

## Minutes of the City of Takoma Park Tree Commission

Sept 8, 2015

By Carol Hotton

Location: Rose Room, Takoma Park City Building

Present: Colleen Cordes, Chair

Carol Hotton

Gresham Lowe

Meeting convened at approximately 6:35 pm

1. Before the meeting, Jessie Carpenter emailed that Jerry Burgess had moved out of Takoma Park and therefore had to resign from the Tree Commission, so we are currently back to four members. Jessie appeared at the beginning of the meeting and assured us that the City Council would move quickly on new appointment and would take our concerns about the process into account.
2. Discussion of amending bylaws for rotation of officers. Denny May participated in this discussion by phone, to comply with requirement that all members agree to changes in bylaws. We agreed to delete the last line in 1(b) of the current bylaws that runs: "A new Commissioner will adopt the seniority of the person he/she is replacing" because it is confusing and contradicts the rotation scheme set out in the bylaws. The original rationale for the scheme was to allow every member of the Commission a chance to serve in every office position. We also agreed to add a sentence requiring that the person who occupies the Chair position to have attended a minimum of 6 meetings. Colleen also suggested changing officers' end of term to some date other than Sept 30, but we decided to shelve that discussion for now. **Action Item:** Carol will amend the bylaws and circulate for approval.
3. Gresham is slated to become Chair according to bylaws but she declined. Denny felt too inexperienced to take over, so Carol agreed to become Chair for the next six months, with Denny serving as Vice Chair during that period, and at the end of that period, first Gresham and then Denny will be in line to accept the chair. Carol expressed a willingness to remain in the post for the year if both declined to do so at that time. Colleen will serve as secretary for six months.
4. Cub Scout tree planting. Carol contacted Dan Seligman, who in March had initiated a discussion of his idea to have Cub Scouts earn a badge by giving tree sapling to homeowners and helping them with planting and care, for an update. Dan indicated that he had not been able to carry out his plan. We discussed ways to broaden and implement plan. Gresham noted that September was when Boy and Girl Scout members developed plans for badges. Discussed working with Boy and Girl Scouts to develop a badge for planting trees. Boy and Cub Scouts can partner for badges (another avenue). **Action Items:** Carol will contact Dan to see if his friend, a forester and fellow Cub Scout father, would be interested in pursuing this project and/or serve as a resource. Carol will create a draft project proposal and circulate to others. Gresham will contact Boy and Girl Scout leaders in Takoma Park and discuss plan after Carol has talked to Dan and other Cub Scout father to make sure that we could proceed with enlarging the plan.

5. Finalize route for tree walk in New Hampshire Gardens and other planning for it. Although Fred Schultz had suggested a route from the Baptist Church at New Hampshire and Glenside to Kirklynn or Anne St, we decided it was too long. We decided on a starting point at the southwest corner to Glenside Dr at its intersection with Jackson Ave., and then proceeding up to Jackson to Holton to Wildwood to Lancaster and back to Glenside. Lancaster has large old trees; the other streets are primarily post-war and have fewer and smaller trees. **Action Items:** Colleen will draft advertisements for the Takoma E-blast (to go to Peggye Washington) and newsletter (deadline: Sept 14), and contact Todd to set up a walkthrough of the walk with him and ask him to extend the tree discount past the walk date. Carol will contact Diana Kohn about final route. Carol will contact Kate Stewart about putting out on Ward 3 list serves. Refreshments: Carol will provide table and cookies; Gresham will provide drinks; Colleen will provide cherry tomatoes and fruit.
6. Continue discussion of proposed “Natural Takoma” column in Takoma Park newsletter. New editor was profiled in latest newsletter: Apryl Motley. Kit Gage of FOSC, members of Hort Club expressed interest. [Secretary’s note: Cindy Dyballa, Co-Chair of Committee on Environment, stated that her group was interested in contributing as well on Wed after meeting.] Gresham unable to talk to David Blockstein about proposal as he was out of town. **Action Item:** Colleen will contact the new Newsletter editor for a preliminary conversation.
7. Update on Lidar mapping of tree canopy by University of Vermont. 2014 map now on line. Erkin Ozberk expressed concern about taking over project; he may require permission from supervisor (Sara Daines) to do project. We will continue to discuss ways forward on this. Colleen will contact Todd about how to move forward.
8. Discussion of meeting with Montgomery College professor Amanda Truett (Professor of Environmental Sciences) and concerned homeowner over construction and impact on trees. Homeowner showed photos of large construction vehicle on tree roots, no protection of trunk. Contractor had followed City instructions in a project on one side of New York Avenue but not other. Colleen spoke to contractor, who expressed willingness to change if given instructions. Colleen called Todd about issue but has not heard back. Amanda suggested having students forward best practices information to Administration but unsure if this would effect change in contractor’s treatment of trees.
- ~~8~~.9. New business: Send alert on watering trees to Peggeye for TP E-Blast (**Done**). Extend deadline for bulk buy. Current deadline Oct 17, same day as tree walk. Want to be able to distribute coupons and encourage participants in tree walk to take advantage of bulk buy. **Action Item:** Colleen will request that Todd extend deadline for bulk buy.
- 9.10. Tree root severing by Washington Gas. Discussion over whether it is appropriate for Tree Commission to contact Washington Gas directly on correct treatment of tree roots, or whether affected homeowner or other residents should contact company. No agreement reached on this.

Meeting adjourned 8:45 pm.