

TREE COMMISSION FEBRUARY 9TH, 2016

Present: Carol Hotton, Chair; Denny May, Tina Murray, and Colleen Cordes

Guests: Paul Chrostowski, Takoma Park Committee on the Environment. The City Arborist, Todd Bolton, also attended.

Discussion on Councilmember Tim Male's briefing to Committee on the Environment related to Solar

Energy and Tree Ordinance: Carol and Colleen, who attended the CoE meeting, shared their notes from it, as did Paul Chrostowski, who is co-chair of the CoE. Tim Male was invited to speak to the committee by one of its members. Those who attended the meeting reported that it appears the Council has not yet placed a discussion about possible changes in the Tree Ordinance on its agenda. There was agreement that the Commission should prepare background materials – possibly a two-pager with bullet points but with references available either in fine print or separately -- for the Council and city residents on the multiple environmental benefits of the City's tree canopy in a timely way. One idea was to review research on benefits posted on Casey Trees website. No deadline was set for producing this written document. **Action Items:** **Paul** said he would email Commission members information about some relevant studies. **Tina** will research Casey Trees resources that could be relevant for a Fact Sheet.

Continued Follow-Up to Tree Canopy Measurements and Goals: The Commission referred to the new data that the Montgomery County Office of Planning has put together, at the Tree Commission's request, a summary of GIS data from 2009 and 2013-14 on tree canopy cover in Takoma Park. The data is based on 2009 and 2014 studies carried out by the University of Vermont on land and water features for all of Montgomery County. Carol suggested the following potential agenda items for a Joint Tree Canopy Working Group, which has included CoE and Commission members in the past but to which other local organizations may also want to participate in:

- 1) How the issues of encouraging solar-power use and the tree canopy relate to each other.
- 2) What should the City's numerical goal be for tree canopy cover and, in that context, working with the county's LIDAR analysis.
- 3) What about biodiversity and resilience goals?
- 4) Planning for outreach and education in the city related to tree canopy issues.

Todd suggested a City numerical goal of 70 per cent tree canopy cover. **Action Items:** **Colleen** will contact Kathleen Nelson in the County Planning Office to ask if the County plans to continue regularly updating its LIDAR analysis of County-wide tree canopy cover. **Colleen** will ask Chris McGovern to help Todd receive the data in a format he can use. **Colleen** will check about how Casey Trees measures tree mortality, if it does. **Paul** will call Todd to discuss the issue of biodiversity and resilience. **Denny** will ask Todd to send us an inventory of street tree species. **Carol** will create a Doodle poll for scheduling a joint working group meeting.

Further Discussion of Tree Fest idea and County Green Festival: The county Green Festival on April 30 will be in Takoma Park this year, in the Community Center on Maple Avenue, from 11 am to 4 pm. The Commission agreed it would be good to ask for a table for the Green Festival and to ask to be next to the Native Plants table. Denny reported that Daryl Braithwaite, Public Works director,

suggested that Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk, would know if there is money related to tree matters that has been appropriated by the Council already but not yet allocated to specific expenses yet which might be an appropriate source to pay for some or all of the costs of bringing Douglas Tallamy to Takoma Park in October for a Natural Takoma talk. **Action Items: Carol** will contact Gina Matthias, the City's Sustainability Manager, to ask if we can have a table and be next to the Native Plants table. **Denny** will follow up with Daryl or Jessie about possible source of City funding for Tallamy talk. Colleen will draft a list of resources about where to buy native trees, including nursery addresses, which could be one handout at Green Festival and at Arbor Day.

Arbor Day: Arbor Day is April 9th this year, the first Saturday in April. Discussions for activities included possibly planting demos, pruning demos, something on pollinators.

Discussion of Continued Planning for Natural Takoma Articles in Newsletter: There was agreement that a conference call for the participating groups could decide on the process for going forward. There was also agreement that the Commission should facilitate a list of which organization would take the lead on specific articles. **Action Items: Colleen** will represent the Commission on a conference call with participating organizations.

Update on Casey Trees as Potential Friend/Partner in Takoma Park's tree efforts: Tina reported on her conversation and research related to Casey Trees. The organization has a tree farm in Virginia. Its executive director is former arborist in Takoma Park. Tina reported being encouraged that it might be possible in the future to work with Casey Trees. Carol noted that its historic mission is to focus on D.C.

*****New Business—Date for Next Meeting?** Carol reported she will not be in town for the next scheduled meeting of March 8th. The question was raised about rescheduling the meeting for Wed., March 16th. **Action Item: Gresham, Carol, Denny, Tina, and Colleen** all need to confirm if they could make a meeting if it is rescheduled for the night of Wednesday, March 16th???. Please respond on email to this Action Item.

(These minutes approved in online exchanges.)