

## **Petersham Forest & Shade Tree Committee**

Dec. 6, 2018 – 5:30pm

**Attendees:** Sheila Youd, Annie Cavanaugh, Melissa LeVangie, Jordan O'Connor, Clarisse Hart (notes), guests Roy Nilson and Nancy Allen

**Overview:** The group discussed the Wood Bank, continued plans for managing emerald ash borer, plans for filling the Tree Warden position in the future, and additional miscellaneous business.

### **Action Items:**

- **Clarisse will**
  - send Sheila the dates for the [DCR Arbor Day 5<sup>th</sup> grade poster contest](#) so we can plan a program at the Center School.
  - email Jordan our gift account # so that St. Peter's can complete their donation.
  - draft a town-wide postcard for the next meeting, focused on EAB and the Wood Bank.
- **Jordan will**
  - add Annie and Roy to the Wood Bank email list.
  - potentially work with Melissa to plan an ash-related meeting with the Selectboard, AFC, some Tree Committee members, someone from the Cemetery Commission, Highway Dept, and Center School.
- **Melissa will**
  - ask the TownofPetersham.org moderator to add a 'join our email list' link to our committee page.
  - consider planning another bag sewing day in January/February.
  - work on a basic job description for a tree warden.
  - potentially work with Jordan to plan an ash-related meeting with the Selectboard, AFC, some Tree Committee members, someone from the Cemetery Commission, Highway Dept, and Center School.
- **All, please note:**
  - This committee will continue to meet monthly, on the first Thursday of the month.

### **WOOD BANK UPDATE**

- 16 vouchers are still available to give; 10 have been picked up already. Melissa checked the moisture content for the crates that were filled Oct. 13. Available ones are marked with green; the ones not dry enough yet are still red. The crates are numbered and correspond to the vouchers.
- Wood that hasn't yet been stacked now will have tarps put loosely over it. This is the first year we've had more need than we've had dry wood.
- Part of our stated mission is to prioritize people on fuel assistance, but that information is confidential. Is there an agency that's involved with assisting Petersham residents to access fuel assistance? Can we work with them to let people know about the Petersham Wood Bank?
  - Let's reach out to the Council on Aging – to put this in their newsletter.
  - Possibly try to reach out to New England Farm Workers Council in Fitchburg, to let them know about the various local wood banks that serve residents of those towns.
  - We want to tell people to apply early. We also could set some vouchers aside each month for real emergency situations.

- Nancy Allen pointed out that the Wood Bank team is doing a great job and mentioned if there is anything the town can do, please reach out.
- There is Wood Bank volunteer day this Sunday. **Jordan will be sure to add Annie and Roy to the email list.**

#### TREE WARDEN UPDATE

- There is a lot of ash in town that needs to come down, in addition to other failing trees. There are pink ribbons tagged on trees that are already planned to be removed (a lot are ash). We have a strong budget in town to support that.
- This Friday Melissa will attend a pro-active meeting between National Grid and the Tree Wardens' Association, in Worcester, to create a plan to help small municipalities. Grid is going to do a lot of Petersham's work for free due to wire conflicts with failing ash trees.
- Trees that have been treated to protect them against emerald ash borer are marked with green ribbons.
- Nancy asked that Melissa provide a report of how many trees have been addressed with their 4-year budget increase, and if possible, how much has also been provided by the state and Grid.
- It would be good to set an ash-related meeting with the Selectboard, AFC, some Tree Committee members, someone from the Cemetery Commission, Highway Dept, and Center School – **Jordan and Melissa can throw out some dates.**
- Our current Tree Warden has contributed a lot of uncompensated hours during her tenure. Moving forward, we need a discussion of what the town wants (and is able to pay for) – an arborist? A non-arborist? Is there an ability to share a tree warden with a neighboring town? **Melissa can work on a basic job description.**
- We could consider a Deputy Tree Warden, or work between a Tree Warden who doesn't necessarily have the full range of arborist skills but could collaborate with (and pay) a consulting arborist.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

- **Clarisse will send Sheila the dates for the [DCR Arbor Day 5<sup>th</sup> grade poster contest](#) so we can plan a program at the Center School.**
- This committee will continue to meet monthly, on the first Thursday of the month.
- **Melissa can ask the [TownofPetersham.org](#) moderator to add a 'join our email list' link to our committee page.**
- **Clarisse will email Jordan our gift account # so that St. Peter's can complete their donation.**
- **Clarisse will draft a postcard before our next meeting; we'll want to thank st peters for their donation there.**
- **Melissa will consider planning another bag sewing day in January/February.**