

**TOWN OF ORONO
TREE BOARD IN-PERSON MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 2021 AT 5:00PM**

OLD NEXLINX PARKING AREA, 3 GODFREY DRIVE

**ON-SITE MEETING
NOT VIDEO RECORDED**

MINUTES

1. Roll Call & Introductions

Present: Cindy Blease (Co-Chair), Dave Thompson (Co-Chair), Pat Thompson, Tim White, Jennifer Dann, Terri Triandafillou, Associate members Jason Clarke and Kenny Fergusson, and Public Works Director/Tree Warden Rob Yerxa. Absent: Jessica Leahy,

2. Agenda Review - None

3. Approval of Minutes of May 5, 2021

Moved by Tim White and seconded by Jennifer Dann to approve the minutes. All voted in favor, 7-0.

4. Election of Board Officers

Tim White nominated Dave Thompson and Cindy Blease to hold co-chair positions for another year, Jennifer Dann seconded the nomination. The vote was in favor, 5-0-2 (with David Thompson and Cindy Blease abstaining).

It was noted that other members of the Board would help with the business of the Board as a learning opportunity so that new members could hold the positions next year.

5. Tree evaluations:

- **Godfrey Drive Buffer Strip**

The Board toured the Godfrey Drive buffer strip, noting that the trees had grown considerably since they were planted in the 1960's. Invasive vegetation was noted - Buckthorn & Norway Maple specifically. It was also noted that the fence was in need of repair in some locations.

The Board discussed options for revitalizing the buffer to make it more effective. It was decided that Rob Yerxa would talk with the new owners of the Nexxlink property to discuss options for new plantings along the edge of the existing buffer to create a new, lower buffer in front of the old one. Mr. Yerxa will also work with Dave Thompson to get a quote for some selective clearing of the existing buffer to benefit the health of the existing tree inventory in the buffer. It was noted that the invasives (Buckthorn, Norway Maple) should be removed during this process.

The process could be done in phases over a three to five year period to mitigate cost and allow for an opportunity to evaluate its effectiveness.

- **Dysart's Redevelopment Plantings Plan Review & Recommendations**

The Board reviewed the planting plan and specification sheets provided by Plymouth Engineering for the new Dysart's Stillwater Travel Stop as requested by the Planning Board at their April meeting. The Board had the following recommendations:

The Board found the plan to be generally good but has the following recommendations:

- **C2 - Grading & Utility Plan (this included the plans for the plantings):**

- Replace the two rows of white pines at the north western edge of the project with alternating white spruce and norway spruce in the same orientation.
- In the island on the south side of the new building (to the left on the plan) three red maples are proposed. The board is ok with this species choice with two concerns - certain strains of red maple can be sensitive to road salt, and poor air quality created by emissions. Care should be taken to select the proper cultivar for this setting since exposure to emissions and road salt is likely in this location.

- **C5 - Landscaping Details and Specifications**

- The Board noted that all of the recommendations for this sheet were based on guidance provided by the Urban Tree Foundation and the International Society of Arboriculture for reference.
- Note #10 specifies that ALL trees be staked - the Board noted that this is not always necessary and can have negative impacts to the health of the tree if not maintained properly.
- Notes 11 and 12 - Consideration should be given to who will water the newly planted trees.
- Note 18 - Herbicide application: A specification for the contractor should be included to prevent exposure to the existing trees and other vegetation to non-selective herbicides. Application of the herbicide should be done by a licensed applicator or eliminated outright.
- Note 20 - Fertilization: Fertilization is not always recommended at the time of planting. If fertilization is done, specification should include a slow release nitrogen fertilizer.
- The three notes listed under the coniferous tree planting detail should apply to all tree planting. Consider including these notes in the general notes.
- Planting details indicate the crown of the root ball should be placed at grade. This should specify that the contractor locate the root collar of the tree to ensure that the root collar is planted at grade.

- Specification details call for 4 inches of mulch, the board recommends only one inch of mulch at the top of the root ball and avoid mounding or “volcano mulching”.
- Specify light compaction of soil around the root ball and recommend using water to remove air voids and settle the soil.
- Specific to red maple plantings - the owner should specify the contractor to do structural pruning within the first 24 months after establishment.

Mr. Yerxa will communicate the Board’s recommendations to the developer through the Town Planner.

6. Monthly Tree Board Activity Update

- **Chairperson Update**

Fun was had by all at the virtual Arbor Week Celebration with Mr. Allen’s 5th grade class. Board members presented the Arbor Day Proclamation, provided a presentation about Emerald Ash Borer, and presented the students with cedar saplings to plant in their own yards.

It was noted, if possible, to have a more traditional in-person celebration next year for the Town’s 25th year as a Tree City USA member. Plans should involve students at Asa Adams School and other members of the community.

The Board decided to order about 40 saplings (available through the Forestry Service) for plantings in town. Pat and Dave Thompson agreed to keep the potted saplings at their house until next year when they would be ready for planting.

The next Tree Board Meeting will be held on June 30, 2021 at 5pm.

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Tim White and seconded by Kenny Fergusson. All unanimously agreed. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes are summary only. No recording was made during the on-site meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy W. Ward
Executive Assistant