

**Town of Essex
29 West Avenue
Essex, CT 06426**

**Public Hearing
Wednesday, March 19, 2014
Town Hall Auditorium**

Essex Tree Warden Augie Pampel began the Public Hearing at 7:00 p.m. The public hearing was held in accordance with Chapter 451, Section 23-59 of the Connecticut General Statutes to discuss the removal/pruning of approximately 40 trees on Town-owned land adjacent to Mares Hill Road, Ivoryton, CT, between #5 and #72 address locations. The removal of these trees has been requested by CL&P to satisfy the trimming/removal specifications they used on this road.

The purpose of the hearing was to give everyone an understanding of the spec that CL&P used called Enhanced Tree Trimming (“ETT”) and to seek everyone’s input. ETT is very severe, calling for an eight-foot clearance zone on either side of the conductors, and then ground to sky.

Augie introduced CL&P Representative Susan Stotts, to talk about the issues. Susan has looked at the trees designated for removal/pruning on Mares Hill Road and presented slides of the various trees under consideration, pointing out those she thought should be removed and those she thought could stay.

Those attending the hearing were then asked for questions and input. Augie stated that he has to make a decision within three days after this hearing based on input from the hearing and a walkthrough of the trees with Susan Stotts. His decision will be based on the health of the trees and if they are diseased or have structural issues. At this point he is estimating that 20-25 of the original 40 trees designated for removal may be able to stay, but each one will have to be looked at to make this determination. Augie noted that the Town owns 20 feet on both sides of the road, and all of the trees designated for removal are on Town property.

Concerns were raised that ground to sky seems extreme and that the result would end up looking like Route 153. The selection of vendor for the tree work was discussed, and it was noted that whoever does the work is following spec. Questions were also asked about what impact the tree removal would have on the soil environment, water runoff and flooding if the soil would be less absorbent, if there is a program to plant new trees, and who pays for the tree removal. Augie noted that the Town tries to replace as much as they can and that CL&P pays for the tree work, leaving the wood for people to take. Concerns were also raised about what was done on Melody and Hickory. It was noted that the tree work done on those streets was on private property with the consent of the property owners.

The question was also asked whether other streets in town would be targeted. There are no other streets being looked at, and it was noted that CL&P considers streets with 40 or more customers and liability issues.

There seemed to be general consensus that everyone would like to see as many of the trees preserved as possible to maintain the country road affect but keeping in mind what would be necessary in order to prevent loss of power caused by the trees and access concerns due to fallen trees.

Augie stated that everyone who received the original notice and those attending this hearing will be notified of his decision on each tree in the form of a worksheet indicating which trees will be removed and which will remain. The postings will be removed from the trees that are not going to be removed. The decision will also be posted in the Town Clerk's office.

The public hearing concluded at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy McLaughlin
Recording Clerk