

Ad Hoc Tree Committee
Meeting Notes
April 28, 2015

Committee members in attendance: Jon Quitslund, Sarah Blossom, Roger Townsend
COBI Staff: Jennifer Sutton
Public: Charles Schmid

The meeting began at 9:15 a. m. and ended at 11:15. These notes, prepared by Jon, combine his notes and recollection with Roger's typed-up.

Notes from the previous meeting (April 14, 2015) were approved as distributed.

Before we got down to business on the landscaping and tree requirements in BIMC 18.15.010, Jon expressed some frustration with the slow pace of work devoted to granular detail. In hindsight, it seemed to him that focusing first on Winslow might have been a tactical mistake; it might have been better to work on BIMC 18.15.010 (a. k. a. the Interim Tree Protection Ordinance) from start to finish, and then move on to the Land Clearing and Vegetation Management chapters. Jennifer noted that we had also shifted gears to deal with some changes in the Land Clearing chapter requested by the Code Enforcement Officer.

Jon also took the occasion to mention that the tree unit method for ensuring that an adequate number and size of trees will be either retained or replaced remains problematic for some citizens, and the committee had been asked early in our meetings if we wanted to go with a different method: prudently, we did not.

It was noted that the tree unit methodology does not apply to residential subdivisions, which are otherwise constrained by perimeter screens and lot coverage rules.

Jennifer briefed the committee on discussion of the draft ordinance (# 2015-04) in the Planning Commission meeting on 23 April. On p. 7, in subsection 3.a, we discussed the rationale for an "inventory" (only when canopy cover is less than half of the parcel) and the focus in 3.b on identification of trees to be retained (formerly "removed"). When the Planning Commission discussed this, Jennifer had been pressed to insert language requiring valuation of trees (using ISA criteria) prior to development. Is this requirement more appropriate in the Administrative Manual, and only needed there? The ad hoc committee's discussion of this detail was not conclusive.

The P. C. had discussed a passage on p. 4 of the draft ordinance (4. Protection During Construction and Development) regarding protection and prohibited disturbance: the notes don't indicate that we made any changes in the language. We discussed the passage beginning on p. 5 of the draft ordinance (D. Perimeter Buffering and Screening). Jennifer observed that roadside buffers are a subset of

perimeter buffers; Sarah observed that “screen” (full, partial, or filtered) describes how the buffer is planted. Jennifer recalled that in our previous meeting Jeff Bouma had pointed out that the number of trees or shrubs required is a function of the length, so a wider buffer without retained vegetation will be less dense. He had suggested that the buffer area rather than its length should be the deciding factor. But a buffer that is double the width would not require double the number of trees. We did not come up with an appropriate multiplier.

Jennifer mentioned Wilkes School as an example. Where evergreen trees are mentioned (in D.4.a.i for example), “conifer” would be a better term.

Where are perimeter buffers and screens (other than roadside) most important? Where adjoining properties are dedicated to different uses? We discussed the boundaries of NSC zones; Sarah was in favor of strengthening the buffer requirement there. Jennifer looked at the setback requirements for NSCs; setbacks and landscape requirements “need to agree” (according to Jon’s note: what does this mean?) We agreed that within an NSC there should be no required buffer between properties (Charles, however, was concerned about building right up to the lot line), while at the boundary the buffer could be increased from 15’ to 20’ with a higher density. Fences were mentioned in passing.

Roger’s last notes say that next time we will discuss B / I requirements, conditional uses for residential sites, water-dependent industrial, and tree unit requirements for NSCs.

Jon’s last notes mention street trees for Winslow beyond the core district, trees in Lynwood Center, location of trees between sidewalk and road, the Pleasant Beach Village plans, B / I, conditional uses in residential zones, and tree unit requirements for NSCs.

Approved: May 12, 2015 Committee Meeting