

Shade Tree Commission

January 25, 2023, 5:30 pm

Attendance:

Richard Pratt, Kevin Fox, Tabi Gott, Bob , and Valerie Forbes

Call to order 5:00 pm

Recognition of visitors – Bob Waterfield

Replacement of trees in the median – Valerie explained approx. 10 trees in the median were removed due to an accident and Public Works Director Jason McNatt would like to know what the Commission would like to replace them with.

Richard provided a listing of miniature/weeping crepes for the Commission to consider.

Tabi asked why the town maintains the median. Valerie and Kevin agree it was an agreement with the state who provided initial funding.

Richard stated if the trees are too large, they could become an issue in the median. Currently the trees out there have too much mulch around them and are shallow rooted which is why he is suggesting bushes which would still need to be planted correctly to survive.

Tabi asked several questions about proper planting and Richard provided an explanation. She also asked about replacing the trees in the median near Mill St.

Other Commission Business:

Tabi asked if the town intended to replace the trees at Sunnyside Park where the plaques are. Valerie will ask but is certain it will not be an issue and asked Richard if planting larger trees would be better since it seems the kids at the park are causing damage to some of the trees that are planted there. He stated younger trees are easier to care for. Valerie will reach out to Sam Seo to see if he would be interested in assisting for any new plantings.

Tabi asked who decides what trees in the town need to be pruned or removed. Valerie and Kevin believe direction would come from public works and the electric department. Valerie also stated that if Kevin would keep track on paper all the tree work performed, she would enter it into ArborPro which will help with applying for grants and our Tree City application.

Tabi asked what role the Master Park Plan plays with the Commission? She believes the proposed plan suggests removal of trees for George C Wright Park to accommodate the plan. Valerie said she would look into it but would not agree to the removal of any trees.

Meeting adjourned 5:48

**Next meeting February 15<sup>th</sup> @ 5:30 PM**

Tree Inventory Update – Valerie provided copies of a minimized tree inventory.

There was discussion on:

The priority of removal, and funding. Valerie will reach out to DFS to see they if will come out and confirm the priority for some of the locations. Tree removal to this extent was not considered in the 2023 budget. Richard suggested consideration for injections for the larger trees with Eastern Ash Bore over cutting them down.

Arborist position – Could some of these trees be saved if we had staff to dedicate to watering and caring for the trees, we would not be throwing money away. Trees are being planted and pruned incorrectly, and not watered enough. In 2022 only 2 trees were planted because this commission acknowledges the town does not have staff to care for them. Tabi expressed the need for an Arborist and that only this Commission understands the importance. Valerie will send Sheldon information which relates to the Master Tree Plan, Arborist, inventory, canopy, etc.

Other business:

Tabi asked if Hickory Hollow HOA is removing trees to do the projects they have outlined. Valerie will ask Jeremy.

Valerie asked Kevin to get a little more information to complete the Tree City USA application. She explained to Sheldon why the 2022 expense report was needed.

Valerie asked Kevin to look into the tree report Bill Evans used to use. This would make the end of the year numbers easier to report for Tree City USA. She explained Bill would provide a folder quarterly with all the details of each tree. Kevin agreed but stated he is not sure who gives the contractor work orders. Valerie will ask about it.

Next Meeting: January 18<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm