

**TOWN OF ORONO  
TREE BOARD VIRTUAL MEETING  
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2020 AT 5:00 P.M.**

**WATCH ONLINE AT  
<https://zoom.us/j/91914304999>  
For Dial in Only call 1-312-626-6799 Webinar ID: 91914304999  
(LINK AVAILABLE AT ORONO.ORG)**

**AGENDA**

**1. Roll Call**

Present: Cindy Blease (Co-Chair), Dave Thompson (Co-Chair), Pat Thompson, Jessica Leahy. Tim White and Public Works Director/ Tree Warden. Rob Yerxa. Absent: Matthew Ewing.

**2. Tree Report**

**a. 31 Hamlin Street - Evaluation of 2 Silver Maples**

Rob Yerxa provided the background on the evaluation of the two silver maples at 31 Hamlin Street. He was contacted by the homeowner who expressed concerns about the two large trees in his front yard. He conducted a site visit and reviewed the homeowner's safety concerns with the large size of the trees and how they have grown out. Mr. Yerxa outlined his concerns and forwarded the homeowner's email regarding concerns about the trees to the Tree Board for their evaluation. He received a recommendation from the Board that it was important to address the hazards and either prune or remove the trees. Mr. Yerxa explained the process of the Tree Board giving recommendations to the Tree Warden who makes the final decision. He noted during his 12 years with the Town he has never disagreed with the Board's decision. With the wishes of the homeowners, recommendation from the Tree Board and his significant concerns with the potential for property damage or personal injury, he erred on the side of caution to decide to have the trees removed. Mr. Yerxa stated a couple months had passed since his decision and securing an arborist. After marking the trees, a couple neighbors expressed significant concerns about removing the trees and he decided to postpone the removal and engage the Tree Board. He commented that the health and safety of the community guides his decisions along with considering the quality of the tree inventory. He noted he erred on the side of caution when deciding to remove the trees, citing trees that have fallen recently.

The Tree Board discussed that the silver maple trees are generally healthy, estimated at 70 years old (with a 130 year average lifespan), are showing signs of decline, that the trees location is problematic, and there are safety concerns for the large limbs which tend to become brittle and sheer off.

The Tree Board recommended having an arborist take a look at the trees and determine the extent of pruning that could be done to be safe and still maintain the health and integrity of the tree, and if not, remove the trees. Mr. Yerxa suggested getting a third-party arborist to give a

recommendation on the trees, and if it is not possible to prune them effectively, to remove them.

Dave Thompson commented, on record, that he did not agree with any decision that would put people at risk. He spoke of the dangers of silver maples and that something should be done. Mr. White agreed. Mr. Yerxa stated he would work to get an arborist as soon as possible.

**Motion by Tim White and seconded by Cindy Blease to request the Tree Warden seek a review of the two silver maple trees by a licensed arborist to determine the feasibility of public safety, health of the trees, and financial impact for a successful pruning of the trees, without a feasible pruning solution, removal of the two trees. All voted in favor, 5-0.**

Mr. Yerxa stated he would work to get this done as soon as possible. The Committee expressed their desire to take care of the trees before the winter months.

Susan Brawley stated she would not have known about this situation without the orange tape on the trees. She noted that heritage trees are important to the community. She supported having a well-trained arborist look at the trees. Ms. Brawley was supportive of the Tree Board having regular monthly meetings.

### **3. Tree Warden Update**

Mr. Yerxa suggested setting up a regular monthly meeting schedule. The Tree Board agreed.

Tree Board spoke of their responsibilities - Evaluate trees, recently they advocated for saving the forest between the schools instead of having a retention pond in that location, and they usually meet with 5th graders to talk about trees and invasive species.

Mr. Yerxa will schedule the next meeting in mid October. He suggested having the Tree Board review the vegetation ordinance.

### **4. Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn by Jessica Leahy and seconded by Dave Thompson. All voted in favor, 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:08pm.

Minutes are summary only. A video recording of the meeting is available on the Town's website at [www.orono.org](http://www.orono.org) under Agendas and Minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy W. Ward  
Executive Assistant