



## URBAN FORESTRY TREE COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday April 12, 2023 – 6:00 P.M.

Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Administrative Office

Meeting Room A

50 Officer Manny Familia Way Worcester, MA 01605

Or

**If you choose to use the WebEx platform:**

- 1) Go to [www.webex.com](http://www.webex.com)
- 2) Click the “join” button on the top right side of the screen
- 3) Enter Meeting ID#: 2311 280 2081
- 4) Enter password: Treecomm4-12

**If you choose to attend via phone:**

- 1) Call 1-415-655-0001
- 2) Enter Meeting ID#: 2311 280 2081

### AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Attendance (Roll Call)
3. Acceptance of Minutes for the (Roll Call) – March 22, 2023
4. To request a reasonable accommodation or interpretation or submit written comments or questions in advance of the meeting, please contact the Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Division by email at [Worcetertrees@worcesterma.gov](mailto:Worcetertrees@worcesterma.gov). Please note that interpretation requests must be received no later than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Para solicitar una interpretacion razonable, o enviar comentarios o preguntas por escrito por favor comuniquese con la oficina de la Division de Parques, Recreo & Cementerio por correo electronico a [Worcetertrees@worcesterma.gov](mailto:Worcetertrees@worcesterma.gov). Por favor note que las solicitudes de interpretacion deberan ser enviadas 48 horas antes de la reunion.
5. Public Participation – Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 and in order to ensure active, public engagement, the City of Worcester currently allows for both in person and remote participation at the Urban Forestry Tree Commission meetings. To partake in the “Public Participation” section of this meeting, you may join us directly within the 50 Officer Manny Familia Way Meeting Room A, follow the information above to join via the WebEx application or dial the direct line as indicated. If you would like to raise your hand when in the meeting as a call-in user you may dial \*3.

6. Assistant Commissioners Report (See Report Topics Below)

5. Old Business

- NA

6. New Business

- Solar Access (Ted Conna)

7. Date of Next Meeting:

- May 3, 2023
- June 7, 2023
- September 6, 2023
- October 4, 2023
- November 1, 2023
- December 6, 2023
- January 17, 2024 – New date
- February 28, 2024– New date
- March 20, 2024– New date
- April 3, 2024– New date
- May 1, 2024– New date
- June 5, 2024– New date

8. Meeting Adjourned (Roll Call)

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## ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

### 1. General:

- Urban Forestry Master Plan Update
  - Public Meeting May 3, 2023 (Part of the Urban Forestry Tree Commission Agenda)
  - Public Meeting May 4, 2023 (Part of the Parks & Recreation Commission Agenda)
- Door Hanger
- Tree Commission attending neighborhood meetings
- Tree replacement policy
  - Request Only
  - Mandated replacement
- Neighborhood Based Urban Heat Risk Assessment - NA
- Worcester Now | Next online survey
  - NA
- Green Worcester Advisory Committee
  - NA
- Planting –
  - Spring 2023 Planting - NA
- Customer Service Update
  - Customer Service Contact Information 508-929-1300 &/or 311
- Street Resurfacing Opportunities & Challenges – NA
- Zoning Ordinance Discussion
- Worcester Ordinance Relative to the Protection of Public Trees
- Partnerships –
  - New England Botanical Garden @ Tower Hill - NA
- Grant Applications –
  - NA
- Economic Development Initiatives –
  - NA
- Forestry Vandalism & Graffiti –
  - NA
- Donations –
  - NA
- Forestry Operations –
  - Tree City USA – Submitted
  - ALB (Asian Longhorned Beetle)
  - EAB (Emerald Ash Borer)
  - Arbor Day – April 28, 2023
- Budget – Operational & Capital – NA
  - Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Division – NA
  - Capital Improvement Program – NA
  - City Five Point Financial Plan – NA
- Misc.

# **URBAN FORESTRY TREE COMMISSION MEETING**

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Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Administrative Office

Meeting Room A

50 Officer Manny Familia Way Worcester, MA 01605

Or

Virtual with WebEx

## **ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

**GENERAL**



## URBAN FORESTRY TREE COMMISSION **MINUTES**

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Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Administrative Office

Meeting Room A

50 Officer Manny Familia Way Worcester, MA 01605

Or

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- 2) Click the “join” button on the top right side of the screen
- 3) Enter Meeting ID#: 2304 892 2071
- 4) Enter password: Treecomm3-22

**If you choose to attend via phone:**

- 1) Call 1-415-655-0001
- 2) Enter Meeting ID#: 2304 892 2071

### AGENDA

1. Call to Order – at 6:11 PM
2. Attendance (Roll Call)
  - a. **Commissioners Present:**
    - i. Alexander Elton
    - ii. Joseph Mogel – Virtual
    - iii. Joy Winbourne – Not present at the start of the meeting, minutes were voted on without Commissioner Winbourne
    - iv. Kristin Wobbe
  - b. **Administration Present:**
    - i. Robert C. Antonelli, Assistant Commissioner
    - ii. Brian Breveleri, Forestry Supervisor
    - iii. Milagros Pacheco, Staff Assistant III

3. Acceptance of Minutes for the (Roll Call) – March 1, 2023
  - Commissioner Wobbe requested the following amendment to the minutes, to add the word **not** to the third bullet under Door Hanger. It should read “There was a question by a meeting attendee as to why trees are **not** automatically replaced”. Commissioner Elton made a motion to approve the minutes with the modification. Second by Commissioner Mogel. All were in favor. Minutes were approved 3 – 0.
4. To request a reasonable accommodation or interpretation or submit written comments or questions in advance of the meeting, please contact the Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Division by email at [Worcestertrees@worcesterma.gov](mailto:Worcestertrees@worcesterma.gov). Please note that interpretation requests must be received no later than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Para solicitar una interpretacion razonable, o enviar comentarios o preguntas por escrito por favor comuniquese con la oficina de la Division de Parques, Recreo & Cementerio por correo electronico a [Worcestertrees@worcesterma.gov](mailto:Worcestertrees@worcesterma.gov). Por favor note que las solicitudes de interpretacion deberan ser enviadas 48 horas antes de la reunion.
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6. Assistant Commissioners Report (See Report Topics Below)
5. Old Business
  - NA
6. New Business
  - Solar Item (Table until April 12, 2023)
7. Date of Next Meeting:
  - April 12, 2023
  - May 3, 2023
  - June 7, 2023
  - September 6, 2023
  - October 4, 2023
  - November 1, 2023
  - December 6, 2023
8. Meeting Adjourned (Roll Call)

1. General:

- Arbor Day 2023 – April 28, 2023
  - Arbor Day event on April 29, 2023 – 10:00 AM at University Park
- Door Hanger – Language was revised for Commission to review
  - Commissioner Wobbe suggested some corrections to the wording
- Tree Commission attending neighborhood meetings
  - Assistant Commissioner Antonelli shared a list of Neighborhood Groups with the intention of attending some neighborhood meetings in the future with some members of the Urban Forestry Tree Commission Members.
- Tree replacement policy
  - Request Only
  - Mandated Replacement
  - Assistant Commissioner Antonelli explained the state is has a Tree replacement program but one of the reasons why the city doesn't use this program is because the trees are small, they have no structural stability and the program relies on planting on private property, where they can grow quickly with the care of the homeowners. There is a second part to the state program where they're planting public shade trees and the City of Worcester is partnering with them on the Public Tree portion of the program not the private.
- Urban Forestry Master Plan – Assistant Commissioner Antonelli gave an update on the status of the draft documents of the Urban Forestry Master Plan.
- Neighborhood Based Urban Heat Risk Assessment - NA
- Worcester Now | Next online survey
  - NA
- Green Worcester Advisory Committee
  - NA
- Planting –
  - Spring 2023 Planting
- Customer Service
  - Customer Service Contact Information 508-929-1300 &/or 311
- Street Resurfacing Opportunities & Challenges – NA
- Zoning Ordinance Discussion
- Worcester Ordinance Relative to the Protection of Public Trees
- Partnerships –
  - New England Botanical Garden @ Tower Hill - NA
- Grant Applications –
  - NA
- Economic Development Initiatives –
  - NA
- Forestry Vandalism & Graffiti –
  - NA
- Donations –
  - NA
- Forestry Operations –
  - Tree City USA – Submitted
  - ALB (Asian Longhorned Beetle)
  - EAB (Emerald Ash Borer)
  - Arbor Day – April 28, 2023
- Budget – Operational & Capital – NA
  - Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Division – NA
  - Capital Improvement Program – NA
  - City Five Point Financial Plan – NA
- Misc.

- New Business: N/A
- Date of next meeting – April 12, 2023
- Commissioner Elton made a motion to adjourn. Second by Commissioner Winbourne. All were in favor. 4 – 0 Meeting was adjourned at 6:40 PM.

**A copy of this full meeting will be available to view and listen to at:**

**[www.worcesterma.gov/city-clerk/public-meetings/agendas-minutes](http://www.worcesterma.gov/city-clerk/public-meetings/agendas-minutes)**



# **TREE PLANTING**

Your tree was removed by the City of Worcester Forestry Division, but we do offer a street tree planting program, as well as a set back planting program.

In order to protect these valuable assets, we need to be careful where and how we plant them. It is important that we plant the correct tree species in a suitable location. Arbor Day Foundation calls this “right tree right place.” Proper planting maximizes the tree’s ability to mature and survive within the urban environment. It also minimizes the environmental impacts and on home utilities costs.

In general, the Forester will adhere to the following guidelines:

- Will plant trees only in the public right of way on public streets
- Will plant trees up to 20’ behind the public right of way with the written permission of the property owner
- Will space trees between 25’-50’ apart depending on species and infrastructure
- Planting beneath overhead electric, cable or telephone lines is limited to ornamental trees only
- Will not plant when underground utilities might damage the tree or if digging will cause damage to the utility
- Will not plant near streetlights, hydrants, and driveways to avoid impacting this infrastructure
- Planting will take place each spring.

Please contact 311 or (508) 929-1300 if you would like a tree planted free of charge to you in front of your property

Deadline for planting request is October 31

Website: [www.worcesterma.gov/311](http://www.worcesterma.gov/311)

Online request please use this QR Code

Reasons to replant trees

- Provides shade and can cool neighborhoods
- Clean out air and reduces the effects of climate change
- Helps save energy
- Increases property value



The City of  
**WORCESTER**  
Department of Public Works & Parks

**City of Worcester**

**Neighborhood Groups**

	<b><u>Neighborhood Group</u></b>	<b><u>District</u></b>	<b><u>Meeting Schedule</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Officer in Charge</u></b>
1	Brown Square Neighborhood	2	3rd Wednesday @7pm	Brown Square Civic Club 639 Franklin St	PO Patrick Bennett
2	Burncoat/Greendale Neighborhood	1	1st Thursday @ 6pm	St. Michael's On-The Heights 340 Burncoat St	PO Anthony Lombardozi
3	Coes Pond Village Neighborhood	5	Currently Not Meeting	Coes Pond Village 39 First Street	PO Thomas Hurley
4	Columbus Park Neighborhood	5	4th Thursday @6:30pm	Knights of Columbus 44 Circuit Ave North	PO Christopher Santley
5	East Mountain Street Neighborhood	1	Currently Not Meeting	Salem Covenant Church, 215 Mountain Street East	TBA
6	Grafton Hill Neighborhood	3	3rd Wednesday at 6 p.m.	Mass Audubon Society, 414 Massasoit Road	PO Peter Bissonnette
7	Green Hill Neighborhood	2	Last Monday at 6:30 p.m.	Saint Bernard's Church, 236 Lincoln Street	TBA
8	Green Island Neighborhood	4	1st Thursday at 5 p.m.	Green Island Neighborhood Center, 50 Canton Street	PO Sean Lovely
9	Hammond Heights Neighborhood	1	Currently Not Meeting	Bancroft Tower, 26 Massachusetts Avenue	PO Lisa Carlson
10	Harlow Street Neighborhood	2	Currently Not Meeting	Saint Bernard's Church, 236 Lincoln Street	PO Peter Bissonnette
11	Illinois Street Neighborhood	4	Currently Not Meeting	Worcester Diocese, 51 Illinois Street	PO Thomas Hurley
12	Indian Lake Neighborhood	2	3rd Wednesday at 6 p.m.	Greater Good Imperial Brewing Company, 55 Millbrook Street	PO Lisa Carlson
13	Kilby St., Gardner St. and Hollis St. Neighborhood	4	3rd Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.	Main South CDC, 875 Main Street	PO Anthony Lombardozi
14	Knight Street Neighborhood	3	Currently Not Meeting	New Horizons Apartments, 20 Benson Avenue	PO Peter Bissonnette
15	Lake View Neighborhood	2	2nd Wednesday at 7 p.m.	Lakeview Congregational Church, 115 Coburn Avenue	PO Nicholas Riggieri
16	Lincoln Village Neighborhood	1	1st Thursday at 6 p.m.	Victoria Building, 116 Country Club Boulevard	PO Christopher Santley
17	Main South Beacon Brightly Neighborhood	4	2nd Thursday at 5:30 p.m.	Y.M.C.A., 766 Main Street	PO Alex Maracallo
18	Newton Square Neighborhood	5	2nd Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.	Blessed Sacrament Church, 551 Pleasant Street	PO Michael Higgins

	<u>Neighborhood Group</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Meeting Schedule</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Officer in Charge</u>
19	PACT Neighborhood	4	1st Thursday at 5:30 p.m.	Neighborhood Network Center, 301 Pleasant Street	PO Bruce Carter, Jr.
20	Pasadena Parkway Neighborhood	1	Currently Not Meeting	St. Joan of Arc Church, 570 Lincoln Street	TBA
21	Quinsigamond Village Neighborhood	3	4th Wednesday at 6 p.m.	The Journey Community Church, 46 Greenwood Street	PO Patrick Bennett
22	Saxon Road Neighborhood	1	2nd Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.	Congregation Beth Israel, 15 Jamesbury Drive	PO Lisa Carlson
23	Seabury Heights Apartments Neighborhood	2	1st Wednesday at 4 p.m.	Seabury Heights Apartments, 240 Belmont Street	TBA
24	Shrewsbury Street Neighborhood	2	3rd Thursday at 7 p.m.	Mount Carmel Apartments, 50 Shrewsbury Street	PO Sean Lovely
25	South Lenox Street Neighborhood	5	2nd Thursday at 6 p.m.	First Congregational Church, 1070 Pleasant Street	PO Michael Higgins
26	Stratton Hill Neighborhood	1	1st Wednesday at 6 p.m.	Stratton Hill Park Apartments, 161 West Mountain St	PO Anthony Lombardozi
27	Tatnuck Square Neighborhood	5	2nd Monday at 6:30 p.m.	First Congregational Church, 1070 Pleasant Street	PO Bruce Carter, Jr.
28	Upsala Street Neighborhood	3	Currently Not Meeting	Upsala Elder Apartments, 36 Upsala Street	PO Alex Maracallo
29	Webster Square Neighborhood	5	1st Thursday at 7 p.m.	Our Lady of Angels Church, 1222 Main Street	PO Christopher Santley
30	Whittier Terrace Neighborhood	4	4th Wednesday at 4 p.m.	Whittier Terrace, 86 Austin Street	PO Alex Maracallo
31	Vietnamese Neighborhood	3	Currently Not Meeting	Worcester Senior Center, 128 Providence Street	PO Duy Chau
	<b>WHA Community Meetings</b>				
1	Addison Apartments Community Meeting	3	3rd Tuesday at 3 p.m	2 Addison Street	TBA
2	Belmont Tower Apartments Community Meeting	2	2nd Thursday at 3:30 p.m	Worcester Housing Authority, 40 Belmont Street	TBA
3	Booth Apartments Community Meeting	1	2nd Tuesday at 1 p.m.	Booth Apartments (WHA), 1 Haven Lane	TBA
4	Curran Terrace Community Meeting	3	2nd Tuesday at 1 p.m	Curran Terrace (WHA), 201 Providence Street	TBA
5	Elm Park Tower Apartments Community Meeting	4	3rd Wednesday at 1 p.m.	Elm Park Tower Apartments (WHA), 425 Pleasant Street	PO Michael Higgins

	<u>Neighborhood Group</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Meeting Schedule</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Officer in Charge</u>
6	Great Brook Valley Community Meeting	1	2nd Thursday at 5:30 p.m.	Great Brook Valley (WHA), 180 Constitution Avenue	TBA
7	Greenwood Gardens Community Meeting	3	4th Tuesday at 1 p.m.	327 Greenwood Street Worcester	PO Patrick Bennett
8	Lafayette Place Apartments Community Meeting	4	1st Tuesday at 4:30 p.m.	2 Lafayette Street Worcester	PO Sean Lovely
9	Lincoln Park Tower Apartments Community Meeting	2	2nd Monday at 1 p.m.	11 Lake Avenue Worcester	PO Patrick Bennett
10	Mayside Apartments Community Meeting	4	3rd Wednesday at 1 p.m.	20 May Street	TBA
11	Mill Pond Apartments Community Meeting	5	3rd Tuesday at 3 p.m.	600 Mill Street	PO Thomas Hurley
12	Murray/Wellington Apartments Community Meeting	4	3rd Tuesday at 1 p.m.	50 Murray Avenue	PO Peter Bissonnette
13	Pleasant Tower Apartments Community Meeting	4	2nd Wednesday at 1 p.m.	Pleasant Tower Apartments (WHA), 275 Pleasant Street	PO Lisa Carlson
14	Webster Square Tower East Community Meeting	4	3rd Thursday at 1:30 p.m.	Webster Square Towers East (WHA), 1050 Main Street	PO Peter Bissonnette
15	Webster Square Tower West Community Meeting	4	3rd Thursday at 2:30 p.m.	Webster Square Towers West (WHA), 1060 Main Street	PO Peter Bissonnette



DRAFT proposal for City of Worcester policy on avoiding public shade tree/solar access conflicts

Submitted by Ted Conna

Rationale:

The city estimates that more than 2500 solar systems have been installed in Worcester since 2012. As more homes add solar hot water and photovoltaic panels, there will be a need to protect their access to the sunlight that powers their sustainable energy systems. In many cases, city street trees may begin to shade the panels as they grow larger. The city should develop a policy and protocols to avoid this problem and to deal with it when it arises, so that these two public sustainability benefits, a healthy urban forest and solar energy production, can be balanced in a rational, consistent way and conflicts are minimized.

Solar energy, and solar electricity in particular, is expected to play a big role in the transition away from fossil fuels. I am a zealous proponent of protecting of our urban forest, but it is important to note that the now-dominant alternative to siting solar panels on the rooftops of buildings is siting them in what were once natural or pastoral landscapes—forests, fields, and farmland. If we don't want the latter impact—and the negative views of solar that come with it—we need to prioritize siting solar above parking lots (where it provides a shading benefit), on disturbed land, along highways and railroads, and on top of buildings: big box stores, schools, factories, and yes, homes. And there is a public awareness benefit to having solar arrays visible in all our neighborhoods. At the same time, the many benefits of our urban forest must also be recognized, promoted, and protected.

Draft Proposal:

1) Avoiding tree/solar conflicts: This should be the easy part. Both the city's Right Tree, Right Place guidelines and the permitting process for solar installations should be updated so that both discourage present and future shading impacts on solar collectors by both public and private trees. As a matter of policy, the city should not plant trees in locations where the mature tree would shade solar collectors, and this might also include prime sites for future solar installations. Property owners, if they want a tree planted, should be informed of future shading impacts (both positive and negative). If the property owner still wants the tree, they have no basis to complain later about shading impacts. Likewise, property owners or installers seeking permits to install new solar collectors should be informed (as part of the permitting process) of present and future shading impacts. These common-sense steps to avoid tree/solar conflicts should not be controversial, and should minimize the need for 2) and 3) below.

2) Existing trees/existing solar installations - Preserving solar access: The city should also decide to what degree it will maintain existing city trees to preserve solar access as the trees grow, since there are likely to be hundreds of existing solar sites in the city where this is or will become an issue. Assuming the city will do so, if/when an existing city tree began to shade a solar installation, the owner would follow the existing Tree Ordinance and contact the Tree Warden through the Customer Service Center, and if appropriate, the city would begin to prune the tree periodically to maintain solar access. The city should

have a policy on whether or not to charge the property owner for this work. Obviously, such pruning would not have priority over emergency tree work, but it would be given enough priority that solar collectors do not end up in shadow for more than 1 hour per day during the peak solar production hours of 9am-3pm solar time between March 1 and October 1 of the year.

3) Existing trees/new solar installations: Should a property owner want an existing city tree or trees pruned or removed to allow solar access for a new solar installation, an application would be made to the Tree Warden through the Customer Service Center. In the case of public shade trees, the existing city Tree Ordinance and state Shade Tree law (Chapter 87) would be followed: that is, a public hearing would be held before any tree is removed. Approval of the tree work would be at the discretion of the Tree Warden, using appropriate metrics that account for the sustainability value of both the tree(s) and the proposed solar installation. Factors to be considered would include the size and health of the tree, shading impacts (both positive and negative), carbon sequestration provided by the tree, carbon emissions reduction provided by the solar array, etc. Mature, healthy public trees should not be removed, but there may be cases where the sustainability value of the solar installation outweighs the sustainability value of not altering a tree or trees. Using science-based metrics to evaluate that should prevent undue tree loss.

If approved, the city would issue a permit for the tree work, but tree work would not be allowed until after the solar system was installed. The property owner would pay the cost of the tree work, plus, in the case of tree removal, the cost of planting a replacement tree for each one removed, in another suitable location. Incurring tree removal and replacement costs will likely dissuade most homeowners from wanting to remove trees, but having a clear protocol for this situation should help minimize tree/solar conflicts.

Solar collectors not oriented to face within 45 degrees of true south would not qualify. The city should not encourage solar installations that are poorly oriented and will have sub-optimal performance.

#### Issues to be resolved:

Jurisdiction: Tree Warden is the final authority; does the Urban Forestry Tree Commission play a role?

Who pays the cost of tree pruning to maintain solar access?

What solar installations would qualify? (minimum size? orientation? etc.)

How much shade is tolerable, and when (time of day, time of year)? (Even partial shade can eliminate all the electricity production from a solar electric panel).

What metrics will be used to compare the sustainability benefits of trees vs. solar installations?

(Note: Paul Popinchalk cited numerous resources for this at the UFTC meeting on 11/30/22).