

Advisory Committee on Trees - November 7, 2017

Call to order 7PM

Present: Brian Townsend (staff liaison), Charles Jackman (chair), Robert Trumbule (member), Ethel Dutky (recorder), Bill Phelan (emeritus member).

Old Business:

1 – Urban Forest Master Plan

Davey Tree sent the corrected copies of the Urban Forest master Plan to Brian. We discussed the document and were pleased to see most of the ACT suggestions were included. The tables were re-organized to be more accurate and clear. We did find some errors which we will discuss with Davey. One major concern ACT has is the lack of allowance for inflation in the Funding Section. ACT is given responsibility for the “Tree Ordinance and Regulations” so they have no cost. ACT would like to see the canopy coverage be expressed in a more consistent and easily verified and comparable manner. We think aerial estimates of canopy coverage are readily available and should be used. We were confused by numbers for “per capita trees” which seemed very strange with the national average (5) being higher than any municipalities listed. We question how these numbers were determined.

We concluded that we need another conference with Davey to go over our specific concerns. Brian will contact Davey.

2 - Lakecrest Drive Replanting progress

Brian reported that planting this area where the Callery Pears were in decline and have been removed is now being planted with replacements. The old Pears were removed by PEPCO. The area is being re-planted with Serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea* 'Autumn Brilliance'). Brian is having difficulty finding suitable size planting stock of Persian Ironwood and the Trident Maple which ACT had suggested. Planting will continue in the spring.

New Business

1 – Mosquito Control and Mosquito monitoring in Greenbelt.

Brian reported that Greenbelt is now part of the state mosquito larvacide program. MD Dept. of Agriculture personnel will survey and apply larvacide as needed. The program can trap and monitor adult mosquitoes for specific diseases such as West Nile Virus, Zika, Dengue, etc.. Several years ago Greenbelt decided to stop participation in survey and control of adult mosquitoes in the city. Individual citizens may protest application of insecticide sprays on their property to control adult mosquitoes. The state will not survey for mosquito-borne diseases unless the city is also part of the control spray program. City Council requested ACT input on this issue.

After much discussion on the specific chemicals and methods (droplet size, sprayer types, etc.) in use ACT agrees that monitoring the adult mosquitoes for diseases that are a threat to humans is valuable and useful. ACT has concerns about the efficacy of some of the spray methods in use. ACT is also concerned about impacts of sprays on non-target organisms such as insect and mite parasites and predators which provide pest biological control in the environment. A vigorous educational program must be part of any effort to prevent disease transmission. Citizens must be educated on how to protect themselves and eliminate mosquito breeding in home landscapes. Most spray programs use trucks that spray from the street. In many situations these sprays cannot penetrate into home landscape areas such as back yard patios where people are more likely to be bitten and infected. People need to apply repellents to exposed skin in addition to elimination of standing water mosquito breeding sites.

2 – ACT concerns about appropriate response to inaccurate coverage of Sustainable Land Care Policy Workshop.

ACT is concerned that there is a continuing campaign to force adoption of “organic only methods” for pest and disease management in City Parks, landscapes and street trees. Excellent IPM based programs are available and have been evaluated for safety and efficacy. ACT will discuss this topic further at our next meeting to decide if we need to make additional response on this issue.

Adjourn at 9:50 PM

Next meeting at Public Works on Tuesday, December 5 at 7 PM

submitted by Ethel Dutky