

## **Garden Club of Amherst Town Planters**

There are nine planters on the part of the town common north of Spring Street adjacent to South Pleasant Street. They are in three groups of three. Each group has one large planter between two smaller planters and sits in a defined rectangular area.

These rectangular areas should be kept free of weeds and covered with mulch. Six bags of mulch applied in the spring should suffice for all, perhaps supplemented as necessary later in the year.

### **Academic Year Schedule Suggestions:**

When tulip bulbs become available in late summer plant three containers with six to eight (yellow) bulbs each. Set these in a good spot in your home garden, to be moved in the spring, container and all, to the centers of the large planters (and surrounded by pansies).

As summer flowers in the planters tire and when good mums are available, replant the containers with mums. Usually, one large mum in each of the large planters and one smaller mum in each small planter is enough; nine mums in all. Use some judgment here, as summer flowers may last nicely into fall and mums do fade as October progresses. But good mums may not be available if you wait too long.

After Thanksgiving, replace the mums with winter arrangements of greens, etc. Some possibilities are red winterberries (try swampy areas around town and beyond), milkweed pods (sprayed gold), and sumac. Be creative!

In March, clean out the planters when pansies become available. Move the containers of tulips from your garden to the large planters. Plant pansies around the tulips and also in the six small planters.

In June, replant with colorful summer flowers. Go for a WOW factor! Remember, these planters should give a lift to passersby, drivers as well as pedestrians.

## **Maintenance Suggestions:**

Planter committee members should check the planters daily. Watering, deadheading, fertilizing, weeding, trash removal are all items that need attention to varying degrees.

Since 2015, the Chamber of Commerce has included our planters in the regular watering schedule they provide for the other planters they place around town. But, they don't start until sometime in June and end in September. When they are not watering, our planter committee members need to water; three to six milk jugs full of water should be plenty, depending on conditions.

Too often our planters are vandalized. Sometimes it is necessary to replace broken or stolen plants. E.g., in 2015 we replaced stolen mums with winter pansies. Do your best. Good Luck! Thanks!