

Montpelier Tree Board Minutes May 1, 2025

Attendance: Shawn White, Steve Bailey, Linda Young, Jay Borland, Nancy Stone, John Snell, Joseph Ferris, Sarah Hoffmeier, Worth Allen (notetaker)

Acknowledgment of those who came before us:

- John Snell reflected on how the rapidly changing landscape this time of year is a reminder that prior cultures navigated the land - and the year - based on changes in their surroundings.
- Shawn refreshed us on our first Abenaki word (Abazi = Tree) and taught us a second: Maskwmosi = Paper Birch.

Approval of the April Minutes was motioned and approved.

Sarah recapped the productive work session removing Barberry in Hubbard Park and two planting afternoons last month. LOTS of Barberry was eradicated, and six trees were planted in the city right-of-way at residences on Pearl Street, Bailey Avenue, and Dairy Lane, plus three trees at a commercial building on Elm Street.

Upcoming planting work:

- Friday, May 2: Joseph coordinated delivery of 190 trees to the city nursery this week and would like to get them into the ground as soon as possible. Work will begin at the Country Club Road site at 9:00 and wrap around 2:00.
- Sunday, May 4: Meet at 32 Pearl Street at 2:00 to plant three trees, move to 5 Ridge Street for one tree.
- Saturday/Sunday, May 10/11: Timing details TBD based on weather. John Snell has four properties lined up including the old VCFA site, the old R.K. Miles site on Stonecutters Way and a couple of residences.

The prudence of planting at multi-unit residential properties owned by commercial rental companies was discussed. Appealing locations are abundant, but the potential lack of care and maintenance makes the proposition significantly more risky than planting at properties with an enthusiastic owner/resident.

Momentary alarm about who is checking the Board email was assuaged when Steve determined that everything sent to the Board email address goes to Alec. We all have unflinching confidence that Alec is on top of this.

Tags identifying tree species and the Board were discussed:

- There is enthusiasm for tags that can be attached to the deer fences that we now erect around all new plantings.
- Joseph has 500 blank vinyl tags on the way for use on nursery trees; he is happy to share for use on any plantings.
- Linda shared her past experience using tags as well as her recent research into options. A motion was approved for her to purchase the tags she deems best. She will run any text to be printed on the tags by Joseph and John Snell.

Treasurer John Snell provided a financial update:

- The City is requiring the Board to transfer all funds currently being held by the Montpelier Foundation into the City account. The City has assured the Board that a) funds will carry over from year to year and b) funds dedicated to the Board will be tracked.
- Two contributions were received in honor of Michael Sherman.

Linda provided an update on the Summer Street park:

- Joseph and an assistant pruned the crab apples
- The plan is to remove two Norway Maples and three Crab Apples this year
- Discussions about what to plant in their place are ongoing
- There is a murky right-of-way issue that needs to be worked through

Nancy provided an update on her Cemetery work:

- She met with Cemetery staff and talked about planting locations
- She and Joseph will coordinate finishing the tree inventory
- There are options for smaller trees that will appease Cemetery staff preferences, but the Board believes some big trees should be planted in appropriate locations

Sarah mentioned that a VT Fish and Wildlife deer biologist recently told her that the state's deer population has held steady during the past 40 years, but we see more deer because our forests have gotten older. This has resulted in deer having less to eat in the forests, pushing them into sight. A discussion ensued about the advantages of leaving debris in forests after cutting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30