

Advisory Committee on Trees – September 25, 2018

Call to order 7PM

Present: Charles Jackman (chair), Brian Townsend (staff liaison and Assistant Director Public Works/Parks), Ethel Dutky (recorder), Robert Trumbule (member), Bill Phelan (emeritus).

Approved August minutes with corrections.

Old Business

1 – Urban Forest Tree Master Plan Work Session

All ACT members attended the August 20 work session with City Council. The document was approved with some minor changes. City Council approved additional funding for tree care and approved the purchase of a new bucket truck. City Council was interested in the Tree Inventory and staff needs to maintain and update this project. Brian reported that Davey Resource Group made changes as suggested at the work session and have provided the updated document to Brian. ACT is in agreement with approval of the document (short and long versions) as corrected.

New Business

1 – Public Lands Day. Sept. 29, 10AM-2PM

Meet at the French Immersion School (8959 Edmonston Rd.). Activities planned include soil improvement, mulching, installation of a Pollinator Garden.

2 – City Council Meeting.

Brian shared the power point of a presentation on safety pruning needs presented by Greenbelt's Outstanding Citizen Greg Fisanich. He did extensive pruning of street trees and clearing of woodland undergrowth along Lastner Lane. He did not request authorization to do this work from Public Works. The safety purpose was to improve sight lines at intersections and crosswalks. Debris was left scattered along the area. One tree that was severely pruned was a memorial tree.

ACT was very concerned about this unauthorized damage to city trees and other plantings. In addition to damaging the trees, this violates codes and laws. Citizens must obtain permission from Public Works before doing any pruning on street trees or other park trees. Obstruction of stop signs or crosswalks should be reported to Public Works, and they can inspect and make needed corrections. ACT is very concerned that this unauthorized activity by the Outstanding Citizen sets a bad precedent as well as by-passing established procedures and violating laws and codes currently in force.

3 – Fall Fest – October 20, 2 to 5 PM at Schrom Hills Park.

ACT members agreed to do a Tree Tour at 3PM. This year instead of using a bus, ACT decided to do a walking tour on notable trees in the park, and other aspects of the woodlands in this park. The tour should take from 30 minutes to an hour.

4 – Willow Oak at Hamilton and Ridge Rd.

We had a serious discussion about the urgency of removing this very large old tree which dropped a very large branch a few weeks ago, leaving a huge hole in the trunk. ACT is very concerned that it appears that internal rot is present in the large trunk. About 1/3 of the remaining branches overhang Ridge Road. ACT is strongly in support of removal of this tree as soon as possible because it poses a hazard to traffic and pedestrians.

5 – Brian Reports on tree work.

Brian reported that many street trees were pruned to remove dead or damaged branches or to raise the canopy. Large ornamental grasses at Ora Glen were removed because they had grown too tall

and were obstructing the view of the intersection.

6 – Prince George's County Champion Tree Tour.

Charles reported on this event held on September 22 which he attended. The trees visited were in Southern Prince Georges. Three busloads (about 50 people) attended. The trees were primarily at the Alice Ferguson Foundation and Fort Washington. Among the trees seen was a Pignut Hickory, an English Walnut, a Mimosa, a Bitternut Hickory, a Black Walnut, a Chinquapin Oak, a Japanese Raisin Tree, and a Chestnut Oak. ACT requested that Charles notify us next year so we might attend this event.

7 – New Nursery Plant Day, Thursday October 25.

This event will be held at Country Springs Wholesale Nursery in Howard County. A good opportunity to see new trees available in the trade. This nursery is in Howard County.

Next Meeting: October 30. We will meet at Public Works at 4PM and do a tree tour while there is still daylight.

Adjourn 9:45 PM.

Submitted by Ethel Dutky