

ARBORETUM COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, Feb 15, 2023, 7-9 pm, Town Hall

Attending: committee members -- Sean Conlan, Adam Darkins, Malcolm Russell-Einhorn;
Arborist – Phil Normandy; Council Liaison -- Gerilee Bennett; Residents -- Chris Keller, Chau

Executive Summary: The February Arboretum Committee meeting started with issues raised by several residents. Phil Normandy will be drafting the spring planting list soon to be reviewed by the committee. The invasive vines project needs to be evaluated by the end of Q1 before we can move forward with a recommendation on further contracts. The committee will be producing a budget recommendation in time for the Feb 27 town council working session and expects to request a modest increase. Finally, committee member Adam Darkins is rotating off the committee and Jane Davenport is joining the committee. The next Arboretum Committee meeting is scheduled for March 15.

Topic	Action Item
<p>Feb 2023 minutes couldn't be approved, not enough members present. Adam asked that we (re)start posting minutes to the Arboretum/Town website.</p>	<p>Defer approval to next month</p> <p>Sean will ask Elizabeth to post minutes</p>
<p>Resident issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leila Holtsman & David Rubenstein contacted the committee by email about plans to replace a town oak that was removed. Phil has spoken to them and they'd prefer that the tree not be replaced. • Chau had a number of questions for the committee. She is hoping to find a source of cuttings for Abidjan(?)/Russian irises taken out during sidewalk construction. Her other three questions were primarily about private property. In general, we don't weigh in on private matters. • Adam Darkins wants a final decision about the leaning tree near his driveway. Phil has determined, based on looking at the right of way maps, that it is likely a town tree. 	<p>Phil will talk with the homeowners but there is no urgency to replace the oak.</p> <p>Gerilee volunteered to ask around about the irises</p> <p>Adam is going to confirm on the town maps and Phil will ask that the tree be tagged and entered in the database</p>
<p>Update from Phil:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He still needs to evaluate the invasive vines project • Spring planting list is being compiled. This is a little earlier than usual because of unusually warm weather. • Per Barbara M, MOU for tree trimming still with state <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adam asked that traffic calming be listed as a specific goal of the tree canopy in the SOW for 	<p>Phil to look at vines in Cambira part and near the train tracks</p> <p>Phill to distribute Spring planting list</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Strathmore in addition to Phil’s tree-by-tree pruning list</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town crew is removing invasive bushes (e.g., bush honeysuckle). In cases where removal impacts residents, the town crew is consulting with them on a case-by-case basis 	
<p>No new information on the Waverly streetscape. Lizzie G-B hasn’t met with the mayor yet</p>	<p>Lizzie to meet with Mayor Welch.</p>
<p>As mentioned above, we still need to evaluate the invasive vines project to see if the work was done as specified. Adam mentioned an article about the importance of vine removal. One such article from NPR: https://www.npr.org/local/305/2021/07/09/1014566230/this-man-documented-5-000-trees-being-killed-by-vines-in-takoma-park</p>	<p>Phil to follow up</p>
<p>The town budget will be discussed in a Feb 27 work session and introduced in the March town council meeting. Chris Keller provided several template documents from previous budget recommendations by the committee. In general, the committee expects to ask for funding that is at least level with FY2023 or likely higher. This is because the previous budget required a mid-year adjustment, we still have a backlog of pruning and additional funds may be needed for invasive vines management. Another project that may be part of our budget , but could also be part of the stormwater budget, is the restoration of the area at the end of Rokeby.</p>	<p>Sean will meet with Barbara Matthews to discuss the best plan forward and share a draft funding recommendation with the committee and town council no later than 2/23</p>
<p>Malcolm R-E raised the topic of whether we should recommend that the town code include some oversight into trees on private property. There is precedence for this in places like Takoma Park and Somerset. See, for instance, this permit request on the Takoma park website: https://takomaparkmd.gov/services/permits/tree-permits/tree-removal-permit/</p> <p>Several examples were discussed of residents or developers clear-cutting lots. The committee has always been wary of stepping into this role and would (probably) prefer to approach trees on private property in an educational manner. Letting residents know the positive impact trees have on the town including, wildlife habitats, cooling in summer months, privacy, visual interest/”skyline” and climate change. Opportunities for educational outreach include a Bugle article,</p>	<p>Malcolm R-E is going to look into having the Arboretum committee present at the 125th celebration (as he is also on the committee planning that). Schedule, tentatively, for May 21st</p> <p>Sean to work out Spring tree walk with Phil since there may be some scheduling complications</p>

a table at the 125 th town anniversary celebration and possible a “historic trees” themed tree walk.	
Adam Darkins is rotating off the committee. We would like to thank Adam on behalf of the town for his time, writing expertise and passion for addressing the challenges of climate change. Jane Davenport, who could not attend, will be replacing Adam on the committee.	Sean will add Jane to the email list and provide here with some documents to get up to speed on.
Next Meeting March 15	Sean to send out minutes and double check Town Hall reservation

Abbrev.

CAP=Comprehensive Arboretum Plan

POSCO=Parks and Open Spaces Committee

GPCAN=Garrett Park Climate Action Network

SHA=State Highway Administration

MOU=Memorandum of Understanding

SOW=Statement of Work

LUAC=Land Use Advisory Committee
