

# *Hamden Tree Commission*

*Main Floor Conference Room*

*Hamden Government Center*

*Meeting of*

*Tuesday, March 15, 2016*

***Minutes***

*6:30 P.M.*

Commissioners in Attendance: Andy Brand, Jill Nathanson, Susan Sternberg, Mike Montgomery, Tom Parlapiano

Others in Attendance: Town Arborist Geoff Harris, Commission Clerk Gerry Tobin

Call to order – 6:40

Mr. Parlapiano called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

Approval of minutes of regular meeting of February 16, 2016

Correct the spelling of Geoff's name.

Page 1, last paragraph, Change sentence that begins “He explained” to read “that UI can remove any shrub or tree with a diameter of six inches or less if the abutter checks remove brush.”

**Ms. Nathanson made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2016 meeting as corrected. Ms. Sternberg seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor. Mr. Brand abstained.**

Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no members of the public in attendance

The tree warden removed 18 trees on Duel Drive and perhaps Public Works can leave brochures about replanting. Mr. Parlapiano showed a brochure provided by the Connecticut Urban Forest Council which has a flow chart of homeowner rights. He said there is no easy way to put this information into a document without it being confusing. The brochure is published by the Greenwich Tree Conservancy. He has contacted them to see if we can get copies printed for Earth Day and Arbor Day and mass quantities to send out. Ms. Sternberg said the brochure is on the Greenwich web site.

Mr. Parlapiano received an email from Margaret Mann who was directed to him by the Town of Hamden regarding a street tree between the driveways of 50 and 42 Underhill Road. She wants the tree pruned or removed. This has been passed on to Public Works.

We received an email from Vinnie Lavorgna at Brooksvale Park announcing that Friends of Brooksvale is having a workshop on the Emerald Ash Borer in April. No specific date was given. Commissioners are welcome to attend. Mr. Parlapiano will keep Commissioners posted.

An email was received from a Glen Gray of Hogan Road, who has been living at 210 Hogan Road with his wife Mona for 36 years. He was driving south on Hogan Road and pulled close to the edge of the road to allow a northbound car to pass. The road is narrow at 300 Hogan Road, and he felt he had hit a pothole hard. The next morning he found that his tires were low. He had to replace four tires and other repairs to his car, incurring over \$2,000 in damages and had to rent a car while his was being repaired, bringing the total to almost \$3,000. He had a \$500 deductible which he would like to recoup. The tree stump in front of 300 Hogan is very close to the road, 5-6 inches above the grade, and was snow covered. A neighbor had previously reported this issue to the Town. The email was forwarded to Public Works and has been passed on to Mr. Giulietti, the Town's risk manager.

Commissioners did not feel that this was part of the UI project. UI removed several trees from that property. Mr. Harris will look at it.

Mr. Parlapiano mentioned that he has sent the letter to PURA and is waiting for a response from Mr. House.

Mr. Parlapiano said that none of the text that the Commission gave to the Town Attorney is included in the partial permit that Ms. Sternberg sent around. There is no mention of pruning standards or anything. Mr. Parlapiano has been in communication with Julie Smith, who is looking at the Mayor's calendar for a possible meeting for next week.

Mr. Harris said he had a long discussion with Tony Green and Craig Cesare, and the full permit has now been issued. Mr. Green is riding with the guy from Asplundh tomorrow. He is finding the cutting less aggressive. They are not going ground to cloud and Mr. Brand said they are not doing the underbrush. Mr. Harris lives on Still Hill Road and finds no problem with what has been done. Mr. Brand said they are tagging new trees on Westwoods Road. Mr. Harris has spoken with the owner of a very nice tree that was marked, and the owner said he wanted it down for firewood. The permit says they have to get consent and they did.

Mr. Montgomery said the majority of the trees they are cutting on Still Hill Road are on private property. There was discussion on the removal of certain trees where the dead trees next to them were left standing. Mr. Montgomery also mentioned that he has a neighbor that has ten trees marked on his property, and he has a lot of brush around. He feels that the Town is less aggressive on removing brush. He also mentioned that some trees are being pruned in the usual v shape.

## Old Business

### 1. Remote participation policy

There was discussion at the February meeting on remote participation at meetings. There is no downside to having such a policy, but Mr. Parlapiano mentioned that the only thing we have been voting on are minutes and adjournment. Mr. Montgomery felt the Commission should adopt the five items that New Canaan adopted. Mr. Parlapiano

distributed the remote participation policy draft for the Tree Commission that contained two points, and suggested the two points be removed and the five points from Greenwich be added.

**Ms. Nathanson made a motion to accept the Tree Commission Remote Participation Policy as adopted by New Canaan, including the five points as discussed, a copy of which is attached. Mr. Brand seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous in favor.**

## 2. Spring Tree Planting Plans

Ms. Sternberg met with Mr. Harris and then with Mr. Brand and drew up a plan for additional plantings at Bassett Park, which she distributed. Commissioners wondered if the spending freeze announced by Mayor Leng would impact the commission's planting plans. Mr. Montgomery said he spoke to Mr. Cesare, and he said that the money for the trees and the overtime to plant the trees is bonded, so he doesn't feel the spending freeze will affect us. Mr. Parlapiano will discuss this with the Town tomorrow.

Mr. Montgomery has been concentrating on street trees. There was discussion about planting trees on Furman Road. He has spoken to some of the residents and he said they are an enthusiastic group. He will now start on on Lent and Leo Roads and might need some help contacting the residents. Ms. Kellenbach is a resident of Lent and volunteered at the last commission meeting to be the contact for Lent Road. The corner of Smith Drive where it intersects with Leo, and Leo Drive are part of this plan.

Ms. Sternberg would like to send the Bassett Park tree planting plan over to Public Works Director Cesare. Because Public Works has a tree crew and a parks crew, Mr. Parlapiano felt we should have a meeting with Mr. Cesare and Ms. Coleman. Ms. Sternberg said she still needs two more trees for the plan. Ms. Nathanson mentioned that bleachers for people to watch basketball will be placed where tree #9 is to be located. They are hoping to provide some shade for spectators. Ms. Sternberg will rework the plan and move tree #9 nearer to the street.

There was discussion on various nurseries where trees could be purchased. Ms. Sternberg had a catalog from Planters Choice. Mr. Montgomery felt the catalog prices were comparable and they will deliver. Mr. Montgomery also mentioned a nursery in New Jersey. Ms. Sternberg and Mr. Montgomery might make a visit to Planters Choice.

Mr. Parlapiano mentioned that he invited Eric Annes to tonight's meeting but did not hear back from him.

Mmr. Montgomery mentioned that the contact on Furman Street would like to do some publicity.

## 2. Arbor Day

Mr. Parlapiano said that we have discussed a planting at the Library, reading an Arbor Day proclamation, reading the book "The Giving Tree" and doing an interpretive walk (tree walk) at Town Center Park. We are thinking about a tree planting in back of the library, away from the road. Mr. Montgomery mentioned that there are lot of messy pines behind the senior center. He would like to put in a nice tree to shade the playground. area. He also mentioned a grove of "tree of heaven" that should be removed and a new tree should be planted there.

There was further discussion on the reading of "The Giving Tree" and who might do the reading. Ms. Sternberg mentioned that oak trees support 72 species of wildlife. There was discussion on the possibility of planting an oak tree. The Arbor Day event will probably be held on Saturday April 30th.

## 3. UI Vegetation Management Status

### 4. Public Works Tree Activity Report

Tree Planting/Removal/Pruning/Permits Issued

We know that Public Works has cut down 18 trees.

## 5. Other old business

Let's Talk Trees – Mr. Harris saw his first article in the 2/16/16 edition of "The Advisor." Mr. Donnelly will send the article to the rest of the newspapers and will put it in the Town's monthly newsletter. Mr. Harris has prepared a second article on planting trees which he read to the Commission. He also asked commissioners if they could give him definitions of three words that he used in the article, raceme (a flower cluster with the separate flowers attached by short equal stalks at equal distances along a central stem; panicle (a loose branching cluster of flowers); and calyx (a protective layer around the bud).

Mr. Parlapiano said we should move forward with the notable tree press release idea. We will send it to Mr. Donnelly to get out to the press.

## New Business

### 1. Permit to UI for Vegetation Management on Circuit 1697

This was discussed previously.

### 2. Earth Day Event – April 16

Mr. Parlapiano asked commissioners if anyone would be able to be at this event. Ms. Nathanson said she could be there for a while Mr. Parlapiano can be there for part of the day. We will have some handouts. Ms. Sternberg has a poster that can be used at the table. She hopes to get some copies made at Government Center.

### 3. Other New Business

Ms. Sternberg went to a meeting of the Ecological Landscaping Association last week and went to one of the presentations. They talked about tree tags on trees in New York City with QR codes on them which feed into a large data system. All of the trees are planted by tree contractors, and they are watering the trees. She said they plant about 100,000 trees each year and lose about 10% of their trees each year. Two growers grow for New York and every detail is specified. She also saw a presentation on trees planted in “tree pits” that drain into the storm system and act as filters. There was also discussion on the EPA's 319 Grants which are underutilized (nonsource pollution grants).

Adjournment

**Ms. Sternberg made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Nathanson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.**

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk

# Town of Hamden

## Tree Commission's Remote Participation Policy

It is the policy of the Hamden Tree Commission that while our preferred participation at Commission meetings is in person, we approve remote participation with certain conditions. These include:

1. The Town Body agrees (with a two-thirds majority) to allow ongoing electronic participations at its meetings.
2. A quorum of members is physically present at the meeting location, except in an emergency. An emergency is defined as a situation where immediate action is deemed to be imperative by the chairman or presiding officer of the Town Body.
3. Physical attendance for a member is not reasonably practical. The reason must be stated in the meeting minutes.
4. All members can simultaneously and clearly hear and speak with each other and all required hand-out materials are available to all participating members.
5. All parts of the meeting are audible or otherwise discernable to the public at the meeting location.

Provided the above conditions are met, there shall be no limit on how many members may participate remotely, nor how many times a member can remotely access a Commission meeting. Members participating remotely shall count towards a quorum and are permitted to vote on all items discussed by the Commission.