

Advisory Committee on Trees – March 11, 2014

Called to order at 7 PM

Present: Brian Townsend (city liaison), Charles Jackman (chair), Ethel Dutky (recorder), Bob Trumbule (member), Alex Palmer (Volunteer Maryland Coordinator).

Review minutes from February 11 – minutes accepted with some corrections.

Earth Day and other spring events.

Saturday April 26 will be when Earth Day and Arbor Day are celebrated. Earth Day events will start with an Open House at Public Works.

Street Tree Data.

Alex announced that the street tree data is available and he can make it available to ACT. Alex will prepare a short report on this topic for the next ACT meeting.

Alex volunteered to assist with promotion and advise us once he knows what ACT is planning and when. It would be nice if the ACT planting activities were in the morning, and we could direct participants to other events in the afternoon. We agreed it would be ideal to start the ACT events at 10AM at Buddy Attick Park. The first event would be a photo with City Council members, followed by planting to enhance “Wildlife Habitat Areas”. Beavers prefer to feed within 50 feet of the water. We will (weather permitting) plan to walk the site at the start of our next meeting.

Alex is planning to schedule another English Ivy work day. Volunteers at the events where trees were protected from the beavers expressed enthusiasm for helping remove ivy that is climbing up trees. No extensive grubbing out of ivy on the ground is planned at this time for this area.

Re-visit Qualifications for new members of the Advisory Committee on Trees.

- 1 – A strong interest in trees and Forest Ecosystems.
- 2 – Highly desirable to have educational and/or work experience in an arboriculture or horticulture field.
- 3 – Experience as a community volunteer.
- 4 – All members should have an understanding and respect for the scientific method as the basis to identify and solve problems.

Brian Townsend reports on plans for tree removal around Garden Plots.

Public Works has removed trees and shrubs that were in the border area around the three Garden plots. Several larger trees have been marked to be spared. This maintenance of a mowed tree free buffer zone around the Garden Plots will reduce tree root competition and shading of the gardens, and help them to continue to be productive. The present buffer area was agreed upon by the Greenbelt Community Garden Club, the Forest Preserve Advisory Board and City Council. This has been a controversial project with letters to the editor and to city council from concerned citizens and some members of the Forest Preserve Advisory Board. The Gardenway Plots are done. Hamilton Road is being done now. Henry's Hollow will be the last area done. The gardeners are using innovative methods to catch rain water and direct it into barrels or simply into the garden plots.

Beaver browse.

There is a lot of interest in the beavers at Buddy Attick Park. Alex has provided articles on Beaver biology for the Greenbelt News Review. There was good citizen participation in two events to make and install wire cages to protect landscape trees, organized by Alex. Brian plans to meet again soon with DNR (Maryland Department of Agriculture Department of Natural Resources) wildlife

experts to re-evaluate the beaver situation.

Beaver forage plants:

Ethel and Alex compiled a partial list of plants favored by beavers. Many of these trees and shrubs can recover from being pruned by the beavers and develop a more dense growth habit. This is beneficial in reducing runoff, and to provide shelter for wildlife in the winter and for bird nesting sites. Providing these native tree and shrub species may divert beaver feeding from larger tree species. Some of these plants will be included in the Arbor Day planting event.

Potential List of Plants preferred by beaver:

Trees: Alder, Aspen, Birch, Cottonwood, Maple Poplar, Willow, Sweet Bay Magnolia** (*Magnolia virginiana*). Dutky would like some white poplar** (*Populus alba*) and red mulberry to be included in the habitat enhancement plantings.

Shrubs: Shady areas – Service-berry (*Amelanchier* spp.), Spicebush, American Holly, Coastal Azalea**, Rosebay Azalea**, Rhododendrons**.

Sunnier areas: Arrow-wood Viburnum, American Beauty Berry** (Greenbelt is on the edge of this plant's northern range).

Herbaceous Perennials:

Cattails, water lilies, rushes, sedges. These are all vigorous aquatic plants.

**Very attractive ornamental characteristics.

Meeting adjourned -8:55PM

Next Meeting Tuesday, April 15, at the Public Works Building. We plan to walk the planting sites at the start of our meeting at 7PM.

Submitted by Ethel Dutky