

**TOWN OF ORONO
TREE BOARD IN-PERSON MEETING
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2021 AT 5:00PM**

**IN-PERSON
COUNCIL CHAMBER – MUNICIPAL BUILDING
59 MAIN STREET, ORONO, ME 04473**

MINUTES

1. Roll Call & Introductions -5:05 pm

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

2. Agenda Review

Jessica Leahy requested that the Board discuss potential change in the regular meeting schedule to accommodate changes in her fall schedule. All agreed to add this item to the agenda after approval of the minutes.

3. Approval of Minutes of May 26, 2021

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

4. Discussion of Regularly Scheduled Meeting Time & Date (added at the meeting)

The Board decided to move their regularly scheduled meetings to the first Tuesday of each month to accommodate conflicts with member's schedules on Wednesdays. All agreed that the Board would meet at 5:00 pm.

The next scheduled meeting will be held September 7, 2021 at 5:00 pm.

5. Tree evaluations:

- **82 Main Street - Norway Maple**

See attached Tree Evaluation Sheet.

The Board agreed the Norway Maple was not in good health. Members expressed that pruning could be an option, however after pruning, there may not be much left of the tree to survive. It was noted that this tree is considered to be an invasive species in this region.

The Board asked if the property owner (Church of Universal Fellowship) was in agreement with the evaluation and would support removal. Mr. Yerxa stated he had been contacted by a representative of the church and that they had requested the evaluation and were open to

removing the tree with a plan to replant in the future. Cindy Blease thought that the tree could be pruned, but deferred to the majority opinion.

Moved by Dave Thompson and seconded by Jessica Leahy to remove the tree. The vote passed 6-1, with Cindy Blease opposed.

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

Mr. Yerxa updated the Board on the progress at the Dysart's project. He noted that Town Planner Kyle Drexler brought the Tree Board's recommendations to the Planning Board. Mr. Drexler reported that the developers had accepted the comments and were working on revisions to the plans to incorporate the recommendations. No further action by the Board was required at this time.

6. Possible locations for a Tree Nursery

Dave Thompson asked the Board to consider a location in the town to locate a tree nursery. The nursery would be a place for the Board to grow seedlings until they were ready to be transplanted to Town properties to replace trees that are removed. The area would need to be about 50' X 50' and would need a water source.

Ms. Blease suggested talking with the school to see if this could be located next to the learning garden in the area on the grassed slope between Asa Adams and the High School. Mr. Yerxa suggested the grassed area to the right of the pool near Westwood Drive. The Board desires to have the nursery located in a visible area in the community to help develop community support and awareness of the Tree Board's efforts.

Mr. Clarke suggested having a kiosk or sign to provide information about the reason for the nursery.

The Board agreed its first choice would be to work with the school to find an area near the learning garden to help make the nursery more accessible and generate support from the students. Mr. Yerxa agreed to bring this to the RSU 26 and report back at the next meeting.

The Board agreed its second choice would be the pool location, but would reevaluate this at the next meeting if the school location is not possible.

7. Options for the 50' Buffer Strip at Godfrey Drive & Sylvan Road

Mr. Thompson suggested the first phase of this project should be to create a path in the center of the 50' strip to create access and clean up the lot; remove all dead and fallen trees; and work to eliminate as much buckthorn (invasive species) as possible. Mr. Yerxa suggested that Public Works might be able to perform this task late this fall, weather permitting.

Mr. Thompson stated that with this step completed, phase 2 could be to have the lot evaluated for a selective cut to thin the existing stock to further address invasive species and to attempt to thin out the red pine (a source of many of the dead standing trees) and allow for future re-planting.

The Board agreed that this was a good first step.

8. Monthly Tree Board Activity Update

- **Chairperson Update**

- i. **25th Anniversary Tree City USA Planning**

Dave and Pat Thompson received the 25th Anniversary Tree City USA signs and stickers and have them posted. They noted the Essex Street sign needs to be repaired. Rob Yerxa agreed to check it out and repair it.

The Board discussed celebrations for the 25th Anniversary. Mr. Thompson suggested planning celebrations to take place during Arbor Week in May of 2022. Jessica Leahy suggested dedicating the nursery during the event. Ken Ferguson suggested that there was some support for a special batch of beer from a local brewer to commemorate the occasion. The Board generally supported this idea, but would want other activities as well.

The Board agreed to plan an event for May of 2022 during Arbor Week, and that planning for this event would be discussed at future meetings.

- ii. Jennifer Dann noted there was a sign on the trail at Brownie's Beach for a basswood tree that needed to be relocated. Ms. Dann planned to do that with the support of the Town and Board. **The Board agreed.**

- **Planning for Learning Garden Work Day**

Cindy Blease and Pat Thompson noted there was work to be done in the learning garden between the two schools. Specifically, an invasive vine that has grown on the trees needs to be removed, among other things. The Board agreed to meet at the learning garden on September 7th, before the regularly scheduled Board meeting to work on the garden and discuss any other work that may need to be done in the area. Mr. Triandafillou suggested that a sign or educational kiosk might be a good idea for this location to help educate the community about this significant Tree Board amenity.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Tim White and seconded by Terri Triandafillou. All unanimously agreed. The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy W. Ward
Executive Assistant

Tree Evaluation

Evaluation by Town of Orono Tree Board requested by property owner/manager.

Date Evaluated	2 August 2021
Evaluator	Jennifer Dann, Orono Tree Board
Location	82 Main Street Orono, ME Church of Universal Fellowship Front of rectory along sidewalk
Species	<i>Acer platanoides</i> (Norway maple) This species is known to be fast growing, often with a shallow root system, and bark susceptible to sunscald and frost cracking. The species is designated as invasive in the State of Maine.
DBH	Not measured; approximately 36"
Height	Not measured; approximately 36'
Crown Spread	Not measured; approximately 25'
Crown/Branch Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ~25% crown dieback ● At least 3 large branches completely dead, including main leader ● Additional crown dieback noted on other branches, leaf browning ● Previous pruning away from utility lines; unbalanced form ● Evidence of frost cracking on several branches ● Evidence of fungal growth on some branches, indicating possible decay
Trunk Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Previous large wound from mechanical damage at base of tree which has never healed
Root Collar Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Small root zone between pavement ● Grass surrounding tree ● Soil level above root collar
Photo	

Overall Tree Condition Evaluation	Excellent – Healthy, vigorous tree with no apparent signs of insect or disease problems and no signs of mechanical damage. Little or no corrective work is recommended. The overall form of the individual is representative of the species.	
	Good – Average condition and vigor for the area. Some minor care, including pruning, may be required to maintain or improve tree health.	
	Fair – tree needs non-routine maintenance, such as pruning, to achieve good condition	
	Poor – Tree is in general state of decline. Special care, including corrective pruning, is required to maintain or improve tree health. Tree may show signs of mechanical damage and/or insect or disease problems.	X
	Dead - Tree is either dead or in significant state of decline.	
Impacted Targets if Tree Were to Fail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Church rectory/courtyard ● Pedestrian sidewalk ● Main Street vehicle traffic ● Overhead utility lines – along street and to buildings 	
Recommendations	Pruning is needed at minimum, as likelihood of individual branch failure is high. Given the overall condition of the tree, and poor form following past and future pruning, it may be a more worthwhile investment to remove the tree and replace with appropriate street tree species.	