source as possible. Types of Green Infrastructure:

  - Drywells are "gray infrastructure"- man made ways to collect runoff from roofs and used to water plants during dryer times. Cisterns fall in this category.

  - Stormwater planters, bioretention and bioswales:

    - Bioretention: Arsenal Park: shallow depression which is not a retention pond, allows water to percolate into the ground through plantings that also filter the water.

    - Bioswales are smaller, within the planting strip, as exemplified on Edenfeld Ave. Inlets from street through the road curbing allows runoff to infiltrate into the ground with overflows into the Storm Water System for large scale storms.

    - Stormwater tree trench: hidden infrastructure. Perforated pipe off existing or new catch basin set below tree planting to allow runoff and provide water for the tree planting and green grass strip. Will accommodate 1" of rain during a storm. Watertown has finished 41 tree trenches at a cost of about 20K each.

  - Permeable paving: like stone or blocks that allow the water to percolate into the ground. These can be seen on driveways.

  - Green Roof- vegetation and water storage on the roof.

- Design Criteria includes investigating existing soils, utilities, water quality, existing street trees and "Right Tree-Right Place."

- Funding is through the Road program in Watertown supplemented by State initiatives and the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program (https://www.mass.gov/municipal-vulnerability-preparedness-mvp-program) which is an equity based Green Infrastructure grant that is focused on environmental fairness.

- The Belmont Library will have a bioswale, as will the Belmont HS/MS.

Eva would like everyone to ponder how we can bring these ideas into Belmont.

The meeting ended at 17:30 and the next meeting will be on December 12th, 2022 at 16:30.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Chris Arthur.

Approved by Eva Hoffman, the Chair
Her electronic signature as required:
(crossed out until these have been approved)

Eva E Hoffman (signature)