

Montpelier Tree Board Meeting Minutes for Thursday, August 6, 2026 meeting

Attending: Sarah, Linda, Vicki, Joseph, Arne Abramowitz, John A (recorder)

Note: We did not have enough members present to constitute a quorum.

Acknowledgement of the land we are on and those who came before – Abenaki tree related vocabulary (Shawn): Shawn was unable to attend.

Approval of July 2, 2026 minutes: Linda provided a correction to the minutes; John will revise and will submit to Evelyn Prim and they will need to be approved at the September meeting.

Welcome Vicki Kuskowski: Vicki has submitted her application for membership of the Tree Board to the City. Sarah mentioned that she would need to be approved by the City Council for that membership. Vicki is skilled in marketing and graphic design.

Welcome Arne Abramowitz: Arne had met John Snell during one of John's tree walks around Montpelier. He had extensive work experience with the New York City and New York State Parks Departments and also in Westchester County, NY. He visits family here in central Vermont during the summer months. Arne is a certified arborist from Queens NY. John had invited Arne to attend a Tree Board meeting.

Comments from the public: Arne mentioned that the honey locust trees near the Transit Station have some sucker growth that should be addressed. He indicated that the tree guard/seating and artwork near Charlie O's was very well done and asked if it was a local production (yes, Flywheel Industrial Arts). Joseph stated that it is not always possible to buy local given the funding available for projects. The open field next to the Art Store (former M&M Beverage property) was also discussed; it is a city-owner contaminated parcel. Arne asked if there was a tree inventory for Montpelier and Joseph stated that there is one under development but he would send Arne a link for it.

Parks and Trees activities (Joseph) General update: The concrete for the 12' x 50' trench area at the City Center was poured this past week after extensive site preparation by Joseph and his MYCC crew. Two tree wells are contained in the trench area with a London Plane and a Triumph Elm to be planted by the end of this month. Stormwater will be diverted to the trench area to provide water for the trees. Because the nine trees planned for the East State Street project won't be planted until next year, some of the UCF grant money for that project was directed to the City Center trench. The deadline to use the UCF grant money is August 31, 2026 and that is why the two trench trees must be planted by then. The materials needed for next year's East State Street project have also been purchased and stockpiled. Arne mentioned that the London Plane trunk will need to be protected from cracking (as occurs in the Freeman Maples) and planting in August will require extra care. He also mentioned that the London Plane was the favorite tree of Robert Moses, a very famous urban planner in New York State.

The MYCC crew has also been working on boardwalks on Hubbard Park trails. The Feast Farm food production is doing very well under director Jeannie Bartlett.

Gleaning on St. Paul Street (note from Lynn Wild):

Lynn Wild reported (via Sarah) that the fruit trees on St Paul Street are loaded and invited anyone to come and pick the fruit, especially pears.

Marketing: Logo, T-shirts, Planting Signs, Booklet, Handouts, etc. (new committee?):

Consideration will be given to forming a sub-committee for enhancing the marketing of the Tree Board with the members consisting of Linda, Vicki, and Shannon Bates (owner, State Street Seafood and Meat). This will be discussed at a future meeting. Arne noted that the booklet created for explaining the State Street Construction that occurred earlier in the year was very well done.

Treasury Report (Sarah for John Snell):

Sarah noted that a \$1500 donation from the Foundation for State Street trees was secured by John Snell. Joseph noted that the City Budget contains \$50,000 for trees planted using the Stockholm method.

Commemorating Worth Allen:

John A presented the following statement for consideration at the next Tree Board meeting:

“Resolved: The members of the Tree Board in attendance today recommend that the Board hold a dedication ceremony for the park bench commemorating Worth Allen at a date/time when the most members of the Board can attend. Other members of the public should also be notified and invited to attend this celebration of Worth and his contributions to the City of Montpelier.”

It was noted that we also may plant a tree for Worth near the bench on the Split Rock Trail.

Other Business:

We had a short discussion of Right of Way (R.O.W) measurements for Montpelier streets. There is no consistent standard as the ROW depends on the street you are on. Measurements are made from the centerline of the street. Sarah mentioned that she had the papers listing ROW by street and would distribute by e-mail. John stated that it would be good to have a digital copy. The ROW measurement is essential for determining if the City or the landowner is responsible for the tree when it requires removal or maintenance. The Tree Board takes ROW measurements into account when planting trees on residential properties but other considerations based on the site (overhead wires, soils, etc.) are also taken into account.

Summer Street Park: The Parks Commission made a site visit and will be formulating a plan for the Park. Linda mentioned that there are several individuals interested in improving the Park but currently are awaiting some sort of approval from the Parks Commission that will allow that. Hopefully the Park plan will include this kind of citizen engagement. There are mixed opinions on the Norway Maples in the Park as they do provide shade but are invasive. Arne mentioned that they are banned in NYC.

Calendar:

We will be replanting some street trees that didn't make it: Locations include Greenwood Terrace, Parkside Drive and the Green Mount Cemetery. Possible future plantings also include those for Amy Gamble (Vine and Summer St.) and for a neighbor on Liberty Street. Linda noted that the trees planted in the Meadow area are doing well and there may be some possible planting locations across from the Summer Street Park.

Next meeting: September 3, 2026 5:30-6:30pm in City Hall