## NHPL LANDSCAPING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

October 27, 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 10:01**

Members present: John Bottomley, Lisa Cote, Audrey Prior, Kathleen Kilgore, Emily Creighton

I. **PHASE 1: ASSESS, MONITOR AND MAINTAIN**

A. IRRIGATION SYSTEM

Action: Kathleen Kilgore, George Chauncey

**Discussion:** Fall/Winter Maintenance is due and scheduled. Kathleen will check to ensure irrigation system is turned off for the season.

**RECOMMENDATIONS** **TO THE TRUSTEES:**

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

B. YEW HEDGES - left side of terrace

**Discussion:** Kathleen Kilgore reported that the Mainly Grass contract now includes fertilizing of the hedges, plants and trees. Burlap covers will protect hedges in the winter. John Hubbard, DPW agreed to trim as needed. Kathleen reported that the hedges will be wrapped in burlap and twine the weekend of Oct. 29.

**RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:**

Approve Mainly Grass contract. 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 coordinate 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. Kathleen reported that boxwoods will be sprayed and Teepees will be in place before Thanksgiving. John Hubbard, DPW, will have the area staked for the winter. Resident, Lee Saunders volunteered to prune the shrubs when needed.

**RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:**

Approve Mainly Grass’ updated contract to include fertilizing the boxwoods and trees.

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;

Committee met with Mark Olsen; and Emily and George C met with John Hubbard, DPW.

**Discussion**:  Don Knowles recommended that we prune trees along Atlantic Ave, remove poison ivy, remove brush and then assess whether removal of trees are necessary. In regards to Alden Ave trees, he was concerned that the Birch trees are too close to the utility equipment and may grow to touch the roofline. He suggested talking to the Library Landscaper about possibly moving some. Don K also suggested a fence to screen the trash bin.

John Hubbard, DPW, will this fall, prune all trees, spray poison ivy and pick up the brush. George Chauncey said we can get volunteers to rake up leaves and brush on the Atlantic Ave and Alden Rd. sides after poison ivy is sprayed. John H and his staff continues to monitor the planted Arborvitae water runoff.

Mark Olson, Landwright, LLC, landscaper told us that Birch trees are not too close to the Electrical and HVAC equipment. The Birch trees can be pruned to keep them away from the roof and building. He agreed that trees, planted closer to Alden Ave could help to screen the equipment from view. Five Birch trees were discussed but he added that the birch trees lose their leaves so screening would be lost for 5-6 months. He suggested that 5 closely staggered arborvitae would make a better screen. Mark estimated $8-900 a tree (Birch or Arborvitae) to purchase and plant.

Mark also mentioned that three arborvitae would be adequate to screen the trash bin. Kathleen K informed the committee that the Trustees are discussing sharing the Town Admin’s trash bin.

**RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:**

Approve the spring 2023 planting of five arborvitae trees to screen the mechanical equipment. In spring, revisit trash bin location and if needed, tree screening.

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 Gardner 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

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. As discussed in Section I. D.

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TRUSTEES:**

Approve Spring 2023 planting of five closely staggered trees

**II. PHASE 2: FUTURE ITEMS**

1. 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 sent 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 2023 once Mahoney Family sculpture is in place.

1. TERRACE FURNITURE AND FRONT ENTRANCE

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

**RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:**

Discuss and Decide who could take on this responsibility

1. 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.

1. RAISED PLANTERS

**History:** Audrey Prior

Researched 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. Audrey recommend we push the planting and the children’s program to Spring 2023. This is also a possible Library request to the Friends – fund purchase of planters. 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 she is researching other planters on the market. She will have this info ready for our Jan 19, 2023 meeting. She will also work with the Children’s Librarian to have a program plan ready for Spring planting season next year, 2023.

**RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRUSTEES:**

None at this time.

1. MAHONEY FAMILY PORTRAIT BRONZE SCULPTURE:

**History:** Emily, 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 statute 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 Erik 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/Jun 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:**

Need a response if Sean Mahoney’s email request for a site plan drawing depicting the exact placement location of the sculpture as decided at the May 26 site visit has be met.

Sean contacted Emily and said the sculpture is on schedule and installation is scheduled for Springtime 2023. He requested a contact person, preferable the landscaper (Mark Olson) who we said would work with Erik and the mason on the development of the platform. Mark said he would take on the task. Sean will also include Emily on the coordination of this task. Again, Sean is financially responsible for any costs associated with the platform. Committee agreed that we should live with the sculpture for a year or two to ascertain whether a walkway is necessary.

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TRUSTEES:**

A copy of the sculpture site plan be attached to the NHPL Library Advisory Committee’s minute

III. **PHASE 3 - OTHER ITEMS:**

1. RETRACTABLE AWNING

**Discussion:** Kathleen K reported that Susan Grant is 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.

1. STONE WALL

**History:** John B. met with the Heritage Committee to discuss the Landscaping Advisory Committee's question of whether the stone wall bordering Atlantic Ave and the Library could be repaired..  In the discussion he brought up the condition of some of the trees along Atlantic and at the Alden/Atlantic intersection.  Their roots and stumps are intermingled with the stone wall. 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 trees or stones would be moved near the stone wall and or repairs were to be made on either of the two sections they be advised before any repair work commences.. 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.

John B. attended a talk given by Ken Gardner sponsored by Rye's Driftwood Garden Club.  Ken Gardner 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", and 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.

Committee agreed to table and to perform Fall cleanup around the landscape without moving stones. Maybe the Town will decide to repair the wall once the Safety Complex is complete.

**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, Jan. 19, 2023 5PM followed by 5:30PM workshop with Trustees

**Meeting adjourned at 11:30AM**

Minutes prepared by Emily Creighton