

## **Advisory Committee on Trees – February 11, 2014**

Call to order 7:00 PM at the Public Works Building.

Present: Charles Jackman (chair), Bob Trumbule (member), Brian Townsend (staff liaison), Ethel Dutky (recorder).

Minutes from Jan. 14 were reviewed, accepted with corrections.

### **Brian Townsend report on Beaver Workshops.**

Alex Palmer gave an excellent presentation on beaver biology and their role in the forest ecosystem. There was a good turnout of volunteers for both days (about 25 Feb 1 and over 30 Feb 8). There was a nice diversity of volunteers including a girl scout troop which came both days. Wire cages were installed on 308 trees. In addition, volunteers pruned English ivy away from the bases of trees and picked up trash. Old cages that were getting too tight or were deteriorated were removed. The cages are estimated to last about 5 years. The volunteers were very eager to help with other projects such as more ivy removal from trees.

Brian sent one public works employee to the University of Maryland Landscape IPM short-course presented by the Entomology Department. It is expensive, so only one employee could attend this year. ACT commends public works for this good use of educational resources.

Brian attended the ESRI GIS (Environmental Systems Research Institute, Geographic Information Systems) 2 day conference. It was very interesting, covering advances in collection and sharing of GIS data. Brian found information about new application being developed especially interesting. CHEARS supported attendance; Alex Palmer, Louisa Robles and several CHEARS staff attended. Brian did the “hands-on” training. The new Obama policy on information sharing to insure transparency was discussed.

ACT is concerned that delays in installation of the new Public Works computer and software will prevent ACT from having access to the tree inventory data which is needed for ACT to prepare the annual Tree plan.

### **Beaver food plant plantings.**

We discussed adding plantings of trees, shrubs and perennials preferred as food for beavers. These should be in the vicinity of active beaver lodges. Many shrubs and multi-stemmed trees are especially good because they regenerate rapidly after the beavers cut them back. Ethel will look up specific plants listed as beaver favorites.

### **Arbor Day and Earth Day plans.**

ACT could sponsor a planting in the afternoon of beaver food plants, a “Beaver food forest”. CHEARS has a variety of activities planned. We discussed doing the tree tour. In past years we got the best results when we had people sign up in advance (via the web site) for the free event. Perhaps Alex Palmer could help with the tour and with planning the beaver food forests. These would be in Buddy Attick Park. It is good to move Arbor Day Events around to different sites each year. Brian suggested the beaver food plans could be part of a Public Lands Day (a fall event) activity. We discussed various proposals for tree planting on city land, and agree that every such planting should be approved and reviewed by ACT and Public Works.

City Council expects ACT to present plans for Arbor Day at an April meeting. April is also Arbor Day Proclamation Day. It would be good for Brian to attend this City Council meeting. Alex should also be there to explain about the beaver educational programs. This activity would include replacement of protection of trees damaged by beavers. Ethel will prepare a list of native plants

preferred by beavers. We should invite Alex and Kim to our next meeting.

**Problems with the dam at Buddy Attick Lake.**

Public Works has removed all of the trees from the dam. More monitoring and work will be needed to be done on the dam.

**Qualifications to be a member of ACT.**

From the start ACT has had one person with educational training in horticulture and/or forest pest management plus one person with a strong interest in trees, but little educational qualification. The committee has evolved from the early days into one where most of the members and the staff liaison have both educational training and experience working in horticulture fields such as landscape design, arboriculture, pest management, etc. All members have a strong interest in The high value of trees in urban communities. Part of being on this advisory committee includes periodic updates through attending workshops and conferences on tree issues. Some examples include Extension conferences, regional conferences such as the Baltimore Washington Forest Stewardship Group. Experience as a community volunteer is also desirable for membership on any advisory committee. We will continue this discussion at the March meeting.

**Arbor Day is April 26.**

Next meeting March 11 at Public Works, 7PM.

Adjourn at 9:45 PM

Prepared by Ethel Dutky