

Tree Commission

May 2019 Minutes

Attending: Paul Josey, Mark Rylander, Matt Brinckman, Brian Menard, Roxanne White, Jody Lahendro, Lynn Rush, Peter Russell, Peggy Van Yahres

Staff: Mike Ronayne, Missy Creasy

Guests: None

April Minutes Corrections –

Approved without corrections.

Tree Commission Vacancies - Paul

There are still currently two existing vacancies for low income neighborhood representation. There has been some interest. Jody announces the vacancy at the beginning of every Planning Commission meeting. Others will follow up on other potential leads and contacts. Paul will check that Rosanne reapplied and Mike will check Brian Menard's status with the clerk.

Arbor Day Reflection - Paul

This past Arbor Day was celebrated at Market Street Park in front of the large basswood. Tree Commissioners, CATS members and one City Council member were among those in attendance. The local news also documented the ceremony. The weather held off for the ceremony. It is decided to add and item to the annual calendar for January to discuss other possible Arbor Day plans for the future.

Financing Urban Tree Canopy Guidebook – Mike

Mike presents the guidebook collaboration put together by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay outlining strategies and case studies for funding municipal urban forestry programs in the Chesapeake Bay area watershed. A roundtable discussion was hosted in D.C. this past December where different municipalities went to discuss some of these funding techniques and obstacles. For this document and subsequent roundtable discussion in D.C., Mike explained how Charlottesville has received consistent funding because of the working relationship between staff and the Tree Commission. There is some discussion about quantifying tree benefits and looking at the return on investment that other municipalities have indicated. Mike will explore ways this may be incorporated into the canopy study. The document also points to a Virginia tree ordinance database which may have some new ideas. Peter agrees to review some other tree ordinances in the state. It is requested that the document also be posted on the website. Mike will seek permissions but does not see this being an issue.

BMP/Timmons Doc components to include in SADM – All

Mark has posted a document on a Google site for commissioners to edit and provide comments. The subcommittee is looking at ways to incorporate a tree pres. diagram for real world scenarios in urban conditions. These conditions likely have impervious area or other obstacles that make it unsuitable to follow the current tree pres. diagram. It is suggested to change “Landscaping” to “Landscape” and to separate “Landscape and Lighting.” The subcommittee plans to have comments compiled by the end of the month and prepared for the next Tree Commission meeting.

Other Updates

Upcoming Development Projects that Impact Trees – Mike

Belmont Apartments is approximately 6 acres and comments are due May 30th. 1202 Druid Av. Preliminary SP is .35 acres and comments are due June 21st. Landonia Circle Final SP is near Burnely-Moran and 250 and is .37 acres and comments are due June 14th. Seminole Square Mixed use Development SP is 8 acres. The commission would like to see the bigger projects, Seminole Square, Belmont Apartments, and Friendship Ct.

Urban Forestry Webpage Content - Mark

Mark has vetted the webpage content for relevance. Mark tried to edit page content without a complete overhaul or redesign. There is some discussion about what should be on the Tree Commission page or the Urban Forestry page. The tree inventory has not been user friendly when viewed from a phone or tablet because the scrolling zooms in on the map. The commission would like to add a Tree Commission page exclusively for documents. Mark plans to have the content prepared for the next Tree Commission meeting.

Fall Tree Planting Locations – All

The commission brainstormed some ideas for fall tree planting locations. Some of those locations for Mike to evaluate are Meade Park and the Rivanna Trail north of VFW. The commission will try to get other ideas either to the commission or Mike in the next month.

Other items/Announcements not on agenda – All

Fall Belmont Planting – Peter, Roxanne and Brian Menard

The group met to discuss potential legal issues surrounding the Belmont tree planting project in conjunction with CATS. The group recognizes that there may be more legal issues than anticipated. It is suggested an MOU between CATS and the commission may be address some of these things. Brian M. will draft a letter for the City Attorney and send out to the commission on the matter.

Fontaine Streetscape – Jody

It is asked why one of the options for the streetscape that appeared in the Daily Progress did not contain trees. Jody discussed the last steering committee meeting at the Fontaine Firehouse where the consultant presented 3 options and did not really solicit feedback from the steering committee. The consultant stated there would be a survey available online for feedback on these options but other commission members were unable to locate the survey online. Jody will reach out to Kyle Kling about the role of the steering committee moving forward.

High Street Streetscape – Brian Menard

June 12th there will be a public hearing for the High St. Streetscape project at City Space. Brian M. will try to get the construction drawings prior to meeting.

Tree Study – Mike

Council had directed staff to combine the Mall Tree Study with the Historic Landscape Study which has complicated project. Mike had provided an outline of items that should be covered in the tree study portion. Mike will follow up in two weeks with an update.

VDOF EAB Grant - Matt Brinckman

For the second year Virginia Dept. of Forestry will be providing a cost sharing grant for emerald ash borer treatments. It is a 50/50 match and Mike will see what he can do to promote program.

Meeting Action Items:

- Mike will request digital copies of Seminole Square, Belmont Apartments and Friendship Ct. site plans
- Paul will check with Rosanne to see if she has resubmitted application for renewal
- Mike will explore return on investment calculations for trees
- Mike will request permissions to post Funding Urban Tree Canopy Guidebook to website
- Subcommittee will provide comments for SADM
- Jody will look into steering committee role in Fontaine Streetscape project
- Brian M. will draft a letter for City Attorney
- Mark will provide a draft of website content

Next meeting: Arborist Next Fiscal Year Work Plan, Review standing committees annual work goals, Annual Update on Urban Forest Management Plan

Adjourn 6:47