

Advisory Committee on Trees – May 19, 2020

Call to order at 7 PM via ZOOM

Present: Brian Townsend (Assistant Director Public Works and Parks and staff liaison), Charles Jackman (Chair), Bob Trumbule (member), Ethel Dutky (recorder)

Reviewed and approved April 28, 2020 minutes with corrections.

Old Business

1 – Arbor Day Proclamation

We agree that the 2020 Arbor Day for Greenbelt will be on the same day as the dedication of the new Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Tree (ERMT). The dedication will be in October, near Oct. 11, which is Eleanor Roosevelt's birthday. The Arbor Day Proclamation would be presented at this ceremony. If social distancing is still in place we may have to postpone or limit the ceremony.

2 – Planning for ERMT dedication

The American Holly tree is planted in the park adjacent to the Library and the Community Center. We discussed some alternatives which could be a meeting in the Community Center where the Greenbelt Museum, the Girl Scouts and others would present short talks about Eleanor Roosevelt. Ethel will meet with the Museum to discuss plans. We hope to move the original dedication plaque to the new site and include a small additional plaque to explain that this tree is a replacement for the original ones which died. There is also a fence mounted on granite blocks around the remains of the dead ERMT which could be moved to the new site.

3 – Bob suggests some trees suitable for Greenbelt Parks

Bob reported that he recently saw a park in which a cultivar of the lacebark elm was used in an alley. This is a fine textured elm. We also discussed several hybrid American Elms which were planted in the past, some on ACT's first Arbor Day. Several of these trees have been damaged or destroyed. We should find places to plant more of these American elms, such as New Harmony and Valley Forge.

New Business

1 – Open Meetings in the time of Social Distancing

Brian and Charles attended a meeting on how to comply with Open Meeting rules in this time of Social Distancing. About 60 people participated in the discussion presented by two presenters. Brian and Charles learned some techniques to manage virtual meetings such as a “mute” setting and the ability to “remove” participants who are disruptive in discussions.

2 - Tree plantings by Public Works.

New plantings will be postponed until fall. Public works is still planting replacement trees. The trees purchased for Arbor Day are being planted.

3 – Meeting on May 28 on Forest Preserve Management and Maintenance Guidelines

Bob reported that the Greenbelt Community Garden Club was approached by the Forest Preserve Advisory Board to revise the document “Forest Preserve Management and Maintenance Guidelines”. Damian Ossi is interested in creating soft edge plantings between the Forest Preserve and Garden Plot areas. These plantings would utilize native shrubs and perennials which have wildlife value and/or could be eaten by people (food forest). These would be on city property adjacent to the forest. Ethel will pass this on to the GHI Woodland Committee because this idea is similar to the “Caretaker” programs recently established by this committee. Volunteers are encouraged to help maintain sections of trails in GHI woodlands, and to plan and care for edge enrichment areas that utilize plants with value to wildlife such as providing nesting sites, shelter and food. This meeting will be a virtual FPAB meeting on May 28.

Next Meeting, via Zoom. Tuesday, June 9 at 7PM
Adjourn 9PM. Submitted by Ethel Dutky