

**Ridgefield Tree Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2024
6:30 p.m.**

**This is a Summary of the Activities of the Committee
and not a verbatim transcript**

In attendance: Tree Warden, Steve Lavatori; Tom McManus (Chair); Ryan Bossis; Robert Roth (Vice Chair); Paul Shotton; Kitsey Snow; Anthony Lewis Tufariello; and Eileen White (Secretary).

The Chair began the Tree Committee (“Committee”) Meeting at 6:34 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

UPON motion duly made (Tufariello), seconded (Shotton), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the February 2024 meeting be approved as presented. Mr. Bossis abstained. Vote: Yes-6, Abstention-1, No-0.

Report of Tree Warden

The Tree Warden reported that the Town Highway Department and Eversource had managed recent episodes of very high winds (mid- and late February) quite well, clearing roads and restoring power due to fallen trees.

Mr. Tufariello and Mr. Lavatori discussed the phosphite spring application treatments for certain Beech trees. Other Beech trees were mentioned as possible beneficiaries, including one at 25 Kellogg St near Pin Pack Rd.

Change of April Meeting Date

The Chair stated that he had circulated an e-mail about proposing a different April meeting date.

UPON motion duly made (Shotton), seconded (Tufariello), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the Next Meeting of the Tree Committee take place on Tuesday, April 2 due to religious observance. Vote: Yes-5, No-2.

Finances

The Chair reported that there were no changes since the previous Meeting regarding the finances.

The Chair reminded the Committee that Ms. Snow and he had submitted a grant request to the Ridgefield Thrift Shop to provide needed resources for pruning and maintenance of important trees in public areas of the Town.

Old Business

The Chair stated that he had circulated an e-mail confirming a reservation of the Gazebo at Ballard Park for the Committee to host a public event to offer guided and self-guided tours of the “Amazing Trees of Ballard Park.”

The Chair asked Members to use their copies of the brochure and map (created several years ago by former Committee Member Cheryl Cook) of the trees in Ballard Park to identify edits needed to bring it up to date. Ms. Snow mentioned that the current map does not include the gardens to the West; would be nice to do so.

April 27, 2024 Event/Meeting (Rain Date April 28, 2024)

UPON motion duly made (Shotton), seconded (Snow), and carried, it was RESOLVED that there be an April 27, 2024 Event/Meeting at Ballard Park for Arbor Day with a Rain Date of April 28, 2024. Vote-7, No-0.

Projects and Publications

The Tree Warden and the Chair walked the hugely popular perimeter path at the Parks & Recreation (P&R) Center to evaluate how the Tree Committee can help protect the trees and thereby increase its public profile.

The Chair distributed a four-page working document including geo-coordinates of labeled trees on the P&R path that Mr. Tufariello had captured using his Garmin GPS device (which displays the coordinates in degrees and decimal minutes).

The Committee discussed how various devices could be used to determine geo-coordinates for notable trees. Mr. Shotton recommended www.iNaturalist.org and its corresponding phone app for GEO coordinates. Mr. Tufariello recommended a free application named [EXIF Viewer LITE by Fluntro on the App Store \(apple.com\)](#) that retrieves geo coordinates (from the phone) for photos already in the user's folder. Ms. Snow said that the Town is working on a new system for maps and Mr. Bossis offered that WESTCOG [WestCOG Region - Regional Map Viewer - MapGeo](#) has something similar. Ms. Snow said that the Conservation Commission is using a new mapping application for an updated version of the Ridgefield Walk Book.

Outreach to the Community

The Chair said that he had started a Facebook Group named "Ridgefield, CT Trees" which already has 30 members.

The Committee discussed distribution of hardcopy flyers (e.g. letter sized "tri-fold" or legal sized "tetra-fold") for communication with residents; Mr. Shotton suggested that the Conservation Commission mailing list might be used for their distribution. Ms. Snow suggested that the Committee might piggyback off of the tax notifications in sending out a flyer.

Tree Guide Publications

The Members discussed three booklets previously published by the Tree Committee: Ridgefield Trees of Interest (2014), Ridgefield's Notable Trees (2010), and Ridgefield's Notable Trees (2004).

The Chair expressed his belief that individual maps of walkable areas with brief descriptions of notable trees would represent a more realistic and achievable goal for the Committee, and much easier to update, too.

New Business

Ms. Snow mentioned that the Garden Club and the Conservation Commission have set up a joint Task Force to address invasive species in the Town, including those at Parks and Recreation and those in the Great Swamp. She also wondered whether Tree Committee meetings are sufficiently accessible for those unable to climb stairs to the Second Floor. Mr. Roth pointed out that that there is an accessible area on the First Floor if necessary.

Adjournment

UPON motion duly made (Roth), seconded (Snow), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the meeting adjourn at 7:55 P.M. Vote: Yes-7, No-0. The Next Meeting is to be an in-person meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 2, 2024 at the Tree Warden's Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom McManus, Chair

Town of Ridgefield Tree Committee