

**APPROVED Minutes**  
**Ridgefield Tree Committee**  
**June 10, 2025**  
**6:49 p.m.**

**This is a Summary of the Activities of the Committee  
and not a verbatim transcript**

In attendance:

Tree Warden: Steve Lavatori. Members: Tom McManus (Chair), Ian Dow, Kitsey Snow, Ryan Bossis and Don Hulnick. Excused: Paul Shotton. Absent: Bob Roth.

**Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Dow reported that the Town website was displaying an incorrect start time (7:30pm) for the June Committee meeting (an error that may have been related to a recent website overhaul).

As agreed by the committee in January and posted on the Town website here ([https://ridgefieldct.gov/boards\\_committees\\_commissions/tree\\_committee/index.php](https://ridgefieldct.gov/boards_committees_commissions/tree_committee/index.php)) ALL regular meetings of the Committee commence at 6:30 pm Eastern Time.

**Approval of Minutes of Past Meetings**

Mr. McManus referred to the minutes of the meeting of the Committee on May 13 that had been provided to the members in advance of the meeting.

UPON motion duly made (Snow), seconded (Dow), and carried, it was RESOLVED that these minutes were APPROVED.

Motion passed: 4-0-1 (Bossis abstaining).

**Finances**

Mr. McManus submitted an invoice and voucher to the Town for expenses he incurred totaling approximately \$291 for Tree City signage (that he installed in April) and stickers.

**Report of Tree Warden**

Nearing the end of F25 with sufficient resources to address some issues concerning the appearance and safety of trees in Ballard Park, including the removal of numerous dead limbs among many trees, installation of a cable in a sugar maple, removal of a dangerous red maple, pruning of a Bradford pear that had been interfering with a pathway lamp, etc.

Received an increased number of calls from residents about dead trees (made more noticeable by spring green-up).

Approved the removal by Mr. McManus of a small struggling red maple tree that had stood on the east side of Main Street just north of the Lantern Restaurant and its replacement with a 'Slender Silhouette' sweet gum tree.

Arranged the removal of a mid-sized struggling red maple tree that had stood on the east side of Main Street two doors south of Town Hall (which raised some concern in Town Hall). Mr. McManus arranged and facilitated a swift removal of the stump and will coordinate the installation of a replacement tree with Mr. Lavatori.

Assisted Mr. McManus over the course of several months with phase 2 of the Main Street planting plan which included the same steps as phase 1 in 2024: selection of tree species, planting locations, delivery, placement and post-planting care of 16 new trees on Main Street between #8 and #599.

**Tree for Keeler Tavern to be funded by Rotary**

Mr. McManus visited Keeler Tavern several times to discuss placement of a special tree.

## **Ideas for the Next Planting Round**

The Committee discussed options for transporting trees from the nursery to town. With access to a truck, trailer and a safe, shaded location (with access to water) to place the trees until they are ready to plant, future planting rounds can be executed more efficiently.

## **Mulching**

Ms. Snow expressed concern about "mulch mountains" (aka "volcanoes," encircling the trunks of Main Street trees) that had apparently been the result of a Scout project.

Mr. McManus reported that Main Street trees planted in 2025 need mulching, as well as many of those planted in 2024.

## **Honorary Plaques**

Many of the trees planted on Main Street in 2024 and 2025 have or will receive plaques honoring the donors or their family members, friends etc. (one original donor/fundraiser dedicated his plaque to the Tree Committee!). A difference of opinion regarding placement exists between the Chair of the Rotary Club and the Committee Chair, who is concerned that placing plaques between the edge of the sidewalk and the tree trunks can result in a tripping hazard. The Chair believes the plaques should be placed deep into the ground further from the sidewalk edge.

## **New Canaan Tree Planting Project**

Several members reported seeing news about how the New Canaan Beautification League had partnered with Town departments to purchase and plant 150 new trees along CT-124 south of town toward CT-15. The Chair offered to share a list of the species purchased.

## **Reporting Dangerous Trees**

Mr. McManus reminded the Committee of the importance of members (and residents) becoming familiar with the various means of reporting hazardous trees as documented on the Committee website; a simple "heads' up" notification (that the report had been made) to the Tree Warden and members would be useful and appreciated. It would also be appreciated if Committee members could help other residents to learn how to report dangerous trees.

## **Invasive Trees & Insects**

The Committee discussed the spread of invasive *Ailanthus* (aka TOH, Tree of Heaven) trees around Town and other towns in Fairfield County. More SLF Spotted Lanternflies have been seen in towns close to the LI Sound (e.g. Fairfield) and also more are seen in Ridgefield. Concern was expressed regarding the roadside mowing to be done later in the Summer, as it appears the mowers are spreading invasive trees and other plants such as Japanese Knotweed.

## **Forestry Management Plan and Website**

The Chair urged review of his revised draft of the Forestry Management Plan and encouraged all Members to check the Tree Committee website for updates and to suggest additional content.

## **Adjournment**

UPON motion duly made (Bossis), seconded (Hulnick), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned at 7:45 P.M. Motion passed: 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tom McManus, Chair