

Advisory Committee on Trees – July 5, 2022

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

Minutes from May were reviewed and approved. ACT did not meet in June 2022.

Old Business

1 – Work at Buddy Attick Park

Brian reported that work is progressing well on the renovation of the parking lot.

New Business

1 – Longleaf Pine in Schrom Hills Park

The very large Longleaf Pine (*Pinus palustris*) near the entrance to Schrom Hills Park is dying. In October 2021 Mayor Jordan noticed that the tree was damaged and asked Brian what had happened to it. Based on the symptoms seen of a split in the bark along the entire trunk and needle browning and needle drop around the entire tree, we think the tree was hit by lightning. Now the tree is nearly denuded and did not produce this spring's flush of needles. We grieve the loss of this old tree. ACT suggests that Public Works look into the cost of lightning protection for the County Champion Deodar Cedar tree in the park.

2 - ACT Officers.

Charles has agreed to serve another term as chair. Ethel was reappointed to another 3-year term as member and has agreed to continue to serve as recorder.

3 – Oak Initiative, activities mostly in GHI.

There are problems showing up in our oaks such as bacterial leaf scorch and decline. GHI personnel are starting a mitigation plan for the oak trees, as well as starting a nursery near GHI offices to grow new oak trees to replace the oak trees that have been dying.

4 – Gray squirrels and their role in oak forests.

We discussed the role that the gray squirrel plays in the oak/hickory forest. Squirrels bury acorns and hickory nuts to store them. These nuts will not germinate unless they are buried. The squirrels later dig up many of the buried nuts to eat throughout the winter, but they don't eat them all. So the squirrels are re-planting the forest.

5 – Re-introduce American Chestnuts

Ethel suggested that we should obtain American Chestnuts which have durable resistance to the fungal disease Chestnut Blight. We could select several sites in our

parks and plant groves of American Chestnuts. The resistance gene persists in the seed, so these trees would establish in our forests.

6 - List for Recommended Street Trees needs to be produced

Charles will send all ACT members copies of the old lists produced in 2015 titled "Recommended Trees for Use under Power Lines" and in 2016 titled "Recommended Tree Species appropriate for Greenbelt Parks." ACT members will look for salt tolerant trees and consider ultimate (mature) height so trees of shorter height can be used near utility lines.

7 – Declining Callery Pear trees on Hanover Parkway

We discussed the pros and cons of the use of various cultivars of Callery Pear trees.

8 – Decline of 'Acolade' Elms along Forest Way.

Bob has noticed some of the 'Acolade' Elms along Forest Way are showing symptoms of decline and advises to avoid planting too many of one species/cultivar together.

Charles will be attending the meeting of chairs of Advisory Committees and Boards with City Council on July 6. He will inform them that the County Champion Longleaf Pine in Schrom Hills Park was hit by lightning in October of 2021 and is dying.

Next Meeting on Tuesday, August 9 at Public Works at 7PM.

Adjourn at 8:50 PM.

Respectively submitted, Ethel Dutky