

Urban Forest Commission Minutes

17 May 2016

Members Present: Jim Lemmerman, Mike Pennington, Janet Nelson, Dale Sellner, Barbara Stark.

Guests Present: Ann Redelfs, Myrna Matthews, Louise Levy.

With Christine absent, Jim agreed to run the meeting.

Approval of Minutes: Janet made a motion, seconded by Mike, to approve the minutes from the April meeting.

Forester's Report: Dale reported that Saturday, May 21, will be the last day the ash collection site on Park Point will be open to the public. Ash trees that were removed earlier on Park Point will be replaced with other species of trees. The ash trees in Canal Park where the horse-drawn buggys stand will be injected. His department has received the trees to be planted along 4th Street and these will be planted this fall. The City will do the planting and maintenance of these trees and is committed to a better outcome than some past road reconstruction replanting projects. Approximately 35 trees will be planted in parks and another 30-35 boulevard trees will be planted to replace dead or dying trees around the City. A forestry intern will start work May 23, 2016.

Old Business: Skyline Task Force – Jim and Mike reported that a letter will go out soon to the residents of the 500 block of West Skyline. This will be part of setting up a process for defined, effective, ongoing management of this viewshed.

Louise asked about the final EAB management plan and wondered if her comments were considered. She does not see any flexibility in the way the plan reads regarding which trees will be injected. Dale stated that the document approved by the Urban Forest Commission will be presented to the City Council as it currently stands. The internal plan is to inject/save ash trees and manage the boulevard trees City-wide.

New Business: New Member Recruitment – Dale clarified that any person interested in serving on the UFC must go to the City website's page for boards and commissions and fill out an application form. This is the initial step to being considered for open board positions. The UFC currently has 7 members but bylaws seek a 9 member commission. We are in particular need of members with professional forestry experience and training.

Louise briefed the UFC on the tree inventory system she is using for the zoo and by the Minneapolis Parks & Recreation Board. It is in a format that allows for layers of information, stored in digital files, and easily shared. She recommends an inventory be done by only 1 or 2 people who are trained in the process to lessen the degree of error. The stored information can be easily updated which would be much more efficient than doing another inventory in the future. Dale shared that although this system and others sound very exciting and promising he does not even have at this time the technological capability for interaction between Parks Maintenance, Forestry, and Engineering. They do not have the software or hardware. He also expressed the frustration he and others feel about having a Forestry Division but not a City Forester.

Louise encouraged the UFC to talk with the Planning Commission and Planning Department. The UDC requires a Tree Preservation Plan when construction of new buildings will impact trees. We should be examining the landscape plan for these projects to see whether the plan is sound for trees and the developer should be held responsible for the success of plantings. A major hole in the UDC is that only buildings are considered. Trail development is not examined for its impact on existing trees. She believes that the Nordic Center trail at Spirit Mountain and the Hartley mini-master plan do not take trees into account. The UFC should be involved in these conversations and work to fix this hole in the UDC. We agreed to consider these comments and ideas at the next meeting.

Adjournment: Mike made a motion, seconded by Barbara, to adjourn.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Barbara Stark.