

Bowdoinham Municipal Tree Plan Committee

(Sub-Committee of the Comprehensive Plan Committee)

Meeting Agenda/Minutes

7/2/25

Attending: Jan Marks, Peggy Christian, Susan Drucker, Frank Drummond,
Mark Tanner, Hank Ogilby

Absent: Nina Mendall, Justin Schlawin

Chairperson: Jan Marks

Secretary: Hank Ogilby

1. Call meeting to order - introductions

2. Approve minutes from 6/4/25 meeting

- Minutes read and approved with few adjustments

3. Reports:

Community tree plans from other towns (Frank)

- Portsmouth, NH ordinance was presented by Mark
- The committee reviewed this document
- Discussion ensued
- CMP work was discussed... they are no arborists, and their goal is 8' clearance in and around power lines
- Question: Do we need to delineate between public/park trees and road/right of way trees?
- A budget for such work was discussed... we may need to investigate this more
- Frank brought up the distinction between an advisory vs. an action/execution committee
- Discussion ensued about how advisory might lead to action steps
- At some point we might need to develop a broader "open space" plan
- The question was brought up about having Toby involved at every step
- He has been invited multiple times
- We will be sure to send him the agendas and minutes

- More discussion on our role, the direction for this committee
- Discussion about Public Works practices vis-a-vis pruning - What is best practice? Do we currently have the budget/staff to do this?
- Mark discussed how arborists can share info/run "workshops" etc...
- Maybe part of the plan can be to work with Public Works regarding when they need to consult an arborist
- Freeport has a "tree warden", who is a volunteer, and works with the town vis-a-vis "best practice" (Susie will research w/Project Canopy)
- Frank: Bath does not have an actual/paper plan? Such a plan might reside within the realm of the city arborist
- Frank: Yarmouth has a tree advisory committee... they put out tree care info on their website. No specific town document, but they also have a tree warden
- Can we get a job description for "tree wardens" (again, maybe Project Canopy trains these folks etc...)
- Peggy: will contact her connection at Project Canopy
- Frank: Brunswick town arborist is the final say on all tree work (town council/committees work with this person)
- Question/discussion regarding tree health and maintenance... beyond the scope of the PW, more under the purview of "tree warden"
- Susie: maybe the role of the committee is more in the realm of communication/awareness and education
- Q: (Mark) should any tree targeted for felling be seen by an arborist, and then the arborist would come to the committee for review... a future goal?
- Jan: reviewed Mark's overview (Portsmouth NH ordinance)
- Peggy: this sounds a bit cumbersome, and maybe is above our expertise
- Frank agreed... not really our role
- Question: should we target trees/areas that we are concerned about, and then recommend to the town that they bring in an arborist to review?
- Maybe start with a few targeted areas as our goal, and focus on the awareness aspect
- Susie mentioned the garden space in front of town office, and how that decision would fall under our potential purview... a good example
- Peggy, connected this discussion to the new town landing canopy, and how that decision was made (ie., need more awareness/communication)

- More discussion about our role and how we can insert a tree/open space plan into the town's decision making process
- Mark discussed best practice regarding transplanting, and the obstacles in the way of a potential plan working well
- Actions: get a hard copy of the Freeport Plan (Peggy), and contact Project Canopy again (Peggy)

4. Tasks:

Review/Write mission statement

- Susie introduced her work - 3 options, plus an action plan list
- Discussion about simplicity of mission statement vs. the specificity of an action plan (Jan and Frank agreed)
- Frank, and let's not ignore planting... Jan agreed
- Discussion about the words "assist", "guidance", "oversee"
- A motion was made to adopt #1, seconded, and then withdrawn
- Discussion ensued about blending #s1 & 2... a new option was created
- A motion was made to adopt, was seconded and approved
- The new option was adopted.

"The mission of the Bowdoinham Tree Committee is to provide guidance and action plans for the long term stewardship of trees in public spaces and along rights-of-way."

Thanks to Susie!

A short discussion of Susie's action list items ensued - any action was tabled for a future discussion.

5. Define "Municipal Tree"

A discussion of trees vs. "woody growth" ensued

Question: should we change our name? Open space committee?

Note: the comprehensive plan committee is working on an "open space" plan

Question: maybe we need to work with/blend our work with them?

Question: should we identify our mandate as "trees and woody shrubs"?

Answer: Yes, but we need a working definition, which was agreed upon:
“Municipal trees and woody shrubs: any tree or woody vegetation that stands on municipal property or right-of-way”

6. What items need to be in our action plan?

- Tabled, and we will all come with suggestions for this at our next Mtg.

7. Update on Emerald Ash Borer talk

- Report from Peggy
- Colleen Tierney will come to give a talk on **Monday, Sept. 15** (Monday)... time TBA
- Hall is already reserved
- We will need to know the time for the newsletter/PR/Bowdoinhammer
- We will need to advertise, especially since the town sign will be focused on Celebrate
- Question: should we do something at Celebrate?
- Answer: Yes - we should ask to use a portion of the comprehensive plan table

8. Shall we Do Anything at Celebrate Bowdoinham?

- See previous notes

9. Other business

- Frank: we need more visibility - a website, linked to the town? Someway to link our agendas, minutes, documents, links etc...
- Would the town allow this?
- Jan will ask about this
- We should contact the Bowdoinhammer... make our presence there (Susie will contact)

8. A motion to adjourn was made and seconded

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