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Minutes of
**The Shade Tree
Committee**
11 June 2018



The meeting was called to order at 16:35 by Chair Lucia Gates, and attended by, in alphabetical order: Mike Chesson, Nancy Forbes, Laura Simmons, DeNee Reiton Skipper and Tom Walsh.

The minutes of 30 April 2018 were approved.

It was announced at Town Meeting by Mike Rogers, Belmont's representative in the State Congress, that Belmont will be receiving an additional \$60,000 to alleviate the large outlay for storm-related tree removal. Tom stated approximately 30 to 40 large trees still need to be removed after the severe winter storms of last year. Many of these large trees will require a crane to remove them. Many residents are very nervous about the possibility of large trees landing on their houses in storms. Unfortunately, they also often won't approve of the town planting the tree in their yard instead of the tree belt, which would definitely be better for the root system of the tree. It would not be confined to a small berm and become lopsided over time. It also requires that the trees in the berm be lifted or pruned upwards to allow trucks to pass safely under them. Pruning many or may not invite decay, weakening the tree.

TREE WARDEN'S REPORT: Myrtle Street has many very large trees and the issue of removing many lovely trees versus safety is delicate. Tom hopes to trench the street around the trees to check the condition of their roots; the pavement would have to be patched afterward.

One large Ash tree will be removed in the Butler area as it is failing; it is hoped that eleven other trees at Butler can be injected to protect them from the Emerald Ash Borer. Tom went to a meeting in Andover, which has numerous Ash Trees which are already infected with this pest and he learned how to identify the sign of infestation. It is difficult to see the signs in older trees with thick bark since the Borer holes are small. If the tree has an infestation higher up in the canopy the presence of Woodpeckers may be indicative of Borers. Younger Ash Trees are less susceptible than the older ones, and the particular variety of Ash does not seem to matter to the insect.

NOTABLE TREES ON THE MCLEAN PROPERTY: Mike obtained list entitled *The Trees of McLean*. The document date is 1965-1966 and was prepared by Ann Lord and Stewart Sanders.

Our list of Notable Trees is still not posted to the town's website.

GROVE STREET PLAYGROUND REDESIGN: The Town Meeting approved the plan and finances. The playing fields block all the entrances to the park and one has to interfere with ongoing play to enter. That will be addressed. Donna Ruvalo has included a large budget for trees in the design plans because large trees are desired. We are concerned that no irrigation is planned for these trees. We will invite Donna back in September to discuss the tree care and to see the finalized plans for the Park.

TOWN FIELD PLAYGROUND: This also is a park with playing fields and a small tot lot. The planning is preliminary at this point and the *Town Field Playground Community Preservation Grant Proposal Committee* has been formed. Lucia will find out who is on the committee and contact them in the fall.

PEQUOSSETTE PLAYGROUND PARK: This is already in the construction phase. The plans we saw earlier have probably been revised since then. We will follow up on the plantings plan.

WAVERLEY PARK: now has many of the larger trees identified with small plaques indicating the species of the tree.

continued

MEMBERSHIP: Now that Town Meeting is concluded we will pursue membership options with Patrice Garvin. Nancy also mentioned she knows a person who may be interested and will follow up.

OPEN MEETING LAW: This has been revisited after the Planning Board was cited. The issue was discussed and how we should not discuss any issue of the Shade Tree Committee with other members of the committee outside the purview of the meeting itself.

The meeting adjourned at 17:35. The next meeting is in September 2018.

Minutes respectfully submitted by DeNee Reiton Skipper
Minutes approved,

Lucia Gates