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NHPL LANDSCAPING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

September 21, 2022 10:00 AM

Committee Members: John Bottomley, Lisa Cote, Dana Hooper, Audrey Prior
Chair: Emily Creighton; Trustee Representative: Kathleen Kilgore; Maintenance Manager:
George Chauncey

Meeting came to order at 10:00

Members present: John Bottomley, Lisa Cote, Audrey Prior, Emily Creighton
Guest: Mark Olson, Landwright, LLC

I. PHASE 1: ASSESS, MONITOR AND MAINTAIN

A. IRRIGATION SYSTEM

Action: Emily Creighton, George Chauncey, Mike Castagna

Discussion: Fall/Winter Maintenance is due and scheduled

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TRUSTEES:

Schedule yearly irrigation system checks at the beginning of spring and perhaps mid summer to ensure the system is fully operational and maintained.

B. YEW HEDGES - left side of terrace

Discussion: Kathleen Kilgore will discuss adding fertilizing of the hedges, plants and trees on the Mainly Grass contract. Burlap covers will protect them in the winter. John Hubbard, DPW agreed to trim as needed.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:

Approve adding fertilizing of trees and plants to the existing Mainly Grass contract and approve burlap covers for the Yew hedges for the winter. Have a yearly landscaping maintenance plan developed by a professional. To ensure yearly landscaping maintenance is performed, decide who will be responsible for the plan to ensure when and what needs to be accomplished.

C. BOXWOODS - In front and side of Library building

Discussion:

Trustees approved replacing damaged boxwoods. Committee decided to wait until next spring to replace them. Request the replacement money be earmarked. Since boxwoods survived their first winter, they may be hardy enough to withstand winter without covers. John Hubbard, DPW, will have the area staked for the winter and trim as needed.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:

Have Mainly Grass update their contract to include fertilizing the boxwoods.

Earmark \$600 to replace three damaged boxwoods this Fall **OR** \$400 if the three damaged boxwoods are replaced the same time the conifer Christmas tree is planted.

D. TREES BORDERING ATLANTIC AVE (East & North ends) & Alden Ave:

Action: John Bottomley and Kathleen Kilgore met with Don Knowles, Knowles Tree Service and walked the length of the two sections of stone wall on Atlantic, the tree plantings around the Sections and the existing trees near the Alden/Atlantic intersection, plus the new tree plantings along the Alden side and back of the Library. This included the area near the trash bin located on a cement pad and the new tree plantings off the parking lot near the new "border fence" and Alden.

We discussed the FB posts and concern expressed by the Alden Rd neighbor regards the lack of screening of the "mechanical equipment" at the back of the Library along Alden.

Regards the the Stone wall sections Knowles said that any attempt to remove the stumps would cause interference and "upheaval" of the existing stone wall. The root system more than likely has spread into the subsurface area of the stone wall. His best recommendation was to have someone look at possibly grinding down the stumps below grade, but he added there would be risk of disruption having machinery operating close to the wall.

Regards the trees along Atlantic and Alden he advised pruning them first and then reassessment. He observed that the inside of the Section 2 wall could be "cleaned up". Trees could be pruned, underbrush removed. He suggested it could be done by Public Works. He did mention some poison ivy that may be amongst the underbrush (Maple tree group on Alden). It should be sprayed (DPW) as it may have started growing up the trunks(?).

Regards the River Oak existing plantings. He had some concern about whether they were too close to the building as they would grow towards sunlight. Branches in subsequent years may start touching the roof line. He advised to have a conversation with Mark Olsen.

As our discussion also included the neighbor's lack of screening complaint he advised talking with Mark about the possibility of transplanting some River Birches, scattering them on the slope and some screening would happen and neighbor's line of sight would be "broken up".

He said that a fence (3 sides) could screen the trash bin and he advised that rains would continue to disrupt the bed and plantings (arborvitae group) and irrigation lines.

Discussion: The Advisory Committee meet with Mark Olsen at its regular meeting(9/21) and walked the Stone Wall sections, inspected the trees, looked at screening and transplantation possibilities and the trash bin area. He pointed out that the River Birches would lose their leaves and provide no screening and sight line disruption for 5-6 months. He felt pruning would ensure the roof line and building would not be interfered with.

The quality of some of the trees along Atlantic raised a question in his mind as to whether they ought to be cut down (especially at the Atlantic/Alden intersection (not Maple grouping). He agreed though that an interim step would be to prune. The Maple tree grouping on Alden just requires pruning and underbrush clearing...again watch for poison ivy.

After discussion Olsen and Committee favored leaving the River Birches where they were and planting Arborvitae groups on the slope to interrupt our neighbors view line and to screen the trash bin area.

Given that they are evergreen the screening would be year round. Around the power modules we are thinking 5 trees staggered on the slope with care that location would not interrupt air flow for filters.

Around the trash bin area 3 trees would suffice. Mark estimated the cost of purchasing and having the trees planted "in ground" would be \$8-900.00 per tree(8 trees total x \$850 = \$6800).

Around the trash bin there was a discussion about whether the bin should/could be relocated to the an area nearer the renovated Town Administrative Building and thus service both buildings While a conversation with John Hubbard might be warranted the power lines outside the Admin Building were a concern and we do have an existing poured concrete pad plus Library personnel might have wintertime

difficulties taking trash "downhill" to a location. The consensus was leave the trash bin where it is and screen it.

Update: Emily and George Chauncey met with John Hubbard, DPW, 9/26 to discern what landscaping services DPW will provide to the Library. (A seasonal list of services they will provide is forthcoming.). John said they would do the pruning of the trees and spray for poison ivy; if we cleared the corner of Alden ave and under the Maple tree stand, place rubbish together and they will pick up the rubbish; they will orange stake vulnerable areas for snow blowing and plowing; and store garden hoses in the basement of Town Hall. He will inform us when they spray the poison ivy so we can move forward with volunteers for the under brush cleanup.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:

Approve purchasing & planting of three arborvitae trees around the dumpster and five arborvitae trees to screen the mechanical equipment a total cost of \$6800. The library is part of the Alden Ave neighborhood and these additions will help the library's landscape blend in with its neighbors,

E. RAIN GARDEN AND PLANTS (Monitor)

Discussion:

Lisa Cote recommends we assess the 2023 growth and decide whether more plants are needed. She requested that Mark Olson provide a list of the plants he planted in that area. Lisa also advised us that Valerie Gamache, Master Gardener and UNH Natural Tree Stewart will join her a few times a year to check on the health of the trees and shrubs. Lisa also volunteered to deadhead the plants in the rain garden this Fall.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:

Wait for 2023 rain garden plant assessment

F. JAPANESE MAPLE IN CIRCLE

Discussion:

None.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TRUSTEES:

Ensure that the Maple is included in the yearly landscaping maintenance plan.

G. UTILITY EQUIPMENT STRUCTURE ALONG ALDEN AVE

Discussion:

During the walk with Mark O, he agreed that five staggered Arborvitae could be safely planted without lessening the effectiveness of the equipment. Refer to: Section I. Phase 1 D.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TRUSTEES:

Reevaluate whether five trees behind the utility equipment and three trees behind the dumpster be added to the landscape to blend in with the residential neighborhood..

II. PHASE 2: FUTURE ITEMS

A. CONIFER CHRISTMAS TREE

History: Committee and Mark O. – Mark suggested a dwarf Balsam 10-14ft to easily service with lights. Site walk was conducted for possible tree placements. Discussion of standing on the lawn in front of the rain garden back about 4-5 feet, centered on the electrical box on the terrace wall and 4-5 feet across from the left of the walkway loop. Committee agreed that it would be best to wait until construction is completed on the old library. Mark O. Is sending a photo of the spruce he recommends.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TRUSTEES:

Review Mark Olson's proposal to plant the Balsam Christmas tree and to approve and fund for Spring 2023.

B. TERRACE FURNITURE AND FRONT ENTRANCE

Discussion: Terrace and Front Door Entry are outdoor rooms of the Library. Staff should see to it that these areas are checked each morning and afternoon to ensure they are presentable and welcoming.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:

Library Director or her appointed staff take responsibility for these two areas.

C. ESTABLISH A LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE FUND

Discussion: Although the Trustees have decided to hire maintenance work on an as needed basis, there is still a need to ensure money is available to pay for services, A line item will ensure there is money in the budget while ensuring that other Library line items are not affected to pay for landscape maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:

Consider a landscape maintenance budget line item under Maintenance for 2024 budget..

D. RAISED PLANTERS

History: Audrey Prior

Research raised planters and recommendations; work with Lisa Cote to help find volunteers to maintain TWO cedar 8 feet wide, self-watering planters in front of hedge on the terrace; work with Children's Librarian to develop a children's planting program; research planter covers for winter months. At this time, they recommend we push the planting and the children's program to Spring 2023. This is also a possible Library request to the Friends. Mark Olson recommends we purchase self watering raised planters. Audrey says this type of planter has a reservoir that will need filling. Volunteers will be needed for the planters and any potted plants outside of the library.

Discussion: Audrey reported that she is waiting for approval of funds to purchase planters. She will work with the Children's Librarian to have a program plan ready for Spring planting season next year, 2023.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:

Approve the purchase of two cedar self-watering planters and the Children's Librarian involvement of a program for the children.

E. MAHONEY FAMILY PORTRAIT BRONZE SCULPTURE:

History: Emily, a Trustee Representative, Sean Mahoney, Mark O and Erik Durant– Artist rendition, Dimensions and placement – Bench 18"x18"x54" Height of sculpture 49"(Picture a man & woman sitting on 18" bench) Sculpture installation date is Spring 2023.

Per May 26th site visit with Sean Mahoney, Erik Durant, Kathleen Kilgore, Susan Leonardi, George Chauncey and Emily Creighton - Mahoney Family Sculpture will be placed on the left corner in front of the rain garden. This area is shaded and will keep the bronze statue cool in the summer months. The sculpture will be placed at an angle on an oval platform to contrast with the environment - rain garden terrace and the library building. George Chauncey will work with Mark Olson and Erick Durant to decide the appropriate size and materials needed to design and build the oval platform for the sculpture. Mr. Durant estimates that the platform should be ready for a May/June 2023 (weather dependent) installation. Mr. Durant also recommended we think about a possible slate walkway to make it easier for people to get to the sculpture. Sean Mahoney graciously announced that he will take care of the expense for the oval platform and installation.

Discussion:

Sean M sent an email request for a site plan drawing that depicts the exact placement location of the sculpture as decided at the May 26 site visit.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TRUSTEES:

Action on Sean Mahoney's email requesting a site plan of sculpture's location. Consider a slate walkway leading to the sculpture.

III. PHASE 3 - OTHER ITEMS:

A. RETRACTABLE AWNING

Discussion: Kathleen K reported that the Trustees are researching a retractable awning for the terrace. Everyone thought it was a safe and perhaps a more realistic choice for that area.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:

Back Channel Canvas (207) 439-9600 is a possible source for retractable awnings.

B. STONE WALL

History: John B. met with the Heritage Committee to discuss with them the Landscaping Advisory Committee's question of whether the stone wall bordering Atlantic Ave and the Library could be

repaired.. In the discussion he also brought up the condition of some of the trees along Atlantic and at the Alden/Atlantic intersection. Chair Donna Etela led the discussion from the Committee's point of view. The Committee was firm in their belief that the existing stone wall was "historical" and therefore if any repairs were to be made on either of the two sections they would need to be advised. They also said that any work done on the wall would have to be done by an experienced builder with "historical wall repair experience". They said they could assist in identifying that wall builder. They cautioned about stump removal and expressed concern that the existing wall would be disturbed.

Note: In other conversations with unrelated parties about Section 1 of the wall (nearest Library entrance) it was learned that the "existing marker" that was below or even with grade had been "raised" and possibly relocated to its present location. Also observers of the work around the time the marker was worked on have verified that stones were moved to other locations along the Section 1 wall.

Regards Section 2, there are stones that are not "on the wall". Inspection raised the question as to whether they have been placed where they are now located.

John B. attended a talk given by Ken Gardner sponsored by Rye's Driftwood Garden Club. He is a former stone wall builder (3-4 generations of family were in the business) and he regularly advises on whether a wall is "historical", what needs to be done to re-build or repair a wall. Two of his books are in the NHPL collection. He no longer builds, but can be hired to advise. He said any wall building or repair is going to be expensive.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TRUSTEES:

Decide if the expense and time involved in determining if the stone wall is historical, finding a builder that meets the Historical Commission's approval and then paying for the construction is a project to accomplish next year or at a later date.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, Oct. 27, 2022, 10am

Meeting adjourned at 11:30AM

Minutes prepared by Emily Creighton and John Bottomley