

MINUTES

Fairfield Forestry Committee's

Vegetative Management Task Force Sub-Committee

Meeting
8/6/2014 8am
Sullivan Independence Hall
1st Floor Conference Room

Assignments:

1. Joe File to updated Neighborhood Association and Garden Club contacts
2. Mary to write minutes, update First Selectman on plans by the committee and if necessary talk with town departments about issues raised by the Task Force, contact real estate community to have them attend upcoming meeting
3. Ken to meet with UI and Town officials next week about stump grinding
4. Misty to provide photos from visits to pilot sites to Mary for communication purposes and Ken for work with UI, work with Forestry Committee on implementation of communication plan generated by the Task Force

1. Call to Order at 8:15am

In attendance Ken Placko, Joe McGee, Joe File, Mary Hogue, Misty Beyer

2. Permitting Process with UI

The Task Force felt it was important to define "right of way" for the public. It was also felt we should clarify the law ETT/ETR law in our communication.

Ken explained to the group that although for past annual trimming by UI was covered by a blanket permit with tight communication with the town, he would be providing a tree-by-tree permit for the ETT/ETR program.

Ken noted that he had added stump grinding as a requirement on the tree permit and will be requiring this for all tree removals in the town right of way, including for UI. He updated us that the ETT/ETR program is on hold in Fairfield until town officials and UI meet to discuss stump grinding, which UI has said the program was not determined to include this for all trees and would not have enough funds to do this. The Task Force agreed that although not all stumps would require grinding it was important to have this as part of the tree removal process if the site required it, e.g. a tree removed in a highly landscaped area would require stump grinding whereas a tree removed in a more wooded area might not and in fact grinding might cause unnecessary damage.

Review of the numbers of trees estimated by Ken is as follows: there are approximately 40,000 – 50,000 trees in and/or overhanging the town right of way in all of Fairfield. With utility poles on only one side of every road, the ETT/ETR program will address 20,000 – 25,000 trees. Ken estimates about half of those (10,000 – 12,500) will require removal, and about half of those (5,000 – 6,250) to be removed will be fully in the town right of way and half (5,000 – 6,250) will be on private property though overhanging town right of way and in the utility

protection zone (UPZ). We were reminded that the ETT/ETR program is an 8-year program planned for starting this year.

3. Fairfield Planting Program

Fairfield has a tree planting program that allows residents to purchase a tree for \$150 / tree to plant in the town right of way abutting their property. In return for the reduced cost of the tree, the property owner is required to water and generally maintain the tree.

Ken orders 175-200 trees every year with a mix of species with many smaller ornamental trees appropriate for planting under the wires and some larger trees, e.g. oak; 35% are usually dogwoods, which are very popular with folks that apply for the program.

It was noted that the vendor who has supplied the stock for the past several years has not always provided quality material.

The Task Force agreed that this vendor issue must be addressed and the quality of stock must improve and be consistent. The Task Force also felt that along with stump grinding tree re-planting should also be part of the ETT/ETR process in Fairfield. Because the town pays for the labor of planting the tree, this could be a very high cost to the town and this needs to be brought to the First Selectman's attention in order to have a line item added to the budget. For instance, if only half of the 5,000 – 6,250 trees in the town right of way estimated by Ken to be removed were replaced that would mean 2,500 – 3,125 trees would need to be planted over an 8 year period, which is 313 –391 trees more trees to plant every year.

4. Review of Special Meeting on 7/16

Misty shared the photos she took from the offsite with UI where Ken, Misty, and Mary rode with UI Manager of Vegetative Management, Dave Goodson, and UI Line Clearance Arborists Ken Bullard, and Ken Kleza to various ETT/ETR pilot sites in Orange and Shelton. It seemed clear to all on the committee that the commitment to the health of the trees and safety to the public were as important as clearing the lines to ensure electric distribution. We were all favorably impressed with their focus on trimming trees in a way that maintained their health though this wasn't always possible due to no consent by homeowners. The Task Force felt this is definitely something that needed to be addressed in communicating with the public.

5. Communication Plan

Ken clarified the role of the Task Force was not to do the actual communicating but to produce a report with ideas, action items, and suggestions for a communication plan to the Forestry Committee and the Forestry Committee would do the actual work. To that end the Task Force agreed that they should produce their report by November 1, 2014.

Joe McGee felt it was important for the Task Force to understand the scale of the ETT/ETR program was so massive it was incomprehensible to the general public. The communication needs to make the information comprehensible by creating information that says, "Here's how it works." For instance, although all on the committee are interested in not cutting trees that don't need to be removed, the value to property owners, as well as to the general public to cut limbs and trees that are potentially going to cause power outage in a storm is very high. Cutting a tree on private property by UI would be free to the homeowner but can cost several thousand dollars to a property owner.

Alternatively, the right tree planted in the right place that is provided the proper care and maintenance can increase property value to the property owner and when done by all increases the worth of the town. Joe's personal story of losing three large sugar maples due to age means that he now has a much hotter house in the summer and the view from his window not nearly as pleasant as it had been.

Although using the media, web and social media will certainly be vital, the Task Force that even more important is working with garden clubs and community and neighborhood organizations. To that end, Joe File took the list of neighborhood associations Mary had and will ensure that there is a contact and contact information for each.

Because property value is such an important aspect of the ETT/ETR and is a topic often sited, Mary will be reaching out to the realtor community to have a special meeting to get their input and elicit their assistance.

6. Old Business

7. New Business

Next meeting will be Thursday, August 14, 8am. The Task Force will meet every two weeks at 8am in SIH starting with the next meeting. Those dates, to be confirmed by the committee members that they are mostly available are:

August 28

September 11

September 25

Mary mentioned the topic of reclaiming the wood for timber and/or chips that can be sold to help support the town's tree programs. The DEEP has new program called StormWise which proposes this and Chris Donnelly, DEEP Urban Forestry Coordinator, noted that in talks with UI they are very positive about doing this and suggested Fairfield as a test site. The Task Force felt it was important to coordinate with the current town sub-contractor for mulch as well as determine space and site requirements for this program before being able to commit though all were favorable to the idea.

8. Adjourned at 9:30

Tree Planting Program Updates

Fairfield's Forestry Committee continues to implement and conduct public outreach for the Tree Planting program established in 2006. In the beginning of 2018, a list of tree varieties recommended for inclusion in the program was created. The file considers which neighborhoods are best suitable for different types of trees as well as ways to ensure their longevity. This list can be found below. Per the April 2018 meeting minutes the Forestry Committee discussed how to work with TPZ, DPW, and PURA to research possible regulations concerning less salt application during the winter. This would ensure the longevity of trees along the side of roads in the Town.

The Town of Fairfield disseminates the program to the public through internal links on the webpage through the Forestry Committee page. Public information includes the homeowner's responsibility for tree under this program (currently just watering them), the town's responsibility (involving planting, mulching, and pruning) and lists for trees under this program depending on where the utility lines are on the property. The Tree Warden and Forestry Committee's contact information can also be found. The embedded weblink is as follows: <https://www.fairfieldct.org/treeplanting>

Fairfield Tree Planting Program
Flowering Trees for Under Wires

Tree Species	Description	Tree Exemplar	Flower	Leaves
American Hornbeam (<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>)	<p>Cultivar: "Native Flame" Height at Maturity: 20-30' Width at Maturity: 15-20' Leaves: Bright red fall color. Light: Full sun to partial shade. Other: Native. Fluted, sinewy blue-gray bark. Not recommended near beaches due to susceptibility to salt damage.</p>			
Cherry (<i>Prunus x incanta</i>)	<p>Cultivar: "Okame" Height at Maturity: 20-25' Width at Maturity: 12-20' Flowers: Dark pink, about 1" across, in early spring. Leaves: Bronze, orange and red in fall. Fruit: Round, red berries, up to 1/2" in diameter, rarely produced. Light: Full sun.</p>			
Pink Crabapple (<i>Malus</i>)	<p>Cultivar: "Prairiefire" Height at Maturity: 15-20' Width at Maturity: 15-20' Flowers: Dark pink, about 1 1/2" across, in early spring. Leaves: Purplish when first open; green in summer; bronze in fall. Fruit: Round, maroon, up to 1/2" in diameter, attracts birds and small mammals. Light: Full sun.</p>			
Plum (<i>Prunus cerasifera</i>)	<p>Cultivar: "Thundercloud" Height at Maturity: 15-25' Width at Maturity: 15-20' Flowers: Light pink to white, up to 1" across. Leaves: Open red and turn purple for the remainder of the growing season. Fruit: Edible. Fleshy, round, red/purple, up to 1 1/2" in diameter, attracts birds and small animals. Light: Full sun.</p>			
Redbud (<i>Cercis canadensis</i>)	<p>Cultivar: "Forest Pansy" Height at Maturity: 20-30' Width at Maturity: 25-35' Flowers: Rosy purple/pink, 1/2" wide, bloom before leaves open. Leaves: Purple leaves turn orange, red and maroon in fall. Fruit: Seed pods, 2-4" long. Light: Full to partial sun. Other: Native. Not recommended near beaches due to susceptibility to salt damage. Available only on property with irrigation system.</p>			

Fairfield Tree Planting Program
Flowering Trees for Under Wires

Tree Species	Description	Tree Exemplar	Flower	Leaves
Kousa Dogwood (Cornus kousa)	<p>Cultivar: "Heartsong" Height at Maturity: 15-20' Width at Maturity: 15-20' Flowers: Pointy, pink, up to 4" across, bloom in May/June. Leaves: Dark green, turn to scarlet and purple in fall. Fruit: Round, pinkish-red, up to 1½" in diameter, attracts song birds. Light: Full to partial sun. Other: Attractive, exfoliating bark near maturity.</p>			
White Crabapple (Malus)	<p>Cultivar: "Snowdrift" Height at Maturity: 15-20' Width at Maturity: 15-20' Flowers: Red buds open into white flowers, about 1 3/4" across, in Spring. Leaves: Purplish when first open, green in summer; bronze in fall. Fruit: Round, orange/red, up to 3/8" in diameter, attracts birds and small mammals. Light: Full sun.</p>			
Washington Hawthorn (Crataegus phaenopyrum)	<p>Height at Maturity: 25-30' Width at Maturity: 20-25' Flowers: White, up to ½" in diameter, in spring. Leaves: Reddish purple when first open; dark green in summer; orange, scarlet, purple in fall. Fruit: Round, red, ¼" in diameter, attracts birds and small mammals. Light: Full sun. Other: Native. Not recommended near beaches due to susceptibility to salt damage.</p>			
Lilac Tree (Syringa reticulata)	<p>Cultivar: "Ivory Silk" Height at Maturity: 20-25' Width at Maturity: 15-20' Flowers: Creamy white flowers on panicles up to 8" long bloom in early summer. Leaves: Dark green, no color change in fall. Fruit: Hard, yellow/green, elongated oval, up to ½" long. Light: Full sun.</p>	 <p>Japanese Tree Lilac "Ivory Silk" Syringa reticulata 'Ivory Silk' Copyright © Robert Olmstead</p>		
Serviceberry (Amelanchier canadensis)	<p>Cultivar: "Shadblow" Height at Maturity: 20-25' Width at Maturity: 15-20' Flowers: Fragrant, white, 1½" wide. Leaves: Dark green, turn yellow, orange or red in fall. Fruit: Edible. Round, up to 3/8" in diameter, purplish black when ripe. Attracts birds. Light: Full sun. Other: Native</p>			

**Fairfield Tree Planting Program
Flowering Trees for Under Wires**

Tree Species	Description	Tree Exemplar	Flower	Leaves
<p>Pink Flowering Dogwood* (Cornus x Rutcan)</p>	<p>Cultivar: "Stellar Pink" Height at Maturity: 15-30' Width at Maturity: 15-30' Flowers: Pink, 3-5" across, in April/May. Leaves: Dark green, turn red and maroon in fall. Fruit: None Light: Full sun to partial shade Other: Available only in limited locations and circumstances due to susceptibility to disease and salt damage.</p>			
<p>White Flowering Dogwood* (Cornus x Rutcan)</p>	<p>Cultivar: Constellation Height at Maturity: 15-22' Width at Maturity: 12-18' Flowers: White, 3-5" across, bloom in April/May. Leaves: Dark green in spring and Summer, maroon in fall Fruit: None Light: Full sun to partial shade Other: Available only in limited locations and circumstances due to susceptibility to disease and salt damage.</p>			

Fairfield Tree Planting Program
Trees With No Height Restrictions

Tree Species	Comments	Example (at Maturity)	Leaf Example
<p>Chestnut Oak (<i>Quercus montana</i>)</p>	<p>Height at Maturity: 60-70' Width at Maturity: 50-60' Leaves: Turn a variety of muted red to brown colors in fall. Other: Native. Upright configuration. Many birds and animals eat the fruit. Not recommended near beaches due to susceptibility to salt damage.</p>		
<p>Red Maple (<i>Acer rubrum</i>)</p>	<p>Cultivar: "October Glory" Height at Maturity: 40-50' Width at Maturity: 20-35' Leaves: Turn a vibrant orange and red colors in fall. Other: Native. Most common tree in this area. Not recommended near beaches due to susceptibility to salt damage.</p>		
<p>Littleleaf Linden (<i>Tilia cordata</i>)</p>	<p>Height at Maturity: 60-70' Width at Maturity: 35-50' Leaves: Small, heart-shaped. Dark green top, light green underside. Turn pale yellow in fall. Other: Native. Not recommended near beaches due to susceptibility to salt damage.</p>		
<p>Sycamore (<i>Platanus x acerifolia</i>)</p>	<p>Cultivar: "London Planetree" Height at Maturity: 60-85' Width at Maturity: 50-70' Leaves: Large. Turn yellow in fall. Other: Resistant to blight. Distinctive, exfoliating bark. Not recommended near beaches due to susceptibility to salt damage.</p>		

Fairfield Tree Planting Program
Trees With No Height Restrictions

Tree Species	Comments	Example (at Maturity)	Leaf Example
<p style="text-align: center;">Tupelo (<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>)</p>	<p>Cultivar: "Green Gable" Height at Maturity: 40-60' Width at Maturity: 20-30' Leaves: Dark green. Turn firey red in fall. Other: Native. Smal, white flowers attract polinators in Spring, and small blue/black fruit feed birds and small animals in fall.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><small>Blackgum <i>Nyssa sylvatica</i></small></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Sweetgum (<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>)</p>	<p>Cultivar: "Moraine" Height at Maturity: 45-60' Width at Maturity: 30-40' Leaves: Star shaped. Turn red in fall. Other: Native. Deep, corky bark. Round (1" dia.) fruit. Best in naturalized location, without sidewalks.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Ginkgo (<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>)</p>	<p>Cultivar: "Golden Colonnade" Height at Maturity: 25-45' Width at Maturity: 20-25' Leaves: Fan shaped. Turn yellow in Fall. Other: Pest free. Fruitless.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><small>Ginkgo <i>Ginkgo biloba</i></small></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Kentucky Coffee (<i>glymnocladus dioicus</i>)</p>	<p>Cultivar: "Espresso" Height at Maturity: 30-50' Width at Maturity: 25-30' Leaves: Compound leaves turn tan/yellow in Fall. Other: Fruitless.</p>		