

**TOWN OF TRUMBULL
CONNECTICUT**



Trumbull Conservation Commission Virtual Meeting
Wednesday, June 1, 2022
7:00 pm

Present: Chairman Mary Ellen Lemay, Commissioners Matthew Sulzicki, Sara Sterling, Pam Roman, Richard Post, John Massari and Tim Coughlin

Also Present: Dr. Danica Doroski, CT DEEP Urban Forestry Coordinator and Janet Epstein

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lemay at 7:02 pm.

Past Minutes

Motion was made by Mr. Post to approve the minutes of April 27, 2022 as written. Seconded by Ms. Roman and approved with one abstention from Mr. Coughlin.

Guest Speaker

Mrs. Lemay introduced guest speaker, Dr. Danica Doroski, CT DEEP Urban Forestry Coordinator, congratulating her on her new PhD in Forestry. Dr. Doroski, Mrs. Lemay and Ms. Roman previously discussed the Trumbull Tree Ordinance/Tree Management Plan that has been developed by the Conservation Commission. A new Tree Ordinance from Norwalk was shared at that meeting. Tonight's discussion centered around various aspects of Trumbull's Tree Management Plan and how the plan can be adapted into an ordinance. Dr. Doroski noted she works with municipalities, tree commissions and non-profits to accomplish goals in conjunction with the Governor's Council on Climate Change and the Forest Action Plan. The Urban Forestry Program's goal is maintaining and increasing canopy cover. The Tree Management Plan needs to include such topics as where the trees will be planted, what species will be appropriate to help the forests stay resilient and diversified and how to steward the trees after planting.

Some general guidelines were discussed.

1. A tree board should be established, which can include the Conservation Commission, that can meet and identify priority of the tree canopy (what exists, what you want, and how to get to that point). There are State Statutes regarding trees which are currently in the Tree Management Plan but they should be more prominent with regard to their actions.

2. Think big picture. The document should not focus on one aspect but be a comprehensive idea of what is pictured by the Conservation Commission.
3. Establish goals and purpose of the plan that are general in nature. Goal should be broader with a reference to a net zero loss and growing coverage.
4. Designate roles and responsibilities with regard to the Tree Warden and the Conservation Commission.
5. Definitions should be refined (Dr. Doroski will send her recommendations to Mrs. Lemay).
6. Guidelines will be the bulk of the plan.
7. Set guidelines for management of the trees. Tree removal on private property was discussed; some tree ordinances in CT cover this topic and the guidelines vary.
8. A repeat inventory of the canopy should be included in the plan. The Trumbull Tree Management Plan currently indicates every ten years.
9. Aim for best possible practices but operate in the realm of what is available in regards to resources and funding. Make sure future funding is available to complete actions noted in the plan such as canopy inventories and enforcement.
10. Have a good working document, it is essential to engage the public for feedback.
11. Avoid vague language.
12. Items in the ordinance should reference the State Statutes. The ordinance can build on the State Statutes but local requirements cannot be less than indicated by the State.

Discussion was held regarding tree ordinances that might be similar to Trumbull. It was noted Norwalk and Greenwich have robust ordinances but they also have resources and funding. Monroe might be comparable with regard to those two requirements.

Discussion was held regarding tree removal/replacement on private property. Currently in Trumbull, the homeowner is responsible to start the removal process by contacting the town. However, this is almost never done. This includes inspection by the tree warden, a hearing, tree is tagged for removal or removal denied. There is discussion regarding replacement of removed trees including placing the appropriate trees on the resident's property with a shared cost of replacement. Ms. Roman questioned if tree services should be aware of the rules when they do work on private property. It was unknown if efforts were made to update them. Services are required to have a CT certified arborist to advise the homeowners on removal of trees.

Tree canopy was discussed. Mrs. Lemay noted when the survey was done, the canopy in Trumbull was healthy but with the recent demise of the beech trees, that may have changed. A focus on park spaces should be considered.

Grant funding for reforestation was discussed. Dr. Doroski noted funding will be released again in the fall.

Dr. Doroski will review the Tree Management Plan and make notations which she will send to the Commission for consideration.

Old Business

1. Status of Letter Sent to P&Z Requesting Inclusion on their Agenda to Discuss Zoning Upgrades – Mrs. Lemay noted she has been unsuccessful in being placed on the P&Z agenda to date but Town Attorney Jim Cardone has contacted her regarding the revisions.
2. Native Plant Recommendations – will be on the July Town Council agenda.

3. A Thousand Trees for Trumbull w/Sustainable Trumbull for Outreach, Mailings and Funding – looking to move forward with the project as funding in the amount of \$12,000 was approved and will be available starting July 1. Two additional gifts have been accepted towards the project. Mrs. Lemay is researching a 501c3 that would be able to hold the money for the Commission.
4. Updates on IWWC Applications – no update.
5. Release of Survey Results and Presentation to the First Selectman - Mr. Sulzicki noted he has not received a response from Mrs. Tesoro regarding a meeting to present to her the survey results. Various ways to release the results were discussed including a press release, posting in various locations in town and on-line. It was agreed to resend the email to the First Selectman and include Mr. Estrada before any public release is done. Mrs. Sterling will refine the survey results and update the press release.
6. Discussion was held regarding the outside funding being gifted for the tree replacement initiative and additional donors to supplement the initial funding.
7. Ms. Roman noted the Commission should begin considering who should be a member on the team for the tree replacement initiative.

Next Meeting

June 29, 2022 at 7:00 pm.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Clerk