

**The Dec. 1, 2021 Presentation to the Peacham Selectboard
by the Peacham Tree Board and Tree Warden**

The Tree Board thanks the Selectboard for the opportunity to make this presentation. Our role is dictated by the Tree Board bylaws, serves under the direction of the Tree Warden, and follows the Village Tree Plan and Peacham Tree Policy for management, planting, pruning, and maintenance of municipal trees - and those in the ROW under direction of the Tree Warden.

1. Membership:

Tree Warden - Neil Monteith.

By the Selectboard's 2019 appointment the Tree Board members are:

Laurie Kozar, Chair, Corneila Hasenfuss, Secretary, Jeff Lane, Rodney Reis, and Dave Jacobs, Ex Officio

2. Accomplishments in 2021:

A. Tree Warden - Neil Monteith has provided consulting / guidance with the following:

- a. Monument Committee and Roller Barn - met with Alan Thresher and Ron Craig regarding clearing of trees for safety, and installation of new monument. (Dave Stauffer performed tree removal independently & donated the wood as firewood to "in need" residents in Peacham)
- b. Cemetery Committee - Ron Craig, Sexton - regarding hedge row cleaning on East boundary (undeveloped cemetery area) (Dave Stauffer [performer tree removal independently & donated the wood as firewood to "inneed" residents of Peacham)
- c. Volunteer Guidance: Dave Stauffer to prune trees, or remove trees on town property / ROW roadways - including East Peacham 5 Corners a dying fir tree.
- d. Answered concern for copper nails in tree on Onion Point at Peacham Pond
- e. Oversaw the removal of 4 hazardous trees by contractors. Three trees on Thaddeus Stevens Road. One tree at the intersection of Old Cemetery and Hollow Woods Roads.

B. Updated Records - Informed the town clerk and SB of the 2021 changes by the State of Vermont to the Statutes of Tree Warden, and changes to Tree Law.

C. Along with Tree Board members we have completion of ash tree inventory of ROW trees and those that lean into ROW, or are on town owned land (School, park, etc). Trees were entered into state database in coordination with Dept of Ruban and Community Forestry, Joanne Garton has provided support and volunteer hours to us as well. The inventory included 4,820* trees, their GPS location, diameter at breast height, condition, and ROW, utility, or private/leaning into ROW - * 71 miles of roadway, the Ewells Mill Trail, and Peacham School (Pathway) -- The inventory represents approximately 290 hours of volunteer time by the tree board..

C. Education Outreach -

1. Materials for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) were distributed at the Town Clerk's Office before Town Meeting and were refreshed throughout the year.

2. 2 Purple Traps were sought from the State for EAB - at first we were declined, but with persistence we secured 2 traps. Laurie and Neil hung traps on the Ryegate and Barnet town lines and checked the traps 2 times. No EAB was identified.
3. Pruning/Maintenance of trees -
 - Proper pruning tips with illustrations were posted on bulletin boards in town in early March to assist property owners and volunteers interested in pruning trees.
 - Some fruit tree pruning was undertaken by volunteers and needed corrections were implemented where possible to trees on town land or planted by town: town office, fire house, gateway trees, etc. Tree Warden and Dave Jacobs worked with enthusiastic volunteer, Dave Stauffer, on pruning technique.
 - Shade tree (Maple) on Reis property - Rodney removed a lower branch to ease clearance at 'side walk' area.

E. Tree Replanting - The Tree Board pursued replacement of two town owned trees by the Fire District/Munson Excavating. When the water line was replaced, two trees were removed at the corner of Olde Cemetery Rd. Unfortunately, due to the size of the underground infrastructure, the trees could not be replanted in that location. The tree Board received tree prices from EC Brown's in E Thetford for the replacement of (2) 2.5" caliper Red Oak. The cost was not acceptable to the Fire District, and they pursued a different supplier for a lower cost (out of financial responsibility to water subscribers). One Red Oak whip + .75" caliper was planted in East Peacham 5 Corners by the Fire District. The other red oak is healed-in for spring planting at Laurie Kozar's property.

F. Statute info / EAB planning - Neil and Laurie met with Joanne Garton from VT Urban & Community Forestry to review Tree Warden Statutes, as well as EAB planning - Management and Utilization. The Tree Warden and Tree Board has reviewed and discussed "Shade Tree Preservation Plan", as suggested by VT U&CF, as a first step to planning for EAB impacts. The Village Tree Plan is in line with, and pre-dates this new document (discussed under concerns)

3. Expenses associated with the committee:

There are not any expenses in 2020 / 2021 associated with this committee.

We have submitted a request on Nov. 15, as per Town Clerk suggestion. We believe that this is in line with the Village Tree Plan adopted in 2006 - requested funds \$3,000. Funds will be utilized for implementation of tree planting/replacement/maintenance and removal in the villages of Peacham (i.e. arborist - day rate approx 2,500) also provides needed "matching funds" for grant seeking.

4. Concerns or Issues to have addressed by the Selectboard:

- Review and publish **Tree Warden Statutes**, and changes to **Tree Laws** in Town Report
- **Budget consideration for 2022/2023:** the emerging and imminent risk **Emerald Ash Borer** presents management planning of Right Of Way ash trees concern w/ connected funding for removal*. As stated above, the Tree Board has inventoried 4,801 ash trees. Of that, 4,210 are in the ROW, 30 are utility concerns, and the balance are on town park/or Peacham Pathway, or are on private land, but lean into the ROW. Unfortunately, EAB was detected in traps at Kettle Pond, as well as in Marshfield - a ridge line away. The state has given up attempting to quarantine ash

wood, and does not have funds available for towns to remove ash trees - only matching funds to replant removed trees in the ROW as part of a "Shade Tree Preservation Plan" (STPP). A STPP is similar to the existing adopted Village Tree Plan but extends the current scope of Tree Board work and Tree Warden duties.

*Some towns in the Urban and Community Forest pilot studies are sequestering \$20,000 per year for 10 years to manage their ash in the ROW.

- **Review of Shade Tree Preservation Plan** - STPP provides opportunity to craft areas of control, update definitions and statutes, indicate responsibilities, funding, and define and adopt policy and process for handling tree removal, & utilization - "free firewood" program, milling, or other protocol/management. We have invited Joanne Garton from Urban and Community Forestry to assist in explaining the EAB planning process to the SB. direction and adoption - included public forum - i.e. Town Meeting or special meeting / description of the committee's purpose and how it works presented briefly (a minute or two only) by the Tree Warden or at Town Meeting.

- **STPP 5 Criteria** and expands the role of the Tree Warden beyond caring for municipally planted, and designated shade trees, and includes the following w/options*:

1. Describes any program for the planting of new trees
2. Provides maintenance of shade trees - feeding, pruning, insect & disease protection
3. Determines apportionment of Tree Warden services provide to other municipal corporations.
4. Determines whether tree maintenance or removal on specific municipal property shall require approval of another municipal officer or legislative body.
5. Determines the process for the removal of A. Diseased, dying, or dead shade trees; B. Any shade tree that creates a hazard to public safety, impacts a disease or insect control program, or must be removed to comply with state or federal law or permitting requirements.

*Options "may include": 1. Map locations, zones, within municipality whether in whole or part shall be considered as part of STPP area; 2. Designates as a Shade Tree if a tree is critical to the cultural, aesthetic, or character of the municipality.

- **Standing description in the Town Report** in table of contents under "Other Town Reports." Especially as EAB will be impacting the community dramatically in the next few years. Loss of Ash trees, safety, and cost associated with removal will become a larger expense for the town in the next 3 - 5 years, & funding for the removal and replacement.