

MEETING MINUTES
Athens Shade Tree Commission
June 9, 2022
7:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Christine Fahl, Chair
Jim Dyer, Member
Roxanne Malé-Brune, Member
Nancy Walker, Member
Ben Ziff, City Council Rep
Katherine Ziff, Alternate member

MINUTES of the May 12, 2022 Shade Tree Commission were approved.

TITLE 33, TITLE 37, MAINTENANCE OF TREE CANOPY

There were no items for discussion regarding these topics.

NEW BUSINESS

Committee Roles

The roles of the three Shade Tree Commission committees were discussed and agreed upon as follows:

- Policy Committee: Guidelines, ordinances, permitting, & related paperwork
- Event Committee: Events, outreach, education
- Data and Planting: Tree canopy and other data, mapping

Committee Reports

Policy Committee: Report by Roxanne

- Cited inconsistencies in Code and practice which were discussed
- Proposed language for a form for contractors who are submitting Site Plan Permits for review
- Proposed language for FAQ's to be added to the Shade Tree Commission website

Action Items:

- Commission members are asked to review the form and the FAQ's and respond to Roxanne within a week with approval and/or suggestions. These are attached to an email from Roxanne dated June 7.
- Commission agreed to reach out to Director Stone to help with clarifying the Commission's role, consistency in ordinances and practice across City Departments.
- Commission agreed that public education and outreach regarding public Right of Way (ROW) is a priority
- Director Riggs will bring maps showing detailed public ROW for City of Athens to next meeting

Events Committee: Report by Chris

- Short term initiative: Video series on important topics including Public ROW and tree care on Court Street
- Mid-range initiative: Decide on Arbor Day date (September or October 2022) and a coordinating task force, with Events committee being the lead to organize. For Arbor Day consider the Hearts project for trees in public ROW, for people to express reasons to care for trees (a myriad of reasons including dollar value).
- Long range initiative: Develop the concept of an arboretum at the City level, planting trees, a special spot for celebratory trees, possible tie-in with OHIO Museum Complex (<https://www.ohio.edu/museum-complex>)

- Katherine reported on Trees by the Bus Stops Project: Mary Reed and Ann Bonner have flagged the locations and created a spreadsheet noting, for each location, the recommended number and species of trees, and any considerations/questions. Privately owned properties were noted but not flagged as there are additional steps to consider.

Action Items

- Chris will contact City to set the date for the City's Arbor Day celebration.
- Video series prepared; Roxanne can facilitate contact with an OU student organization that advises how marketing campaigns can best resonate with students.
- Eventually a brochure to distribute information about trees once we have a communication strategy. Consider that OU Center for Campus and Community Engagement can help distribute and identify student volunteers looking for outreach projects.
- Katherine will email the Trees by the Bus Stops spreadsheet to Director Riggs, who is coordinating this work, copying APR Director Jordan. The email will note that Director Jordan gives a final review.

Data and Planting Committee: Report by Jim

- Discussion of identifying good tree planting sites. Suggested priority of the Hocking River Corridor for which there is complicated oversight among Ohio University, City of Athens, and the Hocking Conservancy. Next tier would be identifying priority neighborhoods using digital canopy imaging.
- Discussion of Code Enforcement role with rentals to identify opportunities for trees and tree maintenance. (This may be a topic for Events Committee.)

Action items

- Prioritize tree planting along the Hocking River and look at making a recommendation to Mayor Patterson on this. Director Riggs is going to see who owns what and suggest to us whom to go to, using his maps.
- Suggestion of working with Andrew Chiki on the homeowner tree planting initiative if we have suggestions for targeting certain areas of need particularly regarding equity.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO SPEAK ON ITEMS NOT COVERED IN AGENDA

No citizens were present to speak.

NEXT MEETING

All present agreed that the Commission will take a meeting recess for July, so the next meeting will be Thursday, August 11. In the meantime, committees may meet. We are reminded that any committee meeting of more than two committee members must give public notice of the time and location of the meeting, at least 24 hours in advance.

Meeting notes prepared by Katherine Ziff