

Trees for Watertown Board Meeting Minutes
November 28, 2018
Sasaki Associates, 64 Pleasant Street

Board members present: Dennis J. Duff, Genie Johnson, Bob Lauricella, David Meshoulam, Michael Moran, Libby Shaw, Michele Waldman.
TFW member present: Michelle Cokonougher

Thanks to cooperative inventory work by T4T teens Merissa Del Carman and John Shea, TFW board members Genie, Michael, MicheleW and Libby, and TFW member Carole Smith Birney, the number of public shade trees remaining to be inventoried dropped below 1000 before the trees were too bare for non-experts to inventory. To be continued next Spring.

The post-storm Mount Auburn Cemetery walk with Jim Gorman on Sunday, October 28 was a real delight. The landscape was carpeted with color and Jim as always was a font of knowledge. About seven Watertown residents participated, and we picked up another participant, a young horticulture student.

David is working with T4T Program Evaluator Evan Kuras and Libby on finalizing the Teens for Trees Final Report for distribution before the end of the year.

The board discussed Watertown's First-in-the-State municipal ordinance requiring solar panels on new developments over a specific size, which was unanimously approved at the last Town Council meeting. At that meeting Libby spoke up to stress the importance of preserving existing shade trees that would conflict with a solar panel requirement. Steve Magoon assured the assembly that the ordinance language relaxes solar panel requirements for buildings shaded by existing trees or structures.

The board also discussed recent School Building Committee community meetings and prospects for preserving trees at the three elementary school building sites.

We also discussed language in support of the forestry budget guideline proposed by the joint Public Works/Rules & Ordinances Committee and refined by the Budget & Fiscal Oversight Committee, which will be voted on by the Town Council at their next meeting. David asked, would it be useful to push for language stressing the importance of counteracting the fact that the economically poorest neighborhoods in a city tend to have the least amount of protective and beautifying tree canopy?

The consensus was to move that goal to a later step. The first step is to try to get this important guideline funded. Council members will be ranking fourteen budget guidelines after the next Town Council meeting, and the resulting totals will determine which guidelines get adequate funding.

The board decided to mount a postcard writing party right after the next Town Council meeting, to give citizens an opportunity to write postcards to all their elected representatives urging them to rank the forestry guideline highly (thanks MicheleW for this idea!)

David reserved the Watertown Savings Bank Room at the town library for 7 to 8:30 pm on Thursday, December 13 and volunteered to contact Watertown Climate Change for recruits. Bob volunteered to buy 200 postcards, MicheleW to buy postcard stamps, Libby to prepare the Councilor mailing list and send out a recruitment email to TFW members, and Michael and Libby to write sample messages.

Chris Hayward met with Libby and David to discuss planning for Watertown's urban forest. Chris invited Meredith Fields, Chair of the Watertown Environmental and Energy Efficiency Committee, to join us. Meredith found an MPAC grant program we might be able to take advantage of. The consensus of the

board was that given the very close deadline, it would make more sense to try for an MPAC grant next year. David will follow up with Chris.

The idea was broached of organizing a conference in Watertown with local tree activists from sister communities with similar challenges, like Cambridge, Somerville, Arlington, Waltham, and Medford. The board consensus was positive. Next step will be discussions with interested parties.

Pleasant Street condo owner Jeanne Trubek brought to TFW's attention a magnificent silver maple on the neighboring industrial lot at 527 Pleasant St, opposite Russo's. Jeanne loves this tree and hopes it can be preserved when the lot is developed. She added the tree to the Watertown Tree Map App. Libby will inquire whether this lot can be considered for an open space purchase under the Community Preservation Act.

Chris Hayward will hold a Tree Hearing on December 5. Eight trees are on the list.

TFW member Paul Tamburello, Jr., along with members of Adelaide Sproul's family, have generously donated a total of \$2000 to Teens for Trees in Adelaide's honor. The board voted unanimously to reserve these funds for two T4T student stipends, and to formally name this reserved fund the Adelaide Sproul Scholarship Fund (Michele moved, Genie seconded). Libby will notify Paul and Adelaide's family.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Lauricella, TFW Secretary