

Tree Board Meeting Minutes

June 5, 2025

Attending: Sarah Hoffmeier (Meeting Manager), John Snell, Linda Young, Shawn White, Joseph Ferris, Jay Borland, Steve Bailey, Worth Allen, John Akielaszek (recorder)

Acknowledgement of Those Who Were On This Land Before Us

Shawn led the group in the Acknowledgement and refreshed our memory of the Abenaki words we learned at the last meeting. Abazi = tree, Maskwamosi = Paper Birch. Next we learned the name of the tree favored by Barred Owls for nesting: Kokoh8akw = Balsam Fir (Owl Wood), Kokokhas = Barred Owl, Kokok = Owl

Approval of the May Minutes: Motioned and Approved

Comments from the Public: None as no one from the public was present.

UCF Conference Summary

The Parks Department presentation on using the Stockholm Method for planting downtown trees was well received. The Town of Woodstock would like to learn more from the Montpelier experience. Rutland and Burlington also gave presentations which involved demonstrating tree planting with Silva Cells, akin to burying plastic milk crates with soil media.

Information on Jumping Worms

John A had sent literature to the Board members outlining methods to limit the spread of jumping worms. Joseph mentioned that one way to limit the spread was to put the trees to be planted in a gravel bed to better develop their root

systems. Afterwards the trees can be bare root planted so no jumping worms would accompany the tree.

Shawn mentioned that she had experience with this and the root ball was so tight that she found it hard to get soil within when planting. Probably would need some flowing water to get soil into the root mass but also may need to do some root pruning.

Black Ash Pounding Demonstration - The flier was circulated at the meeting. The free demonstration is on June 15th at Lake Bomoseen State Park.

The Vermont Woodlands Association poster entitled “Woody Invasives of the Northeast and Beyond” was also circulated at the meeting. Copies are available from John A.

Parks and Trees Update

Joseph will be beginning another tree treatment cycle for the Emerald Ash Borer soon.

The Parks Connector Trail linking Clarendon and Elm Street is under construction. Jay has been hired to work on the trail.

The site of the new park restroom facility (composting toilets) is being prepared. Once the site is prepared the new structure will be delivered.

The Parks staff is managing to keep up with the additional work, like mowing, assigned to them due to staff reductions at the Recreation Department.

A tree is scheduled to be planted in the Fall at the Transit Center on Taylor Street. Joseph indicated that something should be available from the nursery. Linda suggested a tree that provides shade in late Spring/early Summer.

John S indicated that there is room for at least two trees at the Greenway Institute (West Street and East State Street). Fall planting is planned.

Neighborhood Tree Planting Update

Sarah reported that the Tree Board and volunteers planted 36 trees this Spring! She asked that we collect the signage at those locations where we advertised our work and drop them off at her residence (or she will arrange to pick them up). Great leadership and coordination Sarah!!!

John asked that we report any caged trees that are dead. The tree across from City Hall, planted by using the Stockholm Method, will probably need to be replaced. Also needing replacement are two trees near the City Center Building.

John also reported that there is an English Oak on Emmons Street, about 40 feet tall, originally planted from seeds obtained in London. It is near where we planted some trees on that street, between two buildings.

Several members indicated that it would be a good idea to send some follow-up information to homeowners who received trees in years past so they won't make mistakes such as volcano mulching. Linda will draft the letter for review by the Board.

Joseph suggested that we could plant musclewood trees in areas that are prone to beaver damage. It is also known as American Hornbeam, Blue Beech and Ironwood.

EAB Update

John A checked the upper branches of the ash cut down by the Parks Dept. and previously thought to be infested with EAB and found definitive evidence (galleries, exit holes). He reported this to the State Entomologist. Other ash trees in that area are also exhibiting signs of infestation or are already dead. The location is the junction of the Fitness Trail and the Seven Fireplaces Road. Joseph reported that the tree was a black ash and that there is another black ash down the road and adjacent to a swampy area that is also exhibiting signs of infestation.

Financial Update from John Snell (Treasurer)

John has been unable to obtain information regarding our finances from the City. He purchased some beaver fencing which will probably be returned because Joseph indicated that there are several rolls of chicken wire available at the Country Club Road shed. Some trees in the Cemetery on Elm Street need to be protected and some need to have new protection as they have grown into the previous protection.

On a side note, John mentioned that one individual would like the Tree Board to consider an arboretum. We have taken the idea under consideration.

Summer Street Park Update (Linda)

Whereas some scrawny crabapple trees will be taken down, the neighbor to the Park will not, at this time, agree to taking down the Norway maple trees next to his property. There is currently an unresolved Right-Of-Way issue and the neighbor has concerns about future maintenance and care of any newly planted trees given staff reductions at the Parks Department. Linda emphasized that community involvement makes that a non-issue. The plan is to plant one tree in the Fall. The Parks Commission may be able to establish a plan for the Summer Street Park next year and then the Parks Department will execute the plan which may involve the removal of those Norway maples.

Watering Committee Request

The folks that water our downtown trees could use some help. The task involves early morning dragging of hoses across streets downtown to get water to the trees. If you would like to help, contact Abby at abbycolihan@gmail.com.

Sarah mentioned that if we get into a drought situation she will be on the horn for homeowners and volunteers to water our newly planted trees.

Other Business

John reported that the black locust trees are starting to flower in this area. Also, the lindens in front of City Hall will be buzzing with bees and provide a lovely fragrance. Finally, you can visit the American Chestnut at John's house if you are interested.

Joseph mentioned that he has some American Chestnut seedlings available and Shawn, Linda and John A expressed interest in obtaining a seedling. We also discussed the inoculation process to assess the trees resistance to the chestnut blight fungus.

Sarah reminds all to log your hours on the Tree Board Volunteer Spreadsheet.

The next Tree Board Meeting will be held on July 10, 2025 so as to not coincide with the July 3rd parade. Linda has agreed to take the minutes at that meeting.