

URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION MEETING

May 9, 2012

Members Present: Ted Slegesky, Jack Breier, James Crowe, Nancy Solodar, Anu Hittle, Linda Fried

Guest: Richard Wilson Public Works and Parks Director

Meeting called to order at 7:10 pm by President Ted Slegesky

Minutes of the March 14, 2012 meeting were reviewed, Linda motioned to accept, Jack second, motion passed.

City Council Liaison Update: No council liaison report

Monthly Forestry Reports: Nancy motioned to accept, Anu second motion passed

Old Business:

- A) Memorable Tree Walk: Anu is still waiting on tree write-ups; James is investigating tying in with the Washington University tree walk.
- B) Park Foundation Grant: Ted has contacted Judy Prange the contact with the Park Foundation but she has not responded yet.
- C) Arbor Day Celebration: The Flynn Park School 1st grade joined in the April 6 celebration at Flynn Park. A Bald Cypress was planted James gave a talk on trees and the class participated in a scavenger hunt.

New Business:

- A) Linda Conner 1343 Coolidge appeared before the Commission to appeal the decision by the city forester to not cut down the city street tree located in the city r.o.w. in front of her property. Ms Conner's concern is her inability after much hard work and expense to grow grass in her front lawn area. The health and vigor of the large city owned Oak tree is detrimental to her lawn. After discussion Anu made a motion to table the appeal, set a special session date and come to a decision at that time. Jack second and motion passed
- B) Greenway South Rich Wilson presented an outline of the Greenway South proposal from Washington University and Great Rivers Greenway. Of concern to the Commission is the removal of 55 Sweet Gum trees so that the trail can be widened from 8' to 10' as required by Great Rivers Greenway. The city forester supports the removal of the trees and the Parks Commission is requesting a recommendation from the Forestry Commission in regards to the trees. James Crowe as city forester described the reasons he was in favor of removal of the trees. Among them: a widening of the path would do irreparable damage to the root systems of the trees on the west side. Because of the soil conditions these trees have never grown well and are not thriving. The trees on the east side have been decimated by the Ameren pruning which will continue every year. Any carbon sequestering is somewhat mitigated by the numerous times the parks department is called out to blow off flower debris, gumballs and leaves. Mr. Crowe sees this as an opportunity to replace declining trees and trees under power lines with healthy more suitable species. He stated there is a "walkabout" on Thursday May 10, at 5:30pm to tour Greenway South for the Parks Commission and Forestry Commission is welcome.
A number of residents spoke regarding the issue; a brief summary of their comments follows each resident's name.

E. F. Porter- Parkview resident stated he was against the project and introduced his forester consultant James Rocca.

James Rocca- Forestry Consultant; Mr. Rocca is a certified arborist and an expert in his field. He gave a brief presentation on the value of trees in an urban environment; he was hired by Mr. Porter to inspect the trees along Greenway South. Mr. Rocca estimated the average tree diameter at 14 inches and using the National Tree Benefit Calculator he estimates the overall benefits of each tree at \$72 per year.

David Howard- Parkview resident stated he was against the project and when he first moved into his residence the trees were small and provided no shade and now the trees provide shade and aesthetic values that will be lost. Mr. Howard would like to know how much it is going to cost to remove the trees and replace them.

Judy Zwicker: Parkview resident stated she is against the project and disputed some of the comments of the city forester saying that new trees will drop leaves and the parks department will have to blow them off. She stated the path is fine the way it is and does not need to be replaced

Patrick Hollinger- Washington University student is against the project and states the money being used will affect his tuition as a student.

Paul Gruber- Washington University student is against the project and thinks Washington University could invest the money in something of more benefit to the area.

Anu made a motion to table the discussion and add this to the special session agenda next week. Nancy second motion passed.

Update of Development Projects: none

Discussion and citizen comments: Anu requested we set some parameters for the special session using Roberts Rules of Order. Ted recommended we allow Ms. Conner 5 minutes to speak, 10 minutes for commission member's discussion, then a vote either YES to support her appeal or NO to deny the appeal.

For Greenway South any citizens that wish to comment signup, the amount of citizens wishing to speak will determine the amount of time allotted and each citizen will be given this amount of time. After all citizens that have signed up have spoken, no other comments will be taken and the commission will begin discussion. After discussion any motions and amendments will be made and a vote taken. Jack made a motion to set the meeting on Wednesday May 16 at 7:00 pm venue pending James obtaining a room, Linda second motion passed.

Anu will notify the Ames Place agents, Mr. Porter agreed to send James the email address of the Parkview agents, once a venue is obtained James will email out the agenda for the special session and notify Ms. Conner

Nancy made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Jack second, meeting adjourned at 9:38 pm
Next meeting date: Special Session May 16, 2012, regular meeting July 11, 2012.

James Crowe