

**Transcript of MTC's Tuliptree Planting at
Fowler Middle School for Maynard's 150th
Friday May 22nd, 2020**

[Introductory Remarks by Jodi Beebe]

Firstly, I just want to say what a beautiful day it is today. And especially those who are here, it's just a perfect day in the lovely Town of Maynard, and for those of you who may be watching the livestream online, we wish you were here, but we're glad you're there watching what we're doing right here today. What we are doing today is dedicating a tuliptree to celebrate Maynard's 150th anniversary. This tree will act as a time marker and a kind of time capsule for Maynard's 150th anniversary, its sesquicentennial. This tuliptree will not only provide all the things we love about trees including shade, beauty and nature, it will also participate in many math, science, arts, & humanities lessons for future students here at Fowler. We've documented the height of the tree today, as it's being planted along with the diameter so that moving forward children in the school can see how far it grows.

I'm going to do a brief introduction about the 150th and Jen Picorelli from the Sesquicentennial Committee will also talk a little bit. The Maynard Tree Corps is especially pleased to be planting its first tree during Maynard's year of activities and events that acknowledge and celebrate its sesquicentennial. We are proud to live in Maynard in its 150th year, yeah Maynard, and proud to begin the work of the Tree Corps today as we look forward to planting many more trees in Maynard in the near future especially during our group's first year which coincides with the celebration of Maynard's 150th.

We are especially thankful to have the following people with us today to assist with this important tree dedication:

- Number one being Justin DeMarco who is the Director of the Department of Public Works. Thank you, Justin.
- Secondly is David Gavin from the Town's Board of Selectman
- And then we have Dan Costello who is principal of this lovely middle school, the Fowler Middle School
- And fourth is Jen Picorelli with the Town's Sesquicentennial Steering Committee
- We also have Brent Mathison who is our videographer. Just so you know, Brent is live-streaming today's event, and it will be posted on the Maynard Tree Corps' Facebook Page and our YouTube channel sometime in the near future

Jen do you want to say a few words?

[Remarks of Jen Picorelli]

“Good Morning. I’m honored to be here this to represent the Sesquicentennial Committee for this dedication. Those this tree is being dedicated during an unprecedented time, it could not be a more perfect symbol. Trees are naturally strong and resilient to multiple elements like our town and its residents. It has roots that keep us stable and grounded in our home of Maynard. It has a trunk, a solid base that keeps us standing strong and safe like that or our town administration, selectman, emergency services, and DPW. It has branches that extend like that of arms reaching out for a hug representing the love that our town has so much of, to give and that has been ever-present especially during the last few weeks. It has leaves that are each unique and colorful like that of our more than 10,000 residents. Thank you so much for giving us a symbol and reminder of this time. Years from now we will remember that today it was a young budding tree. We look forward to watching it grow and become strong not unlike our town during this time. After weathering this storm, we will witness it thrive yet again.”

[Remarks of Justin DeMarco]

“Good morning, good afternoon. I want to thank everybody who that was involved in this from the beginning. The Maynard Tree Corps has been one of my favorite committees to deal with since I’ve been here in September. Go-getters is the best way to describe this committee. Very thankful, and we hope to see this situation turn into something that is done across the community in every area within the Town of Maynard. And we look forward to continuing this work and moving forward.”

I would be remiss if I didn’t add that there are members of the Maynard Tree Corps who are not here, but we are actually a larger group than those who are assembled. Many of them who helped to make this happen in terms of donations of all kinds including labor and materials. So, I just wanted to make sure we thanked them for their time and contributions.

And with that, I will turn everything over to Neil Pederson: Maynard Tree Corps member, Forest Ecologist, and Maynard resident, and he’s going to say a few words. Thanks, Neil.

[Neil Pederson's Remarks]

“Thank you. I’m going to do a brief introduction to The Maynard Tree Corps. We are dedicated to promoting a healthy and diverse population of trees that will benefit our community.”

The Maynard Tree Corps’, the brainchild of Lee Caras and Kate Wheeler, began organizing in December 2019. Since that time we have been holding regular meetings to establish our goals and plans, both near and far term. Our primary work is to support the efforts and work of the official and newly-formed Maynard Tree Committee which is working in collaboration with the Town’s Department of Public Works.

Composed of about a dozen active and passionate people, The Maynard Tree Corps appears to me to have the team chemistry and camaraderie that will sustain our goals for years. We have a website, MaynardTrees.com, is up and growing. Just this week we posted a list of recommended trees for your yard and our streets. Our pages will continue to grow with guides for Tree planting and tree management. During this time of COVID, we have been conducting virtual tree hikes and archiving them on our Facebook and YouTube pages. We will continue these hikes in June. Please stay tuned.

We have to give a special thanks to the Smith and Finley Realty Group who generously really gave us this wonderful tree that we are dedicating today.

It is really fitting that we are commemorating Maynard’s Sesquicentennial by planting a tree during these historic times. Anniversaries are how we, people, mark passages of Time. When these points of time reach us, we not only reflect on past events, people we lost, and how our community has changed over time, but we also imagine a future that we so desperately want to lean into. A brighter future, a cleaner future, a future where we can celebrate Life together as a community.

Trees are foundational to vibrant communities. During this pandemic, an era that will surely be reflected upon at Maynard’s Bicentennial and Tricentennial celebrations, many of us have been heading into the forests of Maynard to the community of trees for peace, joy, balm, and reassurance.

Trees are stoic individuals that both mark the passages of time and inspire tranquility. In their own silent way, they prove to us that Life goes on. When we shelter in place in other times, like during storms filled with lightning, snow, wind, or ice, trees stand unmoved as chaos and uncertainty swirls around

them. Trees also teach us the kind of resiliency we must absorb now so that we can lead Maynard into a better future.

This tuliptree is a resolute example of our reach for a brighter future. Though not extremely common in our region, the tuliptree, a tree that can live more than 500 years and is the tallest documented species in eastern North America, thrives in more southerly climes. This tree can be a beacon that guides us into an uncertain future because, genetically speaking, it's already been there. See, trees have these large complex genetic structures that they inherited from the ancestors who accumulated knowledge when they withstood, adapted to, and survived eons of storms, droughts, pests, and pathogens.

Within the complex structure of genes, many genes are actively working for the maintenance of life. Other genes are not. However, during times of crisis, some of the inactive genes can be turned on to help an individual adapt to the new conditions. In that sense, the potential to survive the future conditions that Maynard will experience already exist in the genes of this tree, whether those genes are active or not. So, not only do we expect this tuliptree to thrive as climate continues to change our world here in Maynard, we expect it will do so while displaying some of the most beautiful leaves and flowers in our forests, our communities of trees.

The community of Maynard is like a complex set of genes. Our survival of this pandemic will depend on both the accumulated wisdom of our ancestors and the knowledge and technology that we have not yet fully employed. Melding the wisdom gained over Maynard's last 150 years with a diversity of perspectives and new technologies will boost our community's resilience.

Let us make sacred this tuliptree as a symbol of Maynard's next 150 years, where we endeavor to create a more resilient community so future children, teachers, and people can gain peace under its shade.

[Closing Remarks]

So, we'll be back next year to celebrate the tree's first anniversary. How does that sound? Thank you all for coming here today. We really appreciate it. And this is hopefully the first of many trees that the Maynard Tree Corps will be planting especially over this next year and as the organization continues to grow locally. Thank you all for coming. We will probably live stream every new tree we plant moving forward.