

## **Advisory Committee on Trees – September 10, 2013**

Call to order 7PM at Public Works

Present: Brian Townsend (city liaison), Ethel Dutky (recorder), Charles Jackman (chair), Bill Phelan (guest), Richard Olsen (guest)

Minutes reviewed and approved with corrections for August 27.

### **Sustainable Land Care Policy document**

The ACT revised document has been condensed into a 5 ½ page document. We had a discussion regarding pesticide safety goals. We agreed to study the document and come prepared with corrections and other suggestions at the next ACT meeting.

### **Buddy Attick Park Large Mulberry**

The large mulberry in Buddy Attick Park is not a native red mulberry (*Morus rubra*) as we had stated in the presentation by Ethel and Charles at the August 12 City Council meeting. It is the exotic white mulberry (*Morus alba*), now considered an undesirable exotic tree. Brian explained that he had contacted City Council and apologized for our incorrect identification of the tree. City Council remains in support of taking measures to repair and preserve this old, large park tree. Richard Olsen brought in specimens of both mulberry species. The red mulberry has much larger leaves with soft pubescence on the lower leaf surface; while mulberry leaves are much smaller, irregularly lobed and lacking in the soft pubescence. ACT was united in support of efforts to repair and preserve this tree. Richard Olsen agreed that the tree is worth saving. Charles will write a letter to Public Works stating our continued support for the cabling and supports to preserve this tree.

### **Emphasize Vital Importance of Continuation of Tree Planting**

We support care of our large, old significant trees, but all agree that continued planting of new trees is essential for the continued health of our park and street tree “Urban Forest”. One source of excellent trees and shrubs is the USDA National Arboretum's breeding program. Richard Olsen is the Urban Tree program's plant breeder. The goal of the program is to select trees for urban setting which have superior resistance to pests, diseases and urban stress. These superior trees will be introduced into the nursery trade. One step in the evaluation of potential new introductions is a trial period in an urban setting. In the past Greenbelt has participated in these trials by planting trees in City parks. The trees are evaluated over a period of years. The tree may be introduced if found to be free of serious problems. The advantage to participation in these field trials is that we would have large specimens of these new tree cultivars. One disadvantage is that if the trees fail to be approved for introduction (usually due to a serious flaw), the City agrees to remove them.

### **Public Lands Day on Saturday September 28 at Buddy Attick Park**

Brian announced that Public Lands Day will be celebrated with planting native trees and removal of some invasive plant species.

### **Concerns about two Hazard Trees**

Brian mentioned that a large Red Oak with a major trunk defect (a hole, rot) in the park on Crescent Road opposite the Sunoco gas station will soon be removed. Bill Phelan alerted us to another oak in this same area which is showing symptoms and signs (mushrooms sprouting from the trunk buttress) of the very dangerous condition called “Buttress Rot”. Ethel Dutky agreed to visit the tree and report back to Brian.

Adjourn 8:45 PM. Next meeting October 1, 2013, 7PM at Public Works

Ethel Dutky, recorder