

“There is not a village in America, however badly planned at first, or ill-built afterwards, that may not be redeemed, in a great measure, by the aid of shade trees in the streets ... and it is never too late or too early to project improvements of this kind.”

Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852)

AGENDA

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH

TREES AND PUBLIC GREENERY COMMITTEE

8:00 AM – Wednesday, February 14, 2024

1. Acceptance of Minutes of December and January meetings. (attached)
2. Tree Removal Requests.

51 Pinehurst Rd: 1 Sugar maple, fair condition, Eversource request. This tree has a large cavity with decay on its house-facing side about 10' from the ground. Sounding the tree on the road-facing side produces hollow notes, likely caused by a wound from the roots or trunk and extending 5'+ from ground.

115 Pinehurst Rd: 1 Norway maple, poor condition, Eversource request. This tree has been in a state of decline and has a very thin canopy. There is a decent size old wound about 10' from the base of the tree on the road-facing side of the tree.

125 Pinehurst Rd: 1 Norway maple, fair condition, Eversource request. The tree displays typical signs of decline such as dead tips and a thinning canopy. A planned utility upgrade will require intense pruning and leaving the tree in place will be a safety concern.

58 Middle Rd: 1 Norway maple, fair condition, Eversource request. The tree displays typical signs of decline such as branch dieback and a thinning canopy. There is a cavity present on the road-facing side.

323 Islington St: 1 boxelder, poor condition, removal recommended by City. This tree is in the backyard of this (at present) City-owned lot. A neighbor is concerned as this tree has had numerous breaks, and there is a good amount of decaying wood in the unions of large branches.

506 Richards Ave: 1 ash, poor condition, removal recommended by City. This tree is in the side yard of this (at present) City-owned lot. This tree presents large sections of deadwood. There is a large section of necrotic included bark. A neighboring ash was recently removed due to EAB.

506 Richards Ave: hedges on corner of South and Richards. These hedges have been problematic for pedestrians and drivers. They will be removed and their roots grinded.

Langdon Park near 393 South St: 1 Sugar maple, poor condition, removal recommended by City. The tree presents large sections of deadwood.

Langdon Park near City Hall exit ramp: 1 Red maple, poor condition, removal recommended by City. The tree presents large sections of deadwood and a large vertical crack about 15' from its

3. Landscape plan approval

581 Lafayette Rd: Terrence Parker of Terra Firma is proposing a revision to the previously approved landscape plan for TOUR Portsmouth. The new plan will be presented as a pocket park with trees, benches, and walkways.

4. Arbor Day 2024 update.
5. Update of Tree Planting for the City's 401st
6. Programs for reintroducing American Elm
7. Old Business
8. New Business

Next Meeting Wednesday March 13, 2024

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter J. Loughlin, Chair

Attachment: December 2023 and January 24 Minutes
581 Lafayette Road Landscape Plan



No.	Date	By	Revision Notes
C	2/6/2024		COMMUNITY SPACE DESIGN
B	1/10/2024		TREES + GREENERY COMMENTS
A	1/2/2024		PAC COMMENTS

Issue Notes	
tetra firma landscape architecture 183.4 Court Street Portsmouth, NH	
581 LAFAYETTE	
Community Space Plan	
Client	TC
Project	581 LAFAYETTE
Community	1.5.06
Scale	L-3
Sheet	2

PLEASE NOTE: THIS SHEET IS SCALED FOR 22 BY 34" PAPER. DO NOT REDUCE OR ENLARGE.

**MINUTES of the
City of Portsmouth
Trees and Public Greenery Committee Meeting
December 13, 2023**

Members Present: Chair Peter Loughlin; Vice-Chair Richard Adams; Director of Public Works Peter Rice; Assistant Mayor Joanna Kelley; City Arborist Maxwell Wiater; Members Patricia Bagley, Dennis Souto, Michael Griffin, A. J. Dupere, and Deborah Chag.

Members Excused: None.

Chair Loughlin called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. It was announced that Vice-Chair Adams was retiring.

1. Acceptance of the Minutes of the November 8, 2023 meeting.

The minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

2. Tree Removal Requests

Rockland Street at Kent St: 1 Norway maple, poor condition, removal recommended by City. This tree has been in decline for some time. There is a large basal wound with decaying wood, as well as instances of holes, sloughing bark, and limb dieback.

Chair Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Souto moved to recommend removal of the tree, seconded by Mr. Griffin. The motion passed unanimously.*

Rockland Street at Sherburne Ave: 1 white ash, fair condition, removal recommended by City. This tree has recently suffered a large limb tear out that has created a large wound.

Chair Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Chag moved to recommend removal of the tree, seconded by Assistant Mayor Kelley. The motion passed unanimously.*

88 Lincoln Ave: 1 Silver maple, fair condition. Recent storm damage has prompted this removal request. This large tree has some structural issues, such as fruiting bodies from a burl and large areas of included bark. The presence of water sprouts suggests stress, and there is a history of root damage as well as reduction pruning. *Revisiting the decision to remove this tree from the October 2023 meeting.*

Mr. Wiater said the tree had large leaders coming off the tree's central stem. He said things could be done, like retrenchment pruning, and it was further discussed. The property owner Alex Greiner was present and asked that the tree be removed for safety and financial reasons. Chair Loughlin asked if the limb of the tree that went toward the

homeowner's house could be removed. Mr. Wiater said it wouldn't completely alleviate the issue of other parts of the tree falling.

Chair Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Kelley moved to recommend removal of the tree, seconded by Mr. Rice.*

Ms. Kelley said the tree had continuous issues, a large branch broke off close to the homeowner's house, and winter weather was coming, so it could be a perfect storm if the tree wasn't removed.

The motion passed unanimously.

- 3. Arbor Day 2024** – Arborist Max Wiater's proposal that the City plant seedling from the Moffatt-Ladd House/Whipple chestnut tree and invite the Portsmouth Historic Society to discuss the history and people behind the tree. They will likely require the creation of protective box/structures to keep the seedlings sheltered from mechanical damage.

Mr. Wiater said he wanted to acquire and plant four chestnut tree seedlings on City property and invite members from the Portsmouth Historic Society to discuss the chestnut tree's historic implications. The committee thought it was a great idea.

- 4. Tree Purchase Order** – Discussion regarding the trees that the City is purchasing for planting next spring.

Mr. Wiater said there were 150 trees ready to plant in the spring. He noted that he also had records of tree species since 2015 that had not been planted, including a Hardy rubber-tree. It was further discussed. Mr. Wiater said he'd like to plant a few of the trees in a park instead of just in the right-of-way strips. He said the species were mostly from southern states but also did well in the cold.

- 5. Update of Tree Planting for the City's 400th and 401st**

Mr. Wiater said he wanted to do another tree giveaway at the Sustainability Fair around Earth Day in mid-April. He said there were several hardwood trees still available from the State nursery that were easy to transplant and inexpensive. He suggested giving 50 of them away at the fair and demonstrating to people how to plant them.

Ms. Chag asked about tree planting in lower income neighborhoods. Mr. Wiater said the City planned to plant trees in the Pease Development area but that it would be difficult because there was a lot of impervious material as well as the runway and so on. He said trees also could not be planted on Islington Street or certain sections of State Street. Ms. Chag suggested planting trees in some of Craig Welch's projects. Mr. Rice said he had spoken to Mr. Welch and that the City also had the grant program and could look at requests for tree planting that would not be on public property.

6. Old Business

- **Update on Hall Cemetery:** Mr. Wiater said the final phase with Seaside Tree Solutions would be the first week of January and removals of tagged trees would be done along South Street and the debris would be chipped on site.
- Vice-Chair Adams asked about the beech tree near the old high school, between the Keefe House and the Discover Portsmouth building. Mr. Rice said the tree had been looked at. He said the wall would be replaced for handicap access and a small park would be made. Mr. Wiater said the tree had a dead leader and there was some activity on the back side of that stem but it was also cabled to the other half of the tree. He said the building's contractor maintained the tree and if the contractor said the cable should not support a side of the tree, the City would consider removing the failing side of the tree.
- Ms. Bagley asked if there was new information on beech leaf disease. Mr. Dupere said different chemicals were being tried to control the disease and a policy was being developed for hikers because they could drag the pest with them. It was further discussed.

7. New Business

Chair Loughlin said it was Vice-Chair Adams's last meeting and that the committee knew the passion and wisdom Mr. Adams brought to every meeting and how he represented the civility of the meetings. Mr. Adams said it had been a pleasure serving on the committee.

Next meeting: Wednesday, January 10, 2024

The meeting **adjourned** at 8:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joann Breault
Trees and Greenery Committee Recording Secretary

**MINUTES of the
City of Portsmouth
Trees and Public Greenery Committee Meeting
January 10, 2024**

Members Present: Chair Peter Loughlin; Director of Public Works Peter Rice; City Arborist Maxwell Wiater; Members Patricia Bagley, Dennis Souto, Michael Griffin, and Deborah Chag.

Members Excused: Assistant Mayor Joanna Kelley, A. J. Dupere

Chair Loughlin called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

1. Acceptance of the Minutes of the December 13, 2023 meeting.

The minutes will be approved at the February 14 meeting.

2. Tree Removal Requests

- **12 Shearwater Drive:** 2 red maples for the Shearwater Dr subdivision project. These two trees are located directly on top of sewer infrastructure that needs replacing and will conflict with new sidewalks. They're almost directly on top of the water line as well. we'll replace the two trees and add 3 more trees along the right of way.

Project Manager Neil Hansen of Tighe and Bond was present. He said the lot would be subdivided into nine individual ones for single-family homes. He said the two trees were in the right-of-way and had to be removed due to utility upgrades. He said they would replace the two maples and add three more trees along the right-of-way. He said he and Mr. Wiater had discussed tree species and decided on three oaks and two Sweet gums. He noted that the power lines were on the opposite side of the street.

Mr. Griffin asked why a third red maple wouldn't be removed. Mr. Wiater said that maple could stay because it wasn't near the utility replacement and wouldn't be impacted by the new sidewalk. Mr. Griffin asked if the Norway spruce would be saved. Mr. Hansen said it would be removed along with other nearby trees, and it was discussed.

Chair Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Souto moved to recommend removal of the two red maples, seconded by Mr. Griffin. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

Note: At this point, the committee addressed Item 3, Landscape Plan Removal, because the landscape architect and McNabb Properties representative were in attendance.

- **67 Willard Ave:** 1 Norway maple, poor condition, removal recommended by City. This tree has been declining over the last few years. There have been at least two significant instances of storm damage limb failures in the last several years, most recently a month ago. There is also a wound with decaying wood in the tree's trunk.

Mr. Wiater said the Norway maple was declining and that it required more pruning and maintenance than the other tree on the property, so he thought it should be removed. He said he would inspect the other tree more thoroughly and discuss at the February meeting whether it should be removed or not.

Chair Loughlin asked for a motion. *Ms. Bagley moved to recommend removal of the Norway maple, seconded by Mr. Souto. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

- **Woodbury Ave at Thornton St:** 1 Norway maple, fair-to-poor condition, removal recommended by City. A significant leader of the tree failed in a recent storm, and this occurrence is prompting this removal request.

Mr. Wiater said a significant leader of the tree fell off from storm damage and the amount of canopy loss was close to 50 percent, so he felt that the tree should be removed.

Chair Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Souto moved to recommend removal of the Norway maple, seconded by Ms. Bagley. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

3. Landscape Plan Approval

581 Lafayette Rd at Ledgewood Dr: The ground cover surrounding three Carolina silverbell trees (on private property) extends into the right of way.

Project landscape architect Terrence Parker and Marie Bodi of McNabb Properties were present. Mr. Parker said he worked with the existing plant materials and noted that there was a lot of pavement removal associated with the new development. He said a long line of evergreen trees was removed as part of the planting on the lower side of the development, and some arborvitae and oak trees were also slated for removal and would be transplanted to the road barrier. He said they were all in good condition. He noted that the most recent plan he submitted had none of the ground cover that was shown on the prior plan and that all the trees and ground cover were on private property.

Mr. Rice remarked that a note on the plan indicated that partial wire would be left, and Mr. Parker said it was an old detail and that the note would be changed to reflect that no wire would be left. Chair Loughlin suggested that there be some street trees near Ledgewood Drive. Mr. Wiater said additional shade trees would conflict with all the plantings next to the sidewalk and the new manicured installations and would compete for resources. Mr. Rice said the property owner did a nice job of maintaining the landscaping and that City trees would take away from the owner's incentive of maintaining the area. Ms. Chag asked if there were City trees by the bus stop and bike rack. Mr. Wiater said he flagged that area for some proposed planting sites but there were

underground utilities there and he would prefer to avoid it. Chair Loughlin noted that the work done at that location and on Lafayette Road was remarkable and transformed the area. Mr. Rice said the City invested a lot of resources into that gateway. Ms. Shag said she thought Mr. Parker's choices of plant material were great and that she'd like them to be examples for other developers to use.

Chair Loughlin asked for a motion. *Mr. Souto moved to recommend approval of the landscape plan, seconded by Ms. Chag. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

4. Arbor Day 2024 Update

Mr. Wiater said there was no further action on the issue of transplanting the chestnut tree saplings. He said he reached out to the owner who was interested in donating them and that he would continue to pursue it. Regarding the Sustainability Fair, he said he secured two pollinator packs that would benefit lots of trees, bushes, and shrubs.

5. Update of Tree Planting for the City's 400th and 401st Anniversaries

Mr. Wiater said the order for the 150 trees was confirmed and that some of the trees would be planted at Pannaway Manor and at the new skate park, and 80-90 trees would be planted in the City at large.

Mr. Griffin said the committee needed to recognize former Vice-Chair Richard Adams' years of service. He said Mr. Adams' favorite tree was a hackberry and suggested planting one in the City in his honor. Mr. Wiater said he had ordered ten of them and that one could be saved for Mr. Adams. Mr. Griffin suggested that Mr. Adams decide where the tree would be planted. Mr. Wiater noted that ten hackberry trees were planted in 2023 throughout the City and only two of them lived. He said he thought they had poor root systems and that he would do further research on them.

6. Old Business

Chair Loughlin asked how the soil for the new skate park would be prepared. Mr. Wiater said he would add 25 percent of the City's super loam to the parent soil and follow it up with composting.

7. New Business

Ms. Bagley said she noticed two tall silver maples on the Langdon House property construction site and thought they were architecturally beautiful in the winter but that they might be dead. She asked if silver maples were normally impacted by construction. Mr. Wiater said it depended on how they were pruned and that they also had weak wood. He said he would research it further.

Mr. Wiater said his crew would now carry iPads when they set out to do tree-related work. He said a lot of work was done on trees that wasn't captured and that it should be

part of the tree inventory maintenance. He said he had been working with the City's GIS department to adapt the existing system they had instead of using the 'Daily Tree Keeper', which would be more costly.

Mr. Griffin said the pathway to the Hall Cemetery off South Street was completed and looked great.

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 14, 2024

The meeting **adjourned** at 8:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
Trees and Greenery Committee Recording Secretary