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TREE COMMISSION AGENDA

Wednesday, June 10, 2020, at 4:30 PM

Virtual Meeting:

<https://www.facebook.com/westminstermd/>
www.WestminsterMD.gov

- I. Call to Order** (*Chair Allgeier*)
- II. Approval of Minutes**
March 11, 2020
- III. Old Business**
- IV. New Business**
 - A. Tree Buffer Planting along Copps Branch (*Chair Allgeier*)
 - B. 2020 Urban and Community Forestry Workshop (*Ms. Schlitzer*)
 - C. 2020 Arbor Day Celebration (*Mr. Gray*)
 - D. Review of the City Comprehensive Tree Plan (*Mr. Gray*)
 - E. 2020 Commission Elections (*Mr. Gray*)
- V. Commission Comments**
- VI. Staff and Public Comments**
Tree Commission Rules (*Mr. Gray*)
Arbor Week Tree Plantings (*Mr. Schlitzer*)
- VII. Adjournment**



CITY OF WESTMINSTER TREE COMMISSION MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 4:30 PM

Conference Room, Second Floor, 56 West Main Street
Westminster, Maryland 21157

A meeting of the City of Westminster Tree Commission was held in the second floor conference room at 56 West Main Street, in Westminster, Maryland 21157, on March 11, 2020, at 4:30 PM.

Chair Steve Allgeier, Commissioner Tim Bangerd, and Commissioner Richard Wilbur were present. City staff Mark Depo, Andrew Gray, Eric Schlitzer, and Samantha Schlitzer were present.

The following members of the public were present: Paul Mullins, Bartlett Tree Experts.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Allgeier motioned to approve the meeting summary of June 12, 2019. Commissioner Wilbur seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Chair Allgeier opened Item A – 2019 Urban and Community Forestry Workshop. Ms. Schlitzer requested Mr. Mullins provide details on the upcoming 2020 Workshop so that Save the Date notices could be sent to previous attendees. Mr. Mullins explained that a new staff member would be handling the Workshop and requested assistance from Ms. Schlitzer with registration on the day of the event. Mr. Mullins then requested suggestions for afternoon sessions; the Commission suggested chainsaw safety, tree risk, urban tree replacement, and the Baltimore Gas and Electric safety demonstration vehicle.

Chair Allgeier opened Item B – Heritage Tree Program Nomination for Pecan Tree at Dutterer Family Park. Mr. Schlitzer presented the application form and information from the State of Maryland that recognized the tree as significant in size. He will provide a photo and updated measurements to post the information on the City's website.

Chair Allgeier opened Item C – Tree Removals without Department of Natural Resources Permission. Mr. Schlitzer reiterated that several trees were removed in the Furnace Hills area last fall. The Homeowner's Association had sent a letter to its community members indicating that the street trees required removal so that sidewalks could be repaired. The HOA also contracted a tree removal company for several locust trees in its common area. Chair Allgeier asked if the residents would be replacing the trees or be fined by Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Mr. Schlitzer was unsure at this time.

Chair Allgeier opened Item D – 2020 Arbor Day Celebration – Mr. Schlitzer explained that the February 2020 tornado damaged several trees on the grounds of City Hall. He planned to replace three trees with a hawthorn and two dogwoods during the Arbor Day Celebration. Mr. Mullins stated that Bartlett Tree Experts would be glad to provide donated tree saplings for event attendees and, on behalf of the Westminster Rotary Club, he would ask if they could donate the trees to be planted for the Arbor Day Celebration. Mr. Schlitzer stated that the event would likely be held on a Saturday to accommodate local Boy and Girl Scout troops attending again this year. Mr. Gray asked if a beneficial insect release could be coordinated for the same day. Mr. Mullins will research if the date is too early for the insects to survive.

Chair Allgeier opened Item E – February 7, 2020 Tornado Damage. Mr. Schlitzer presented a slide show of several major trees that had been damaged or destroyed by the tornado.

Chair Allgeier opened Item F – 2019 Tree City USA Application and PLANT Award Application. Mr. Gray stated that the City recently submitted its applications for approval; specifically, the Green level PLANT Award.

Chair Allgeier opened Item G – Street Tree Grate Retrofit. Mr. Schlitzer stated that the current tree grates are cast iron and extremely difficult to maintain. He is researching tree grates using porous concrete to eliminate trip hazards and lower maintenance on the tree bases.

Commission Comments

Chair Allgeier stated that he is working with the Westminster High School and Winters Mill High School environmental clubs to plant trees in the forest buffer at the former Wakefield Valley Golf Course. Dr. Robert Wack plans to present the forest bank program for partnership with the City, if possible.

Staff and Public Comments

Mr. Schlitzer presented photos of trees that had been planted incorrectly in the Bolton Hill Development. He has reached out to the contractor to coordinate the trees being relocated and properly planted so that they survive.

Mr. Gray reminded the Commission members to participate in the 2020 United States Census; the website recently went live.

Mr. Depo introduced himself, stating that he has previously worked with tree commissions in other designated Tree City USA municipalities. He looks forward to working with the City of Westminster Tree Commission.

The Commission adjourned at 5:31 PM.



To: Westminster Tree Commission

From: Andrew R. Gray, Comprehensive Planner

cc: Mark A. Depo, Director of Community Planning and Development
Eric Schlitzer, City Arborist
Samantha Schlitzer, Executive Assistant

Date: June 5, 2020

Subject: Summary of Agenda Items

The following is a brief summary of the New Business Agenda Items for the June 10, 2020 Westminster Tree Commission ("Commission") meeting:

- A. **Tree Buffer Planting along Copsps Branch** – The Chair will provide a summary of the item during the meeting.
- B. **2020 Urban and Community Forestry Workshop** – Up until 2019, the City and Bartlett Tree Experts have been conducting the Urban and Community Forestry Workshop. It is understood that Bartlett Tree Experts will now be taking the lead for conducting the 2020 Urban and Community Forestry workshop (workshop) and subsequent workshops. The City will now have a smaller role in workshops such as sending out information for registration. On May 20, 2020, Community Planning and Development (CPD) staff contacted Bartlett to discuss the 2020 workshop and to see if the workshop could be presented virtually due to COVID-19. Bartlett was receptive to conducting the 2020 workshop virtually. They will provide more information during the meeting and would like to get the Commissions thoughts on the possibility of a virtual meeting. The Commission should also discuss the date for any workshop and any back-up dates to give Bartlett, CPD and City staff flexibility.
- C. **2020 Arbor Day Celebration** – Due to COVID-19, the City was unable to host the annual Arbor Day Celebration this spring. The City is committed to hosting some type of celebration this year to commemorate Arbor Day. On May 20, 2020, I spoke with Ms. Anne Gilbert, CC-P, from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Forest Service. Ms. Gilbert mentioned that other communities have expressed interest in conducting a digital Arbor Day Celebration or conducting an Arbor Day Celebration during the six month Arbor Day anniversary, which would be Saturday, October 24, 2020. Both types of celebrations would be live streamed on the City Facebook Page. However, the digital celebration would only involve CPD and City staff and no participants. I would like to note that Ms. Gilbert reminded me that this year is the 30th year the City has been recognized as a Tree City! Congratulations Westminster!!!

D. **Review of the City Comprehensive Tree Plan** – Pursuant to Chapter 148 Trees, Section 6 A., of the Charter and Code of the City of Westminster:

“It shall be the responsibility of the City Tree Commission to study, investigate, counsel, develop and/or update annually and recommend to the Mayor and Common Council a written plan for the care, preservation, pruning, planting, replanting, removal or disposition of trees and shrubs in parks, along streets and in other public areas. Such plan will be presented annually to the Mayor and Common Council. Upon its review, the Mayor and Common Council may modify and amend such proposed plan and adopt it by resolution as the official comprehensive City tree plan.”

On February 25, 2019, the Mayor and Common Council voted to approve Resolution No. 19-08 “Adopting a City of Westminster Comprehensive Tree Plan”. CPD staff would like the Commission to review the Comprehensive Tree Plan and provide any comments they may have to improve this plan. CPD and City staff will also review the Comprehensive Tree Plan and provide comments. CPD staff would like to receive comments from the Commission no later than Monday, August 3, 2020 so the comments may be incorporated into a draft document for the Commission to review and possibly approve during their September 2020 meeting.

Link to the [City of Westminster, Comprehensive Tree Plan](#)

E. **2020 Commission Elections** – Pursuant to Chapter 148 Trees, Section 5 A.:

“The officers of the Commission shall consist of a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson. Both the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson shall be elected by the members of the Commission and will hold such offices at the pleasure of the Mayor and Common Council.”

Currently there are no known Commission rules to dictate what month the Commission shall conduct its election. The Commission has not conducted an election since at least 2015, and since this time, one new Commission member has been appointed by the Mayor and subsequently confirmed by the Common Council.

In the month of May, the Planning and Zoning Commission conducts elections pursuant to their rules. CPD staff recommends that the timing of elections for the Tree Commission be consistent with the timing of the Planning and Zoning Commission elections for the purpose of tracking and consistency of City commissions. Since the Commission meets quarterly, June would be the most appropriate time to conduct such elections.

Request:

CPD staff requests the Tree Commission elect from its members a Chair and Vice-Chair.

The following is a brief summary of CPD staff comments for the June 10, 2020 Tree Commission meeting:

Tree Commission Rules – Pursuant to Chapter 148 Trees, Section 5 B.:

“The Commission shall adopt its own rules of procedure and keep a record of the proceedings.”

Currently there are no known Commission rules. CPD staff plans to draft a set of proposed rules for the Commission to review in the Month of September 2020.

Arbor Week Tree Plantings – Mr. Schlitzer mentioned that he planted four trees for Arbor Week. He planted a Service Berry at 65 West Main Street and at 149 Pennsylvania Ave; a Hawthorne at 119 Pennsylvania Ave.; and a Cherry tree on Pennsylvania Avenue. More information will be forthcoming during the meeting. Photos of two of the four plantings are below.



Service Berry at 65 West Main Street



Hawthorne at 119 Pennsylvania Avenue