

Tree Commission

June 2019 Minutes

Attending: Paul Josey, Mark Rylander, Brian Menard, Roxanne White, Lynn Rush, Peggy Van Yahres, Rosanne Simon

Staff: Mike Ronayne, John Mann, Joey Winter

Guests: None

May Minutes Corrections –

Approved without corrections.

Introduce New Staff Joey Winter

Joey Winter has replaced Heather Newmeyer as one of the City Planners and has been with the City for four months. Joey hands out his business cards and is welcomed to his first Tree Commission meeting.

Annual Update on Urban Forest Management Plan - Mike

Mike reviews some of the items from the Urban Forest Management Plan and indicates where some items have been implemented and others have room for improvement. It is discussed how relevant some of the plan is and the general consensus is that there should be an update. The original plan is from 2009 without having a proper update. It is suggested that the goals here should be ranked by importance by both commission and staff. This would eliminate redundancy and create conversation for things to be included in a revision. Mike will send out the UFMP.

Arborist FY Work Plan - Mike

Mike reviews some objectives he would like to accomplish in the coming year, among those were the Mall tree study, create a document for tree work prioritization, create an outdoor café heater use policy for the Mall, categorize where tree work is being done by sector and type of procedure and to incorporate trees protected by ordinance into the Tableau system. These are in addition Mike's other responsibilities to the community and day to day duties.

Report from Design Manual Team – Paul/Mark/Peggy

The group spent a few hours going through the Standards and Design Manual draft making comments. The group removed redundancy and took out "lighting" as it did not pertain to trees and landscape. The group did not get to the tree protection section. The hope is staff will be able to meet with the subcommittee to review comments prior to the next public meeting of the SADM which is June 13th at 5pm.

Standing Subcommittees

Planting Committee – Paul/Rosanne

CATS has decided they would like to work with the commission again to plant trees in Belmont but this year they will hire a contractor to dig the holes prior to planting. Two trees have died since last year. Brian Menard is drafting a letter to the City Attorney regarding some of the legal questions/additional protections. Mike/John will send out the Parks volunteer form for the group to reference. There is also some discussion about Peter's leadership role in the committee. Peter has accepted a job in Richmond and his role in the commission may be limited.

Belmont Apartment Comments – Paul

There were a few comments regarding trees and the Belmont Apartments site plan including species diversity, width of planters, trees per number of parking spaces and existing grading/trees. The commission will provide written comments.

Data Committee – Roxanne

The committee feels that a bulk of the committee's work is finished. The data collection in place is more of a staff function at this point and the group is looking forward to having a report after June 30th. There is some discussion about proposing an education committee and who will manage the Tree Commission Facebook page in Peter's absence. It is decided to review the Tree Commission's bylaws next month. Roxanne and several other members will draft priorities for the commission taking into account other City documents like the Comprehensive Plan.

Other Updates

Upcoming Development Projects that Impact Trees – Mike

There are two other small projects currently, Piedmont Av. infill houses and Landonia Circle which is on a third of an acre. Seminole Square comments are due June 7th and the Planner Joey Winter is present.

E. High St. Streetscape – Brian Menard

Brian will send a reminder next week about the E. High St. Streetscape meeting Wednesday June 12th from 5-7PM for review and from 7-8PM is the hearing. The commission will provide written comments by Friday but there will be an opportunity to comment up until June 22nd. Brian will also send a summary of the design. Brian plans on attending and encourages other commissioners to do as well.

Mall Study- Mike

Will be pushed back to the next meeting. An RFP draft currently exists.

Return on Investment of Trees – Mike

Mike will send out a study which shows how the ROI of trees are calculated.

Website Recommendations – Mike

Mark did an excellent job revising the Urban Forestry webpage. Staff does not have questions at this time.

Fontaine Av. Streetscape Project - Paul

There were some concerns about the steering committee project for Fontaine Av. The commission felt that there were some issues and a lack of consideration. The proposed area was very conceptual. There was no budget allocated for purchasing right-of-way. Comments were not collected formally. There was no consideration of utilities (overhead or underground). It was a very disappointing experience and the commission will draft a letter to send to NDS.

Canopy Study Discussion – Mike

The Urban and Community Forestry grant that was intended to be utilized for the 2019 Canopy Study is available now. Unfortunately the USDA will not be doing a fly over in 2019 to collect NAIP (leaf-on) imagery due to cycling. It is asked whether or not we would like to have a study completed using the 2018 imagery or wait until the next scheduled fly over which will be 2020. After a short discussion it is decided to wait and have the study done in 2020.

Other items/Announcements not on agenda – All

Oakwood Cemetery Planting – Lynn Rush

Lynn has printed a drawing of Oakwood Cemetery and would like to review with staff where may be suitable for tree planting. John explains some of the challenges regarding planting in Oakwood like unmarked graves and a natural spring. The only place that may be suitable is near the rock wall along First Street. Lynn and John will get together to look at possibilities.

Meeting Action Items:

- Mike will send out UFMP
- Subcommittee will send out SADM comments
- Staff will send out volunteer form the department uses
- Commissioners will draft priorities/direction for commission
- Joey will try to obtain a site plan for Friendship Ct.
- Brian M. will send out summary of High St. Streetscape design prior to meeting June 12th

- Mike will send out study demonstrating how ROI is calculated for trees
- Commission will draft letter to NDS regarding Fontaine Steering Committee
- Lynn will meet with John to review tree planting possibilities in Oakwood Cemetery
- Commission will provide written comments for Belmont Apartments site plan

Next meeting: Review bylaws,

Adjourn 6:59