

CHARLOTTESVILLE TREE COMMISSION
March 4, 2025 - 5:00–7:00pm
In-Person Meeting–Parks and Recreation Office

- In attendance:
 - MaKshya Tolbert
 - Tyler Miller
 - Woody Parrish
 - JD Brown, Donna
 - Susan McKinnon
 - Shanti Levy
 - Steven Gaines
 - Hannah Brown
 - Eric Bredder
 - Katie Lockhart
 - Three public attendees – UVA students observing for class

Call to Order and Approval of February Minutes

- February meeting minutes approved

Staff Report and Discussion (S. Gaines)

- Next Steps for Restorations (Rx Fire) to be completed by mid-March
 - Seeding and pre-emergent herbicides applied late winter/early spring at Tonsler Park hillside (behind baseball field, approx. 1.5 acres), slopes along JW Parkway (Bradford pears), Park Street bridge.
 - Pollinator plots drilled/seeded along JW Parkway early spring (between railroad and JW Parkway).
 - No forestry mulching while birds are nesting (on hold until fall)
- RFQ installed approx. 140 trees around the city limits, focus on Rights-of-Way and highway interchanges.
 - Watering for installed trees will likely begin in May (hot weather depending).
- Charlottesville Area Tree Stewards to plant 20-25 trees in McIntire Park (March 22) as part of tree planting training event
- IRA Grant – Eocene is working through first phase of the grant. The first phase focuses on canopy analysis, community engagement, and logistics for vegetation analysis.
 - No anticipated disruption in federal funding
 - remaining funds of about \$70K are under consideration – one potential is study of geomorphological conditions of undeveloped properties
 - ReLeaf Fifeville project (funded by VA DOF) has been put on hold
- Parks & Recreation removed 10 Zelkova trees along West Main Street. Operations also included pruning of an additional 12 trees. Staff is working with Public Utilities and Public Works to grind stumps and have plans for trip hazard mitigation in the first week of March. Further planning for street trees along W Main will be a spring task.

- Discussion of how to best communicate city removal and planting efforts
- Urban Forestry will hire a new seasonal technician in spring 2025.
- CHIPP
 - Met this past Sunday to survey condition of trees on private property in Kellytown. Included outreach in the form of flyers to homeowners with trees impacted by invasives, with the aim to assist those homeowners in removing the invasives.
 - Training sessions will take place this week in both Kellytown and Little High neighborhoods.

Introduction of New Commissioners

Hannah Brown (officially beginning February 19)

Meredith Keppel (officially beginning April 1)

Eric Breder (continuing, new term beginning April 1)

Clarification and specification of LINR appointment

- Bylaw requires that two tree commissioners live in low-income neighborhoods. Current positions are advertised for Belmont and 10th and Page neighborhoods only.
- A request has been made to the city to let the commission know which neighborhoods qualify as low income.

Commission Planning Items

- Sign-up for secretary
- Suggestions for broader commission priorities/themes/goals for the year
 - Relation of tree canopy and development
 - Incentive approaches
 - Data collection
 - Canopy composition of undeveloped lot – potential other areas for tree gains (shrinking public right of ways)
 - Tree gains and losses
 - Tree permit implementation process
 - Education and dissemination
 - New visualizations to support education
 - Website materials
 - Including current and former documents
 - Connecting with schools
 - Arbor committee
 - Supporting investment by private donors to fund tree preservation and planting
 - Developing a strategic project list that could be funded
 - Coordination with NGO partners who can facilitate funding to purchase lands or preserve trees
 - Committee Assignments

- Code Committee
 - Chair – JD
 - Tyler
 - Betsy (to be confirmed)
- Arbor Committee
 - Chair – MaKysha
 - Shanti
 - Hannah
- Education and Advocacy Committee
 - Chair – Eric
 - Susan
 - Woody
 - Manuel
- Before the next meeting, each committee will review the current description of activities and discuss workplan for this year

General Public Comment

Adjourned
7:00pm