



TREE COMMISSION INFORMAL MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, September 11, 2019, at 4:30 PM

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

The City of Westminster Tree Commission did not hold a formal meeting in September due to a lack of quorum.

Vice-Chair Cindy May and Commissioner Tim Bangerd were present. City staff Andrea Gerhard, Andrew Gray, Eric Schlitzer, and Samantha Schlitzer were present.

The following members of the public were present: John McEachern, Paul Mullins, and Laurel Pogue.

Mr. Gray introduced John McEachern and Laurel Pogue, McDaniel College students, who presented their report on "Abundance and Diversity of Invertebrates in Urban Tree Wells." During their presentation, they compared populations of springtails, a common soil invertebrate, between areas on Main Street and areas within Harvey Stone Park, on the McDaniel College campus, to see how different soil compositions affected insects. Based on the findings, the population of springtails was higher in Harvey Stone Park; this was due to the smaller soil area in the tree wells, as well as their closer proximity to roadways.

Vice-Chair May thanked Mr. McEachern and Ms. Pogue for their research and report.

Mr. Mullins explained that Bartlett Tree Experts had decided to cancel this year's Forestry Workshop due to low registration numbers. A major contributing factor in the low response rate was likely due to where the email information blasts were generated. Registrants were accustomed to receiving information directly from the City, and when it came from Bartlett Tree Experts instead, it may have gone unnoticed, into SPAM folders, or otherwise disregarded.

Ms. Schlitzer stated that approximately six prior attendees had contacted her directly regarding registration, which she had forwarded to Ms. Fitzgerald at Bartlett Tree Experts. Mr. Mullins could not confirm if those were included in the reported low registration number. Ms. Schlitzer suggested that next year the email blast of information come directly from the City, while Bartlett Tree Experts still processes registrations and payments directly.

Mr. Schlitzer presented the Heritage Tree application form and information from the State of Maryland that recognized the Pecan Tree at Dutterer Family Park as significant in size. The Commission will vote at its next meeting on accepting the nomination.

Tree Removals without Department of Natural Resources Permission. Mr. Schlitzer explained that several trees had recently been removed in the Furnace Hills area. The Homeowner's Association 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. Mr. Schlitzer presented an information flyer, designed by the Department of Natural Resources, to help educate the Westminster community on proper tree care, removal procedures, and permissible tree species for replacement. He recommended sending it out as soon as possible.

Vice-Chair May suggested sending a copy of the flyer out through the City's water and sewer bill newsletter. Ms. Schlitzer stated it could also go onto the City's website and Facebook pages so that it was immediately available.

Vice-Chair May recognized Ms. Gerhard, who introduced herself as the City's newest Comprehensive Planner in the Department of Community Planning and Development.

The Commission adjourned at 5:24 PM.