

Windham planting new trees at Jillson

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WILLIMANTIC —

Several new trees will be planted on Jillson Square in recognition of Windham's efforts to be a green and sustainable community.

The new trees will be planted Saturday at 12:30 p.m.

One American sycamore tree will be planted in Jillson Square that day.

The Connecticut Tree Protective Association is donating the tree in partnership with Sustainable CT to celebrate the town's sustainability leadership.

Windham's Sustainable CT committee chairperson and Windham Town Councilor Dawn Niles said the Town of Windham earned bronze certification in late 2018 and was one of the first towns certified in Connecticut.

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More trees to be planted at Jillson Square

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“Windham has always worked hard to be inclusive and innovated,” Niles said in a statement. “Receiving this certification shows how hard our residents and our community leaders work to make Windham a sustainable community.”

Sustainable CT is a statewide initiative that inspires, supports and recognizes communities in becoming vibrant, resilient and inclusive.

All Sustainable CT-certified towns have met high standards in a broad range of sustainability accomplishments, such as diverse housing and clean transportation.

The certified municipalities span every county and include some of Connecticut’s largest cities and smallest towns.

The program is spearheaded and administered by the Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University.

“We are thrilled to continue to honor and recognize Sustainable CT’s certified towns by planting trees that symbolize the growth of sustainability in each of these communities,” Sustainable CT Executive Director Lynn Stoddard said in the release.

In addition, five other native trees will be placed on Jillson Square Saturday as part of the 325 Trees Project. Those trees were donated through a grant from the U.S. Forest Service and the Connecticut Urban Forest Council, with labor provided by the Windham Public Works department.

The project is now in its third year and began in 2017 as part of the town’s 325th anniversary celebration at the time.

The project aims to plant 325 native trees and shrubs in Willimantic.

So far, more than 300 have already been planted in public spaces like Memorial Park, Poets Park, Heritage Park, Whitewater Park, Lauter Park, the Greenway Trail, the Schilberg Butterfly Garden and the Windham Textile & History Museum.

The group will continue to plant past the 325 total as old city trees come down and need replacements.

A new aspect of the project is being launched called

Remove and Replant to encourage homeowners to see the value of residential trees that add shade, cleaner air and curb value to their homes.

Two trees were removed from Jillson Square earlier this year because they were decaying and in danger of falling.

“I hope people realize trees are living things and they don’t live forever,” 325 Trees organizer Faith Kenton said. “Those trees were very old and unsightly and now it’s time for something new.”

Kenton said red oak, sweet gum and tupelo trees will be planted.

For more information on Sustainable CT, visit <https://sustainablect.org>.

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