Elm trees may make comeback in Winsted

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WINSTED — About 90 small Elm trees planted on property near the town garage may eventually be replanted around town once a shade tree panel begins its work.

The newly formed eight-member subcommittee made up of Conservation Commission members and interested citizens cancelled its meeting last night after failing to achieve a quorum for the second meeting in a row.

The group hopes to create a tree policy for the town that would ensure that existing trees in the downtown area are cared for and that new trees are planted over time to beautify the town.

Of the 100 disease-resistant elms that the town purchased two or three years ago as saplings, more than 90 have survived, and though they are still too small to transplant, eventually they could be replanted in locations determined by the tree panel.

"The goal is to preserve what we have, and to do maintenance and planting where necessary," subcommittee member Barbara Jones explained.

"Over the last 10 or 20 years hundreds of trees have been cut down for utility poles or whatever," Robert Caley, head of the Conservation Commission, said. "There's a lot of people in this town who care about the recent decimation of trees."

The shade tree panel was formed following a meeting at the office of community lawyer Charlene LaVoie in July. About 10 residents attended that meeting to learn about a national program to encourage the conservation of trees.

The National Arbor Day Foundation, based in Nebraska, provides guidance for communities who want to participate in its program "Tree City U.S.A."