

Corrected Hartford Tree Board Meeting Minutes

March 22, 2022

Hartford Municipal Building Room 2

5:00pm

Mission: The Tree Board's mission is to plant and maintain public trees and advocate community tree stewardship.

Room 2 – until 6:30 p.m. If additional meeting time is needed, the meeting will be moved to Room 317.

Board Members attending: Jeff Arnold, Chair, Karen Watson, Kathy Lamb, Leif Smedman, David Barrell, Clare Forseth

Others Attending: Jon Bouton and Tom Kahl from Hartford Conservation Commission, Scott Hausler, Director of Park and Recreation and Michael Quinn.

Meeting Called to Order 5:00

Business:

1) Tom Kahl and Jon Bouton will explain the reasons and objectives for their Forest Management Plan and how the proposed timber harvest works towards attaining these goals and then take questions. 30 minutes max.

- Please refer to the attached three page supplement titled "Hartford Town Forest Resources Management Plan Update, April 14, 2020" for a more in depth knowledge of Tom and Jon's presentation to the Tree Board.
- The Hurricane Forest Wildlife Refuge Park is managed by the Hartford Recreational Department and the Hartford Town Forest is managed by the Hartford Conservation Commission (HCC).
- Important aspects of the Town Forest:
 - Ecological functions and habitat.
 - Recreation, education and demonstration and forest products.There needs to be a balance between wilderness and park.

- Forest Management Goals (refer to “Purposes” on supplement).
 - There is a large contiguous tract of hundreds of acres from Hartland to Exit 1 where there is a diversity of species, structure and age.
 - Resilience to Climate Change: A dynamic forest is needed to accept new species.
 - Carbon Sequestration and Storage: Older trees, middle aged trees and new growth makes for a dynamic forest.
 - Keep It Local: Wood taken out of the forest should stay local.
 - Demonstrate/Share Information: Thoughtful and sustainable forest practices could be used as an example for private landowners.
 - Sensitive/Reserve Areas: AJ Follensbee, Windsor County Forester, has mapped sensitive areas to avoid during cutting. He has found fungal disease in the biggest white Pine crowns that should be thinned. He suggests cutting the aspens in winter will stimulate sprouts to grow in the spring.
 - Logging Operations: Using forwarders to haul out the logs and logging in the winter will minimize impact on soils.

- Questions/Comments from the Board and public:
 - Jeff Arnold mentioned that (many) the reports titled “Vermont Action Plan” and the “Vermont Conservation Design” recommend that 9% of Vermont's forests should be left as old forest. Since there is no financial pressure to log the Town Forest Jeff proposed that the town leave the Town forests alone and instead promote logging on private lands where owners need income to pay property taxes or reduced property taxes from enrollment in Vermont’s Current Use Program. Also, the planned removal of 2300 trees with average diameters of 10 inches will remove about 1705 Mt CO₂e (see definition at end of Minutes) from the Town Forest which is counter to the goal of Hartford’s Climate Action Plan of increasing carbon sequestration and counter to its goal of expanding Hartford’s

forest canopy by 90 acres by 2030. The only way to attain old forest habitat is to leave a forest alone.

- Tom and Jon agreed that old growth forests are important where appropriate and there was a value judgment on how to use the Town Forest ecologically. They felt that the loggers would probably leave most of the pulp wood on the ground. They also felt that private property owners may not have the knowledge to log their forests selectively and so this project could teach them how.
- Michael Quinn reported that Paradise Park in Windsor has been logged and still has large trees.
- David Barrell reported that part of Quechee Lakes forest is being managed and that trees were being harvested there.
- The following motion was made by Karen Watson and seconded by David Barrell: "I move that the Hartford Tree Board thank Jon Bouton and Tom Kahl for coming in to explain their Management Plan update for the Hartford Tree Board; and the Tree Board supports the HCC's efforts to implement this plan in the winter of 2023 and obtain final approval from the Select Board. The motion passed with one objection.

2) Brainstorm ways to highlight the Year of the Tree Proclamation:

- Plant the national tree of Ukraine, the willow viburnum, maybe in Lyman Park or somewhere near public.
- Set up a booth at the Balloon Festival (June 16, 17).
- Talk to children's theatrical groups to put on a play about trees - maybe from a children's book. Northern Stage and performing arts groups at summer camp were mentioned.

3) Get Quechee Green funding and operational updates including news from the Chamber of Commerce's Board of Directors meeting regarding an additional contribution.

- The Chamber of Commerce will donate \$500 and they will promote the project to their members for possible individual contributions.
- Rick Grondin will donate \$1000.

- Quechee Lakes Association will donate up to \$3000.
- Tree Board has \$1200 in their budget.
- Northern Nurseries will be getting in 3.5 inch caliper trees but probably not any bigger than that.
- Karen will write an article for the Quechee Times in April when the trees get planted and acknowledge all who are involved in the project.

4) Take a head count on volunteers to lead 4/23/22 Tree ID walk at Wright Reservoir and set a time the Saturday before (4/16) for a pre-ID walk to determine what species we will identify. The inside of the reservoir is going through a first succession phase and is filled with mainly birches that are about 10 feet tall and very dense.

- David and Leif can't make the walk on April 23rd. Kathy can't make the pre-walk on April 16th at 10 AM. Michael Quinn will assist the board in identifying trees for our walk. We will meet at the Wright Reservoir parking area. Take Rt 5 south past the VA Hospital. Wright Reservoir Road is to the right (across from the entrance to the Aquatic Center) and the parking area is ¼ mile or so on the left.

5) Updates on the Tree of the Month program. March Tree of the Month is the cottonwood in Veterans' Park.

6) Discuss how we will assist the search for Tree Warden and to fill our one vacant seat on the Tree Board. I told the Selectboard at their 3/8/22 meeting to advertise both positions and they plan to do that.

- To be discussed at the April meeting.

7) Discuss what we could possibly teach Mathew Dragon's Natural Resources Hartford High Class.

- Mathew Dragon's class has connected with the third grade that are sugaring and they will work with the Dothan Brook School sugaring project.

8) Look over the Shade Tree Plan and finalize it.

- Continue to the April meeting.

Other Business:

9) This is the 50th year of the Arbor Day Association. Hartford has been accepted for a Tree City USA designation again this year.

Approval of Minutes from February 15, 2022 : Changes to be made:

- #1) "Strategy" change to "Steering" .
- #1) third bullet: change 5,000 acres to 5,500 acres.
- #1) 5th bullet: add "Clifford Park" in West Hartford and "fruit and nut bearing trees and bushes".
- #5) second bullet: change "list" to "map".
- #8) fifth bullet: change to: "Soil stores 55% of the carbon in Vermont vs 30% in the above ground resources like trees. But soils don't sequester carbon like trees do."
 - The corrected February 15, 2022 minutes passed unanimously.

Adjourned: 6:35

Respectfully submitted,
Clare Forseth, Secretary

Definition MT CO₂e

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent is a measure of how much a gas contributes to global warming, relative to carbon dioxide. You calculate the carbon dioxide equivalent of a quantity of F gas (fluorinated greenhouse gas) by multiplying the mass of the gas (in tonnes), by the gas' global warming potential (GWP)