Minutes of

The Shade Tree Committee

15 October 2018

The meeting was called to order at 16:35 by Chair Lucia Gates, and attended by, in alphabetical order: Nancy Forbes, DeNee Reiton Skipper and Tom Walsh. New members include Rachel Berger, Julie Corbett, Caroline Hurwitch and Jennifer Parker.

The minutes of 11 June 2018 were approved with a small change.

Introductions were made with both old and new members expressing their interest in trees and also providing background information on themselves. New members on the committee's were provided with information about its purpose and goals. The Open Meeting Laws were briefly discussed.

Tree Warden's Report: The usual tree trimming and removal is ongoing. The Norway Maples that were all planted in the 1930s, to replace the Elms succumbing to Dutch Elm Disease, are reaching the end of their life span. This is causing a need for tree removal as many of them are considered dangerous trees. The additional $60,000 appropriated by David Rogers will be welcome, indeed.

The Oaks on Myrtle Street have been scrutinized and several have been removed as they were deemed dangerous.

Notable Trees on the McLean Property: It is still not posted on the Town's website.

Emerald Ash Borer Update: They were first spotted in Michigan 15 years ago and are currently in New England. We have yet to identify one in Belmont, but they are confirmed in Arlington, Lexington and Waltham, and most probably, here. The town has not planted Ash trees in a number of years and most were White Ash, many of which have already succumbed to Ash "Yellows" and are in decline. Starting the the 1970s, Green Ash were planted instead. Around five or six years ago, all Ash Tree planting was halted because of the borer. Tom will have another look at the Ash Trees with an eye to injecting certain of them against the borer. Eleven of the Ash Trees in the Butler School parking lot have already been injected. Losing all eleven at once would have a large impact on the school. Many other towns, such as Minneapolis and Buffalo and in Ohio have lost all their Ash Trees. Other large trees will be injected if funds allow. The smaller ones will have to be sacrificed as they are not as expensive to remove, should it become necessary.

Asian Longhorn Beetle: This has affected the Worcester area and many trees have been lost. The good news is that the Chinese are now irradiating the crates used in shipping goods abroad to kill the beetle.

McLean Property: The Community Preservation Act funds, which were approved by Town Meeting, will be used to preserve the piggery barn. We hope, as a committee, to tour the property come spring and may be more involved later in the preservation of the plantings of the area and to follow the McLean Historic Tree listing to see which trees are still alive from the time that list was created in the 1960s.

Police Station: It will undergo a major renovation coming up. The two Blue Spruce Trees in front of the building are in question. They are now very large and have some problems. They have grown considerably and are now positioned very close to the station. One is rather lopsided and the other is topped so the trees are no longer a matched set. Some citizens, however, wish to retain the trees. Our committee will not work actively to preserve them.

The meeting adjourned at 17:35. The next meeting is 19 November 2018.

Minutes respectfully submitted by DeNee Reiton Skipper

Minutes approved,

Lucia Gates