

ACT Meeting August 17, 2010

Present: Charles Jackman (Chair); Ethel Dutky; Robert Trumbule; Lesley Riddle.

### **Report from Lesley Riddle**

Public works is deluged with tree problems from the three severe storms in the past 3 weeks. Charles reported a problem at Schrom Hills park, Lesley agreed to look at it.

Lesley reported that the most recent storm had shearing winds and micro-bursts along the lake path on the far side of Greenbelt Lake. Several large tulip poplars were uprooted and broken up. Several large oaks and a large beech were also hit by the micro-bursts, and canopy was shattered by the strong twisting action of the wind. Lesley described a path of destruction that ran along the lake path and through the woodland. Bob Trumbule reported another large area of tree damage in the wooded parcel of Woodland Hills parkland.

The grove of Callery Pears at 4 Bay Lakecrest sustained so much damage that Lesley advised that virtually all the old Callery Pears should be removed. Callery Pears along Hanover Parkway were also damaged.

Woodland Hills Park was especially hard hit. Lesley commends Mike Fox for his calm steady work throughout the crisis. Care of Trees has been out working on removal of broken trees for a full 4 weeks.

### **Group Discussion of Identification of Hazard Trees**

We are concerned about “over-reaction” to these unusual storms which caused such spectacular damage. “Tornado” and “Micro-burst” winds are not commonly seen in our region, and having three such storms pass through the city in 3 weeks was very unusual. Many of the trees uprooted or torn apart were sound, healthy trees. We certainly support continued scouting and pruning of trees that show symptoms and signs of decay and other damage. One problem facing many towns in our region is the fact that the trees are getting older, and are thus much larger and if they fail, produce more damage.

### **Long Term Project to develop a list of preferred street trees**

Lesley suggested that ACT could start working on a list of street tree species and cultivars that should be considered in replacement of damaged trees and in plans for restoration of damaged woodland areas in the parks. We should consider trees and large shrubs that are sturdy, resistant to pests and diseases and provide habitat (food, shelter) for wildlife. We should consider the mature size of trees, and avoid planting the taller trees in places where they will grow up into utility lines or pose other problems. Shrubs should be included in woodland restoration since they are especially good at protecting soil from erosion. Many shrubs also produce fruit that are useful to resident wildlife and migrating birds.

We agreed that it would be interesting and useful for ACT to work on development of a list of excellent street trees. Emphasis would be placed on durability and design features.

**Field Trip to USDA-National Arboretum Plant Breeding Laboratory**

Ethel will contact Dr. Susan Bentz to arrange for an ACT visit to her program in breeding for improved trees and shrubs

**Recognition for Lesley Riddle**

Lesley was elected to the Mid-Atlantic International Society of Arboriculture Board of Directors. At present the ISA board meets in Warrentown VA.

**Coordination with Forest Preserve Advisory Board**

Lesley will meet with the Forest Preserve Advisory Board to discuss the use of Forested Preserve and other woodlands in the city for educational programs. She will also address storm water scouring and methods to reduce this damaging process.

**Blueberry Hill maintenance needs**

We discussed the stand of native Blueberries. The area is being overgrown by seedling trees. We agreed with the proposal to thin the seedling trees to prevent the blueberries from being “shaded out”.

Our Next meeting is set for Tuesday, September 28, 7:30 PM at the Public Works Building.

We adjourned at 9:15 PM.