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## TOWN OF BRANFORD

### COMMUNITY FOREST COMMISSION MINUTES FEBRUARY 15, 2018

Present: Shirley McCarthy, Louise LaMontagne, Nancy Mancini, Joann Minicozzi, Diana Ross

Special Guests: Diane Hoffman, Hamden Tree Alliance; Tom Paralapiano, Chair, Hamden Tree Commission; Jason Knight, Outreach Coordinator, CT General Assembly; Robin Latta, Resident

The meeting was called to order at 6pm.

1. The minutes of 1/18/18 were approved by S.McCarthy; seconded by J.Minicozzi.
2. S.McCarthy discussed the changes to the POCD draft booklets that she submitted to the POCD Steering Committee. There has been no response yet on our recommendations.
3. D.Ross discussed Spring tree planting plans. After her discussion with the Town Revitalization Board, it was decided to concentrate the plantings on one section of Main St. from Ivy Street to Montowese Street. There are a proposed 19 trees to be planted in this stretch, partially funded by an ATB grant; 6 trees have been proposed by the Town Green Committee to be planted on the town green; 3 trees are planned for Young's Park; and an additional 11 trees/shrubs are being donated for plantings on Church St., Wilford Ave., John St., and around the fire station. D.Ross is requesting quotes from various nurseries. The Department of Public Works will be responsible for planting and watering the trees.
  - The utility company's Vegetation Management Plan will not be submitted to D.Ross until the fall so she has no specifics yet.
4. L.LaMontagne and N.Mancini reviewed the blueprint planting plans for Atlantic Wharf, the Community/Senior Center, and the middle school. Most of the projects had a majority of natives in their plans, with the exception of the Community House which appears to have a mix of native and non-natives. D.Ross will talk with the town planner to possibly increase the percentage of natives. It was also suggested that we recheck the plantings at these project sites at a later date to make sure tree plantings are not being removed from the plans due to lack of funding. We also discussed the need to protect existing trees while a site is under construction. The current Community House project appears to be causing significant damage to existing trees. It was suggested we build a Tree Protection provision into the Tree Ordinance or Tree Management Plan.
5. J.Minicozzi met with the Conservation Commission last week to discuss a possible Arbor Day collaboration. The date of the celebration will likely be Friday, April 27. The site location and eco-friendly award will be discussed further at the next CFC meeting.
6. Chris Woerner will be stepping down from his seat and S.McCarthy will ask Doug Welch to submit a request along with a CV to the First Selectman to take his seat.
7. Hamden Tree Alliance – A representative from the HTA, the Hamden Tree Commission, and the CT State Legislature attended our meeting for the purpose of exchanging ideas and sharing valuable information on tree management issues and updates on upcoming legislation. (See attached addendum for details).
8. New Business – There were no new business items.

9. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm; motion by S.McCarthy; seconded by J.Minicozzi.

Submitted Respectfully,

Joann Minicozzi  
CFC Commissioner

ADDENDUM – 2/15/18 MEETING WITH THE HAMDEN TREE ALLIANCE, HAMDEN TREE COMMISSION AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR, CT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- Discussion of the utility company's approach to trees. The above Hamden tree groups define "hazardous tree" as a dead or dying tree which the DEEP agrees with, however, not how the utility companies define it, which leads to the cutting of healthy live trees. Also unclear what constitutes "excessive pruning"?
- Hamden hires a part time consulting arborist to work in conjunction with the utility companies to assess the actual need for tree pruning/removal. The Hamden tree warden must sign off on any removals. Would this work for Branford?
- Following input from a survey (which several of us did), the South Central Regional Council of Governments Hazard Mitigation plan has been updated to include "better stewardship of trees" instead of a simple statement saying "better cooperation with utilities to remove hazardous trees and cut limbs". There is a Hazard Mitigation Public Hearing on February 22 (5-6pm) at the Foxon Firehouse in East Haven; all are encouraged to attend.
- Discussed ways to educate the public: social media, newspapers, posting on special interest group's websites; getting the word out about upcoming tree legislation; workshops; importance of building a data base.
- Upcoming tree legislation: File 792 re: tree and vegetation removal management guidelines for the DOT: Jason Knight asked us to please go through, edit and red line.
- HB 6123: This bill requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) to submit to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Environment Committee a tree removal plan 120 days before removing any trees from a limited access highway. We should contact Senator Ted Kennedy to say that we support this and that we would like the Environment Committee to take up introducing this legislation.
- PA 17-117 re: public notice of tree removal on municipal property. We are encouraged to read through and offer our comments/suggestions.

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