

MINUTES OF PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING OF OCTOBER 1, 2012
Request to remove trees on various Town roads
Room #315, Town Office Building, 400 Slocum Road

Planning Board Members

Mr. Joel Avila, Chairman
Mr. Joseph E. Toomey, Jr., Vice Chairman
Mrs. Lorri-Ann Miller, Clerk
Mr. John V. Sousa
Mr. Stanley M. Mickelson

Planning Staff

Mr. Donald A. Perry, Planning Director
Mrs. Joyce J. Couture, Planning Aide

The Chairman opened at 7:16 p.m. the public hearing¹ concerning a request by NSTAR Electric to remove trees on the following designated scenic roads: Collins Corner Road, Hixville Road, No. Hixville Road, Old Fall River Road, and Reed Road.

All Planning Board members and Planning staff were present.

A motion was made by Mrs. Miller, seconded by Mr. Toomey for discussion, and unanimously voted (5-0), to waive the reading of the legal notice, which appeared in The Chronicle on Wednesday, September 19, 2012, and again on Wednesday, September 26, 2012.

The Chairman provided information for the general public on the manner in which he will be conducting this evening's public hearing.

The Planning Director proceeded to read into the record a letter from Paul Sellers, NSTAR Electric, dated September 5, 2012. Mr. Perry also noted that he conducted an initial site inspection with Mr. Sellers to view the trees being proposed for trimming and removal. He stated that some of the trees present a hazard and some are diseased. Mr. Perry also mentioned that NSTAR has interacted with the affected property owners, with signoffs from the residents where trees are to be cut down.

The following individuals spoke concerning this proposal:

Henry Riley, 408 County Street, New Bedford
Cecilia Whipp, 1031 Old Fall River Road, Dartmouth
Gloria Bancroft, 748 Collins Corner Road, Dartmouth

¹ For more information, see minutes of the Planning Board's regular meeting of October 1, 2012

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Paul Sellers, Senior Arborist with NSTAR Electric, responded to the numerous questions from those in the audience. He was asked to specify how many trees with trunks 12" and greater were being removed. He also explained how the trees had been marked in the field, and noted the trees with an "X" are the ones to be removed. Mr. Sellers confirmed that NSTAR has permission signoffs from the landowners of properties with trees being removed.

The Planning Director stated that after a second site inspection of the trees being tagged for removal, he does not recommend the following trees be cut:

1. 1242 Reed Road – one 18"-24" Oak
2. 1246 Reed Road – two 12"-18" Oaks
3. 1250 Reed Road – one 18"-24" Oak
4. Pole 109-108 Hixville Road – one 12"-18" Pine

General discussion ensued.

Mr. Sellers indicated that most of the tree work will be completed before the end of the year. He also agreed as a result of this evening's discussion that NSTAR will provide replacement trees spaced approximately 50 feet apart along the section of Reed Road from the railroad tracks north to the treeline at the end of the industrial district. Preference will be given to placing the trees on the east side of Reed Road in the Town right-of-way.

Prior to closing the public hearing, the Planning Director specified the proposed conditions of approval to ensure that Mr. Sellers was in agreement.

The Chairman asked if there were any final comments and/or questions from Board members.

There were none.

The Chairman asked for the Planning Director's recommendation as to whether the public hearing should be closed.

Mr. Perry felt the Planning Board had received adequate public comment on this request and recommended closing the public hearing.

A motion was made by Mrs. Miller, duly seconded by Mr. Mickelson, and unanimously voted (5-0) to close this evening's public hearing at 8:00 p.m. and return to the regular meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce J. Couture
Planning Aide