

Summary of the Minutes

April 15, 2013 Meeting

City of Binghamton Shade Tree Commission

PHCD Conference Room, 4th Floor, City Hall

Present: Leigh McCullen, Fiske Hanson, Melissa Enoch, Dick Andrus, Artem Treyger, Paul Palmer, Teresa Baleno, Julian Shepherd, Josh DeMarre, Bill Barber, Alex Spencer (scribe)

Minutes for Mar. 18th, 2013: Approved (with amendments discussed via email)

Next Meeting: Mon. May 20th, 2013, 7:00 p.m. City Hall Planning Dept Conference Room

- 1. Introduction to Bill Barber, new director of Parks and Recreation, with updates from the department:** they have just completed an inspection of all 33 parks facilities and are planning to plant 4-5 trees at each (excluding those facilities where it would be unreasonable). Rec Park is of particular interest due to its soil compaction and uniformly aged trees of the same species. Dick suggested concentrating efforts on the deforested area along the road to the Discovery Center / zoo. Engaging local students in fundraising for this area was suggested, and Bill Barber took note of the commission's suggestions.
- 2. NYSEG tree trimming update:** About 35-40% of the trimming in the city is complete, including most of the north circuit up by 17. A question arose as to what right of way the city has in distance from the road when there is no sidewalk. The Helen/Highland/Kneeland/Leroy area is also almost done, and downtown to the center of Chestnut is next. Melissa and Leigh showed pictures they had taken comparing Crestmont to Schubert and Grand (between Minerva and Orton), where they had observed a disparity in amount of trimming and end appearance. After discussion with Artem, it seemed that the "prettier" pictures of fuller trees were ones that had not been trimmed as a part of this project. It was also explained that the part of Grand that seemed especially hacked away at was because the predominant species planted there was linden, which requires more extensive pruning in the 10'-below-power-line area due to their 4 vertical, large limbs (we should back off on planting lindens). We noted that the island in the center of Crestmont, separating the two ways of traffic, added shade and visually pleasing green space. It was confirmed that no trees are being wholly removed without permission from the city, and that Paul has confirmed the necessity of removing 3 trees so far. Because of the project's limited tree removal budget, we may try to create an agreement where the work is split with the city.
- 3. Arbor Day:** On Friday, April 26 at 1pm, the city will be planting 3 swamp white oaks in Fairview Park. We would like to create a larger celebration of the holiday next year, and hope to involve public school students. In October, some STC members should take on planning 2014's arbor day celebration to allow enough time to organize a larger event.
- 4. Citizen Pruner Program:** management has switched over to Cornell Cooperative Extension. A few concerns have been raised during the transition, mainly rooted in communication between

CCE and the pruners. Alex volunteered to contact Dave Bradstreet and make him aware of the pruners' feedback and expectations.

5. **Tree Requests:** We are going to keep a running list of trees we want to see planted in city parks, as well as the rotating species for utility strips. Alex is no longer interested in being responsible for the latter and will put the working list up in an editable format on the google group. Because we want to encourage the planting of the largest possible trees at every site, we might change the wording on the request form from "larger" and "smaller" trees to ones to be planted "under power lines" and "not under power lines" or something similar. 35' is a pretty decent size for street trees; we'll save the Dawn Redwoods for the parks.