

Advisory Committee on Trees Meeting - August 16, 2011

Present: Charles Jackman (chair), Ethel Dutky (recorder), Lesley Riddle (City liaison), Bob Trumbule, Bill Phelan (guest).

We met at the Public Works building at 5:30 PM to make another tour of city street trees and parks.

Problem on woodland path in Greenbelt East

We drove to Greenbrook Drive where a foot bridge (Chartwell Bridge) connects a woodland trail with Schrom Hills Park. This path is used by walkers, dog walkers and children and adults riding bikes. Branches, logs, rocks and other debris are being systematically placed on the path. This creates a hazard, especially for bikers. We observed one elderly man striking an obstacle in the path and flying off his bike. He was not seriously injured, but rather embarrassed. Charles had been clearing the obstacles from the path every couple of days when he walked his dog. By the next time, the logs and debris are put back across the path. In addition, small “gardens” are being planted in the path. Lamb's Quarter plants grown in potting soil are planted in small (about a foot across) patches. Each “patch” is encircled with stones, again creating small trip hazards on the path. We discussed the possible motivation for this activity and agreed to ask people on the Woodland Committee and others who may be able to pass the word that these activities are not acceptable.

Street Trees along Hanover Pkwy near Megan Road

This area has some weedy trees (mulberry) with low branches sticking into the sidewalk area at chest and face height. We requested some corrective pruning, perhaps even removal of some of the volunteer trees.

American Legion/Lakecrest Circle area

There is a need here for plants to screen the residential area from traffic noise on Rte 193. We suggested that the existing hemlock planting could be augmented with other plants to make a better screen. Some possible plants include Green Giant Arbor Vitae (*Thuja plicata* 'Green Giant) and Red Tip Photinia (*Photinia x fraseri*).

Buddy Attick Inlet area

The Callery Pears (*Pyrus calleryana* cultivars) planted along the path next to a lawn area are in decline. They are also seeding into the park. These declining Callery Pear trees should be removed and the area re-planted with plants more compatible with the Buddy Attick Master Plan. Some ideas for this site included Sycamores (*Platanus occidentalis*); or Sour Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*); or Leatherwood (*Cyrilla racemiflora*). We assigned ourselves the task of thinking of other plants for this area, and contribute this at our next meeting. The site has somewhat hard soil that tends to be dry, and is bordered with the gravel path on one side.

Proposed Report from ACT

This report would make specific suggestions for replacement of declining Callery Pears (*Pyrus calleryana* cultivars and seedlings) in specific places in the city. Charles volunteered to write a draft of this report which we can review at our next meeting.

Library Parking Lot – Admire the two Pawpaws

Two Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) trees are included in the planting between the Library parking lot and the Community Center. They are very handsome small trees, and are bearing fruit.

Recreation Center Willow Oaks

We were pleased to see how well the established willow oaks are doing in this area.

Coop Parking Island needs a tree

We noticed one of the islands in the Coop Parking lot had an empty space where a tree was removed. We suggest that a London Planetree (*Platanus x acerifolia*) be installed in this space.

Buddy Attick Park in the Picnic area near the bandstand

We noticed a single established red oak showing severe leaf scorch on most of the foliage. Adjacent oaks showed no symptoms. Closer inspection found the diagnostic symptoms of the disease Bacterial leaf scorch caused by the bacterium *Xylella fastidiosa* and vectored by leaf hoppers. This disease produces a “greasy” or “water-soaked” appearance of the leaf tissue between browned areas and the green tissues. A serological test is needed to confirm the diagnosis. Very little decline was seen on this tree, so Dutky advised to leave the tree alone and watch it next year. The hot, dry growing season may have contributed to more severe scorch symptoms.

Meeting was adjourned at about 8:45 PM

The next ACT meeting will be on Tuesday, September 20.