

Winthrop Tree Committee Meeting
June 2024 Minutes
Meeting June 11, 2024

6 PM

Tree Committee in attendance

Chris Aiello Chair
Paul O'Donnell Tree Warden
Tim Duplin Member
Marie Wynne Member

Minutes from the May Tree Committee Meeting were voted and accepted.

The following 2024 Tree Plan was submitted by Chris Aiello and adopted by unanimous vote.

2024 Tree Plan

Introduction

Winthrop's tree canopy provides the town many benefits. Trees clean the air, and help reduce noise, therefore addressing, to a degree, the negative health and welfare impacts the town suffers as a result of the activities of Logan Airport. Trees also reduce carbon dioxide from the air, therefore helping to combat climate change. Winthrop is particularly at risk to the impacts of climate change and a rising ocean. Trees also reduce heat islands, make parks and public spaces more comfortable, reduce stress, and can increase real estate values.

Recent Efforts

During the current fiscal year the DPW has planted 70 trees at 70 locations with town funding and xxxxx trees as a result of donations. Additionally, Winthrop Loves Trees has planted xxxxx trees in Winthrop's parks and public lands. Finally xxxxxx were planted as a result of a community run fundraiser in honor of David Green and Ramona Cooper. With current staffing and funding Winthrop currently has the ability to plant roughly 50 trees each year. Further, a Tree

Survey was conducted, and the town currently is believed to have roughly xxxxxx trees.

Multi-Year Tree Planting Plan

Winthrop is in need of many additional trees that produce a robust canopy. Winthrop should adopt a policy, where sensible, of planting trees that will provide the maximum feasible canopy for a specific location. Tree hardiness, diversity and other considerations must also be weighed.

Winthrop's main travel corridors are the most heavily utilized streets in Winthrop, resulting in higher traffic related pollution and noise on those streets. The Tree Warden and Tree Committee therefore recommend an initial focus on these main travel corridors for mass plantings of trees as it will have an outsized impact on both the corridor residents and the greater Winthrop community. The Tree Committee has evaluated the three priority corridors which are the Pleasant-Washington corridor, the Main-Revere corridor and the River-Cross corridor. The needs of these corridors are further explained below, but at Winthrop's current pace of tree planting it should be expected to take at least the next 2.5 years to address the needs of the first two corridors. Additional main corridors that should be evaluated next are the Crest Ave-Veterans-Shirley, and Pauline-Winthrop-Walden.

It is likely that at the current planting rate, it may take up to five years to address the identified corridors. Meanwhile, Winthrop's neighborhoods and parks are also in need of additional trees.

The Tree Committee and Warden should evaluate tree canopy disparities between neighborhoods and parks, and consider facts such as where EJ communities are located, to help guide future planting efforts.

Where town funds and capabilities are limited, the town administration should work to secure additional funds dedicated to planting additional trees, promote tree donations, optimize the tree farm, and work with community organizations to better address these needs. Further, where feasible, grass strips along the edge of sidewalks should be considered. The additional permeable surface will make for healthier trees and allow for more water to be absorbed into the ground during rainstorms. Finally, as sidewalks are replaced, tree pits and trees for feasible planting locations should be incorporated into the construction plans as normal design and construction standards.

Pleasant and Washington Corridor

The Pleasant-Washington Corridor should be the first to be addressed. An initial evaluation indicates an initial need for roughly 38 trees along Pleasant Street and roughly 22 trees along Washington Ave.¹ As some trees planted each year replace trees that have died, it should be expected that it will take roughly two years of planting efforts for this corridor to be fully built out. The Tree Committee and Warden should next work to recommend tree species for the designated spots along this corridor.

Main and Revere Corridor

At the recommendation of the Tree Warden and the Tree Committee, the town has recently planted street trees at most open locations along Main Street. from the entrance to Winthrop to Magee's Corner. Further, the TIP project is expected to add a net gain of xxxxxx trees on Revere St. between Magee's Corner and the intersection with Crest Ave, which should result in most appropriate street tree locations along the stretch being planted. Tree species recommendations have been made in relation to the TIP project plantings.

The initial evaluation of Revere St. from the intersection of Crest Ave. to the exit of town indicates a need for roughly 15 additional trees. This should be prioritized after the Pleasant and Washington corridor, which should line up nicely with the completion of the TIP project. Expect this segment to take the bulk of new trees for one planting season.

River-Cross

River Road is in need of roughly 35 trees, and there is a need for additional trees on Cross St. as well. Tom Derderian has recommended specific species in some places, and the size of trees

¹ See Exhibit 1

in others. Two to three planting seasons (1 to 1.5 years) of planting will be needed to fully plant this corridor at current planting rates.

Conclusion:

Winthrop is in need of a significant amount of additional public trees which will provide numerous benefits to the town. Currently the DPW has the resources to plant roughly 25 street trees per planting, translating to 50 a year. This includes donated trees (Trees can be donated for \$350) and town-led tree planting efforts. Meanwhile it is much more expensive to outsource tree planting, with a cost in excess of \$1,500 per tree. There is therefore a constraint as to how rapidly Winthrop can replenish its canopy. Winthrop should continue to focus on mass plantings along the main travel corridors in the short term to maximize the impact and benefit of town funds, while continuing to both plan neighborhood and park tree plantings and to seek funding, donations and partnerships for those plantings.

END

Discussion of adding Red Buckeye and Hedge Maple to the list of recommended trees as well as Linden, Crab Apple, Beech and Red Bud for open space trees.

Additional streets to be assessed for tree plantings:

Pauline Street - Tim Duplin

Crest / Shirley / Veterans - Chris Aillo and Paul O'Donnell

Discussion of Proposed Edits to the Tree Ordinance

1. Landmark Tree - Addition to definition to include- 56" round tree or greater shall be designated as a Landmark Tree.

a. The town has not yet designated any trees as Landmark Trees, this will automatically designate Winthrop's largest public trees as Landmark Trees. New definition will give added protection to many mature trees

3. Added language in Activities Requiring A Permit: No tree work/ removal permit shall be issued unless one of the following conditions exists, and such permit shall only allow for a scope of work necessary to address the reason for the permit.

a. *Added clarity of work to be done.*

4. Removal of Public Trees: Addition of new 2nd sentence:

Therefore, a Landmark Tree may not be removed for any non Town purpose

Edits 5 and 6 regarding Tree Replacement and the Tree Memorial Program were tabled and will be taken up at the next meeting.

Next Meeting will be September 9, 2024 6 p.m.

