

MINUTES Hamden Tree Commission
Main Floor Conference Room, Hamden Government Center
Meeting of Tuesday, April 19, 2016, 6:30 P.M.

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

Others in Attendance: Commission Clerk Gerry Tobin

Call to Order

Mr. Parlapiano called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Approval of minutes of regular meeting of March 15, 2016

Page 2, eliminate 1st and 2nd paragraphs and substitute the following: “An e-mail was received from a resident of Hogan Road. He stated his car was damaged when he hit a snow covered tree stump in front of 300 Hogan Road – where the road narrows – while pulling to the side to let another car pass. He stated that a neighbor had previously reported this stump as an issue. The e-mail was forwarded to Public Works and has been passed on to Mr. Giulietti, Hamden's Risk Manager.

Commissioners feel that this stump may be the result of a UI project. UI removed several trees from that property. Mr. Harris will look into it.”

Page 2, paragraph 3, after PURA insert “regarding the relationship between United Illuminating and the Tree Commission.

Page 2, paragraph 4, insert period after permit and eliminate remainder of the sentence.

Page 2, Paragraph 5, line 2, change guy to site planner.

Page 2, Paragraph 6, Line 5, change Town to United Illuminating

Page 3, Item 2, paragraph 2, 5th line, change Kellenbach to Kallenbach, and remove Lent and insert the neighborhood.

Page 3, Item 2, 5, add “on time”

Ms. Nathanson made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Mr. Montgomery seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no comments from the public.

Old Business

1. Spring Tree Planting Plans

Mr. Montgomery said he has taken a look at the tree planting that was done last fall. He reported that, the two crab apples at Public Works still in burlap are still alive. A ginkgo on Harmon Street lost its top. The rest of the trees look good. In comparison, the four

trees planted between the library parking lot and the sidewalk are not doing very well and the crab apples look worse than the ones at Public Works. Mr. Montgomery also checked the trees planted on Harmon Street and Churchill Road, and all of those trees are doing very well.

Three bids were received for the Spring planting plan. The Town requires that orders between \$2,500 and \$10,000 be submitted to the Purchasing Department to obtain three quotes. Only one quote came back for the 35 trees that are on the list and partial order prices were received for two others. The quotes go to Mike Sicilliano at Public Works, then to the Mayor's Office, and then to Purchasing. The bids went out to several nurseries. Mr. Montgomery gave Public Works the plan for the 14 trees for Furman Road, and all but three trees for Bassett Park, There are 18 trees available. Mr. Montgomery will send John Torgeson at Public Works an e-mail.

The commissioners are trying to plant trees Duel Road where 18 Ash trees have been removed. Public Works crews will be available for planting the 35 trees that are ordered for this spring. They have penciled in the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the expected Tuesday delivery.

A tree will be planted in front of the library Mr. Montgomery has gone over the plans with Mr. Green and they met at the library. They have a lot of work to do there. The ceremony will be putting some dirt in the hole, and watering the tree.

2. Arbor Day

The Arbor Day ceremony will start at 10:00 a.m. And last about an hour. First will be the reading of the proclamation, then the tree planting and watering, followed by a tree walk and the reading of the book. Mr. Parlapiano felt that "The Lorax" would be more appropriate than "The Giving Tree." Mr. Donnelly will send the press release out tomorrow and she will ask him to send flyers out to the schools. The book only takes 10 minutes to read. Mr. Montgomery mentioned the grove of American Elms near Josh's Jungle. He said five Winter King Hawthorns will be planted near this area. The remaining trees will be planted along streets and in parks. Mr. Parlapiano asked if we would still hand out seedlings. Mr. Montgomery will procure 50 Redbuds.

3. UI Vegetation Management Status

Several commissioners have seen United Illuminating around Town. Some of the streets mentioned were Brooksvale Avenue, Still Hill Road, Ridge Road and Shepard Avenue. Ms. Nathanson mentioned that if trees are posted, they are in North Haven. Mr. Montgomery said the next circuit United Illuminating is going to work in is around the Keefe Center. He thinks they will be doing mostly pruning.

4. Public Works Tree Activity Report - Tree Planting/Removal/Pruning/Permits Issued

Mr. Montgomery said one tree was removed on Filbert Street, a perfect example of no communication. Another tree is marked and the public has until April 21st to comment. Ms. Nathanson mentioned that the signs are being posted on the street side of the trees.

Mr. Montgomery said Mr. Green's list has 81 trees on it, not necessarily all to be removed. He is not willing to share his list. We should be getting information on each tree that is posted. Mr. Parlapiano wondered how the trees are prioritized.

Mr. Green does not like the hangers that United I leaves on doors. A lot of people call him first instead of calling United Illuminating. The letter for residents that Mr. Parlapiano has been working on should perhaps be revisited. Mr. Green might be able to give the letter to people who call him. United Illuminating reports to PURA that they get a 95% approval rate..

Changing the door hanger is one of the items Mr. Parlapiano spoke to Mayor Leng about. Mayor Leng said he would contact United Illuminating. Rather than someone having to contact Mr. Green if they object, United Illuminating would collect the forms and report that data to Mr. Green.

5. Other old business

Notable Tree Progress – a press release was sent to Mr. Donnelly and has been distributed to the papers. Ms. Sternberg received a call today from a reporter from WQUN. We haven't seen it yet, but the Chronicle comes out on Wednesday, and local items appear in the New Haven Register on Wednesdays. Ms. Nathanson will work on a certificate to give to people. There was discussion on how and when to determine a notable tree winner.

Mr. Parlapiano mentioned that the Mayor is looking at tree ordinances and which ones might be a good match for ours. He sent the Mayor what we have worked on so far and agreed to. Mayor Leng wants to work with the commission on the tree ordinance, and hopefully have something ready for the Legislative Council by the fall.

Mr. Parlapiano said a question came up about the decision process for the street trees United Illuminating was cutting down. He explained he wanted citizens to hear from the Town before they heard from United Illuminating. Mr. Parlapiano said the trees are Town assets and we should know which trees to save. At a meeting, Ms. Smith, Mayor's Chief of Staff said if a homeowner says they want a tree down, we should not disagree with that decision. Mr. Parlapiano said the commission is supposed to make decisions regarding public trees (assets). Mr. Green has asked Geoff Harris to look at some of the trees for his recommendation.

Ms. Nathanson said that there have been occasions (Barrett and Woodlawn) where Mr. Green has overridden someone wanting to have a tree taken down. The utility being involved should not affect this one way or another. Ms. Nathanson felt that when they

didn't require trees to be posted, it was a legislative oversight.

Mr. Montgomery asked for feedback on Earth Day. Mr. Parlapiano said it was less crowded than last year which gave him time to talk at length with people about trees in town. Hamden Alliance for Trees was able to get 53 signatures on a petition asking that Town tree work be discussed with the Tree Commission prior to any non-emergency tree cutting. There was discussion on clearing/cutting along the Farmington Canal Trail.

New Business

1. PURA Correspondence

Mr. Parlapiano said Art House of PURA received our letter and replied that we should work more closely with United Illuminating and we should not be out of sync.

2. Other New Business

There was discussion on a resident trying to plant a tree on Putnam Avenue. He hired a landscape company to plant the tree between the yoga place and the soup place. The person who lives there doesn't want a big tree there, so they thought of an upright tree, and apparently the tree is not on the approved tree list. Mr. Montgomery will check with Mr. Kops and if he says no, they will choose something from the tree list.

Ms. Sternberg received a letter from a business owner asking that something be done about the cherry trees in her area. They have been butchered throughout the years. Ms. Sternberg will send a note to Mr. Green. The low branches are a hazard to pedestrians. Mr. Montgomery will look at the location and see what kind of trees they could replace them with.

Ms. Sternberg suggested that if commissioners have documents that other commissioners might want to use, we could place them on our web site and we can pull down documents as we need them. We would require a login to access. Mr. Montgomery isn't sure because of FOI regulations. Ms. Sternberg will explore this. Ms. Nathanson will work on this and asked commissioners to send her any forms they have created.

DeNicola Park

There was an email from a resident of Whitneyville that mentioned the massacre of trees at DeNicola park. There are stumps from trees that had been cut and emergency work on branches that have fallen onto the playground. Other trees were removed near the playground and others near the basketball court. He felt there were some trees removed that didn't need to be and others that should have been removed that remain. Emergency tree removal does not require posting.

Street Tree Requests

A letter came in to the Mayor's Office addressed to the Tree Commission, requesting a street tree on Gilbert Street. Mr. Parlapiano wrote back saying that if there were others requested in the neighborhood we might be able to provide trees at that location. If not, perhaps in the fall we could plant a tree there.

Theresa McCabe of the Spring Glen Garden Club said the Club would like to plant an oak tree somewhere and wanted the Commission to consider locations. Mr. Montgomery will discuss this with John Torgeson. Mr. Montgomery might suggest Brooksvale Park where several ash trees had to be removed. Ms. Nathanson suggested Cesare Field.

Adjournment

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

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk