

## Advisory Committee on Trees – August 12, 2014

Present: Charles Jackman (chair), Ethel Dutky (recorder), Robert Trumbule (member), Brian Townsend (city liaison), Bill Phelan (guest).  
Meet at Public Works at 5 PM.

### Street Tree Inventory for the City of Greenbelt

Brian distributed the Summary Report on the Street Tree Inventory. At about 7:30, upon return from the field trip we looked over the Street Tree Inventory in more detail. We found some odd tree species listed, some appeared to be errors. Bill Phelan volunteered to help check the list but needs to have trees identified by address. We agreed to continue this discussion at the next meeting.

### Status of ACT revision of the “Sustainable Land-care Policy” document.

Charles will write a letter to Mike McLaughlin expressing concern about the status of the document. ACT devoted a lot of time on the revision of the long “Sustainable Land-care Policy” document. We are also concerned about the status (adopted, is it policy?) of the ACT Report on ice melting salts. Charles will prepare a separate letter on this document as well. Major injury from improperly applied salt was seen on landscape trees in spring of 2013 and 2014.

### Injury to young trees by “weed wackers” and mowers

Many young trees are damaged at the crown by string trimmers (weed wackers) and by being bumped by mowers as crews mow weeds growing close to the trunks. Herbicides should be used to create and maintain a weed free zone near the base of trees to prevent this damage. It was suggested that ACT might make a Report to advise on specific methods to maintain this weed free zone and prevent this damage.

### ACT took a field trip around the City to look at Tree problems

#### 1 - Municipal Building

The large willow oak is scheduled to have all dead wood removed on August 14. The tree had extensive buttress rot with many fungal fruiting bodies projecting from lower trunk and large roots; it also shows areas of trunk rot where the bark has sloughed off high in the canopy with fungal fruiting structures protruding from the trunk. This large tree is in decline and is a hazard tree at high risk for failure with high risk for property damage and injury to people. The tree is scheduled to be removed in the fall.

The recently installed Crape Myrtle is wilting and should be irrigated as needed to restore leaf turgor.

#### 2 - Library landscape

The large Willow Oak in front of the library is showing a lot of “stag horns” (branches with the distal portion dead and leafless) throughout the canopy. This is a symptom of root injury or disease. ACT advised mulching and aeration in the root zone to stimulate root growth and health.

#### 3 - Large White Oak in Playground on Crescent Road opposite the Library.

This tree has a lot of slime flux on one side. The bark is damaged, split and dead. Many wasps are present, attracted to the sweet fermenting slime flux running out of bark cracks and accumulating on the ground around the tree. Many large wasps including European hornets and bald faced hornets were present on the ground and on the tree. The affected side of the tree shows dead branches and a flat appearance in addition to the flux and split bark. These symptoms suggest that the roots on this side of the tree have been damaged. ACT suggested that Public Works use an air spade to remove mulch on the affected side of the tree to see how bad the roots look. ACT expressed concern that children could be stung by the wasps and suggested that a fence be placed around the tree with warning signs (Danger

– Wasps) to warn care givers to keep small children away from the tree.

4- Hanover Parkway Callery Pears mixed cultivars.

In general these trees look good.

5 - Landon Court

The concern is about the many stressed Ash trees. ACT advised that these trees should be removed. They should be replaced with a mixture of species. Consider elms which tolerate poor soil and stressful sites. American Elm cultivars 'Accolade' and 'Allee' would be especially good.

6- Southway Callery Pears, older trees.

These trees are not looking vigorous. Many have dead branches. Some twigs show blackened leaves and some dead twig tips. This could be fire blight disease. ACT suggested that samples be submitted to the University of Maryland Plant Diagnostic Lab in College Park for confirmation.

7- Ridge Rd historic large Ash trees.

Public Works is continuing to treat the large Ash trees with systemic insecticide to prevent infestation by the Emerald Ash Borer.

At 7:30 we returned to Public Works.

Reviewed and accepted July minutes with some corrections.

Adjourn at 8:30PM.

Next Meeting September 23, 7PM

Modification communicated via e-mail. Next meeting will be Tuesday, September 30.