

TREE ADVISORY GROUP  
TOWN OF WESTON  
MINUTES OF MAY 3, 2019

Present: Nina Danforth, Chair; Marilyn Doyle, Kristin Barbieri, Barbara Fullerton, Lori Hess, Laura Perry, Ed Recka

Absent: Luke Mcneil, John Skillman

Guest: Leslie Glynn, Planning Board Member

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m.

1. Resident Comments:

There were none.

2. Arbor Day Plantings by Eversource:

Nina reported that all went well and everything came together despite the rainy weather. Stating drainage and plowing issues, the School Committee did not approve planting near the playground or near Council on Aging at Field School. TAG will pursue the issue and try to locate plans showing drainage locations. The playground is fully exposed to sun and it needs shade.

Nina said the redbud planted looks good. She is not so sure about the dogwoods (part of Tom Wirth's plan) at Case Park. Old irrigation lines at the park were hit when digging, even though holes stayed within spray-painted areas.

The tree for the Library was rejected because of poor condition, and Nina will go to Weston Nurseries to choose a replacement. Four days later, DPW planted three Wyman crab apples on North Avenue. The delay was because the planting crew could not see any DIGSAFE markings. John Zaccardi confirmed DIGSAFE with spray paint. One tree remains to be planted at the Library.

Ed asked about the triangle at Westland and Spruce roads. Eversource informed Nina that they will do nothing until the space is cleared entirely. Tom should work with Eversource on this.

In response to a question about the role of tree warden, Leslie said the tree warden is in charge of all town roads, scenic roads, public spaces and forests. She said issues regarding trees should be solved before construction projects begin.

3. Discussion and Vote on Ash Street Sidewalk Project (Article 23 at Town Meeting):

Nina gave some background on the two part sidewalk project. Planning and engineering has gone on for two years and all ready cost \$105,000. Howard, Stein, Hudson is the traffic engineering company hired. The plan was rejected by Rick Sullivan at DPW. Howard, Stein, Hudson is the sidewalk and traffic engineering company hired. The plan was rejected by Rick Sullivan at DPW. It was considered "unsafe." The design is considered inadequate, a curb being needed. \$60,000 more is needed to redesign it with a two to three foot grass strip between walk and road for poles and trees. With a curb, street drainage will be necessary, as well as oil and water separators on both sides of the road. Leslie said that the town should not pay for engineers' mistake, and some members of the Group concurred. A question

was raised concerning abutters: have they been consulted about possible taking of some of their land by eminent domain?

It was noted that oil and gas separators are expensive and will require maintenance. Three or more pairs would be needed. TAG is concerned about their impact on viability of trees. Another issue is the vernal pool replication area created by the MWRA in negotiations (late nineties) to replace a vernal pool destroyed when the Norumbega tank was built. Nina will check with the MWRA about this. Salamanders would be endangered by oil and water separators near a vernal pool.

Leslie wondered if there is another way to address drainage problems. Could the curb be opened at designated areas so that natural drainage could occur?

There was some discussion of the stone dust path for the meadow from Ash Street to Wellesley Street. In response to a question about the white oak to be taken down, Leslie said an arborist deemed it unsafe and recommended to the Planning Board its removal. She asked if the strip for poles and trees could be widened to eliminate the need for a curb. Asphalt curbs, as proposed, are not strong enough to prevent damage from cars. Barbara asked if we needed grass a strip between the walk and the curb.

The main concern of TAG is canopy and natural drainage for benefit of trees. It was suggested that the cedar allee on Wellesley Street (opposite Chestnut Street) could provide a way to connect to Ash Street, and it could replace the planned \$250,000 stone dust path through the 1,400 foot meadow from Ash Street to Wellesley Street.

A vote was taken regarding Article 23 on Town Meeting Warrant. TAG voted to not support the project as it now stands.

Nina noted that the Massachusetts Audubon Society will conduct an ecological study of the Case Estates.

Leslie recommended that we provide an information sheet at Town Meeting. Barbara said she would be willing to speak at Town Meeting, and Lori is willing to speak. Also, Kristin said she might be able to speak depending on the time the article is presented.

4. Nina mentioned that National Grid was given permission by the Town to park their equipment at the red school house on Case land on Wellesley Street. Soil has been compacted, and they have black topped the area where there previously had been a lovely perennial garden.

5. The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2019, 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Doyle

