

# Tree Commission

Hamden, Connecticut

Tuesday, April 20, 2021

This meeting was held via Zoom.

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## Call to Order

Mr. Parlapiano called the meeting to order at 6:39pm.

## Commission Members

Thomas Parlapiano - *Chair*

Glen Cummings

Michael Montgomery

Jill Nathanson

Susan Sternberg

## Others in Attendance

Craige Cesar - *Director of Public Works*

Diane Hoffman

Alyssa Bussard - *Commission Clerk*

## Agenda

### Approval of March 16, 2021 Minutes

Mr. Parlapiano asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on March 16, 2021. The motion was made by Ms. Nathanson and seconded by Mr. Montgomery. The motion was approved unanimously.

### Public Comments on Agenda Items

Ms. Diane Hoffman spoke to the SB950. She hopes that the commission will be writing a letter in opposition and she stated that The Tree Warden Association of Connecticut is strongly opposed as it takes away the authority of the tree wardens. She stated that a group met with Senator Looney and he heard their concerns and believes them to be credible.

Ms. Diane Hoffman told the commission about a tree celebration for Arbor Day on April 30 from 4:30-5:30. This will take place at the corner of Putnam and Whitney Avenue.

### Old Business

#### 1. Tree Activity Report

Mr. Cesare reported that he is working with Jeff and they are going to be planting over 50 trees. The schedule is in process, but there will be three crews out planting on Saturday.

#### 2. Notable Trees

Ms. Nathanson sent out the press release for April. There was a discussion regarding May's tree. Mr. Montgomery had suggested a red elm being chosen. There is one in Brookside Park. He also suggested a Black Locust. Ms. Nathanson reminded the commission of trees showcased in the past. She did state that Spring Glen has been chosen as a location many times. It was decided that commission members will send in a picture in the coming week of a tree, hopefully a red elm, to showcase.

Mr. Parlapiano stated he wishes that people would begin nominating trees again. Mr. Cesare will spread the word to promote this.

### 3. Tree Planting

Mr. Montgomery spoke about the commemorative tree fund. Mr. Cesare said that there is a little over \$500. Mr. Montgomery stated that now they can recommend expenditures from that fund and send it to Mr. Cesare. Mr. Montgomery spoke to the plans for planting. He stated that there are 37 large trees coming on the following Wednesday. As Mr. Cesare already stated, three crews will be planting as many as they can on Saturday. There is an order for 14 smaller container trees still outstanding. They will be planted hopefully the week of Arbor Day, with some being planted on the corner of Wood Street and Pine Rock. There will also be trees being planted to replace two wild crabapple trees in the entrance to Hamden Middle School as well as two trees on the hill.

The question of what needs to be done for Fall planting was brought up to Mr. Cesare. Mr. Cesare explained the Council and the Mayor are committed to funding the account moving forward so he is confident that they will be able to continue planting in the Fall.

People are encouraged to donate to the tree fund. One example of how they can do that is by purchasing items on their own to donate. Mr. Montgomery stated that they are out of the gator bags. He uses about 10-15 a year. Individuals can buy them online which would be much cheaper than buying through a vendor.

There was also a discussion regarding mulch. Mr. Cesare stated that mulch can be stored by Public Works. Mr. Montgomery will move forward with ordering the mulch and having it delivered to Public Works. Mr. Parlapiano asked for a motion to recommend the approval of the purchase of 50 bags of mulch using money from the commemorative tree fund. The motion was made by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Ms. Nathanson. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Cesare will discuss this further.

### 4. Education

Mr. Parlapiano reminded the commission that the Governor declared that people can begin meeting outdoors unmasked as of May 1, 2021. He believes that this is a great opportunity to begin thinking of outdoor educational programming. There will be further discussions at a future meeting.

## 5. Commission Liaison Report

Mr. Cummings reported that he will be attending the Energy Use and Climate Change Commission meeting in May as well as the Natural Resources and Open Space Commission. He also has plans to attend a Clean and Green meeting in the near future.

## 6. Epoc Grant Update

The grant has been submitted, with a letter of support from Mr. Cesare, as well as two council members. Nothing has been heard regarding the approval of the grant request but Mr. Parlapiano is hopeful that they will obtain the grant. This would give them an additional \$5,000 for Fall planting.

## New Business

### 1. Consulting Arborist

Mr. Cesare reported that he had a meeting with Mr. Phil Goodwin regarding the consulting arborist. Mr. Cesare was surprised to hear that there was only one response to the RFP. The response was not from a local vendor. He and Mr. Goodwin have discussed other options at this point and Mr. Cesare will report back when he knows more regarding the process.

### 2. Connecticut SB950: An Act Concerning The Replacement of Public Utility Poles and Revising Vegetation Management in Utility Protection Zones.

A discussion ensued regarding the Connecticut SB950. Section E of 16234 required the approval of the Tree Warden and the homeowner when removing trees. CT SB950 would take away the power of the Tree Warden to have to approve the removal of a tree when in contact with an energized electrical conductor. Mr. Montgomery put forth a motion to authorize Chairman Parlapiano to draft a letter in opposition to Connecticut SB950. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sternberg and passed with Mr. Cummings abstaining.

### 3. Other

The discussion regarding the list of tree recommendations has been shelved for the next meeting.

Mr. Parlapiano spoke regarding the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative which is a one million dollar grant program announced by DEEP. The money will be granted to towns to purchase trees. The program is not yet open, but there will be a discussion at a future meeting regarding applying when it is open.

Mr. Parlapiano presented a proclamation for former commission Clerk, Gerry Tobin. The proclamation stated her extensive work with the commission and certified her as an honorary member of the Hamden Tree Commission. He asked for a motion to accept this proclamation as written and for approval to send it to Ms. Tobin. The motion was made by Mr. Cummings and seconded by Ms. Nathanson. The motion passed unanimously and Mr. Parlapiano will send it to Ms. Tobin.

### Adjournment

Mr. Parlapiano requested a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Mr. Cummings and seconded by Ms. Nathanson. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting concluded at 7:45pm.