

Minutes of the City of Takoma Park Tree Commission

August 11, 2020

By Carol Hotton

Location: virtual meeting by Zoom

Participants: John Barnwell, Bruce Levine, Co-Chairs; Carol Hotton, Secretary; Nancy Cohen, Commissioners; Daryl Braithwaite, Director, Public Works; Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk (meeting host)

Meeting convened at 6:45 pm.

1. Minutes for July meeting approved.
2. Bruce & John will leave Tree Commission when their terms end on September 30.
3. Urban Forest Manager update, presented by Daryl Braithwaite
 - a. 14 applicants for Urban Forest Manager position. Zoom interviews will begin in next few weeks. One Commissioner invited to participate in interview.
 - b. New tree permit process is now online.
 - c. Current Ordinance is still operative until the end of October.
 - d. Keith Pitchford will take the place of Jan for Montgomery College hearing tomorrow as City UFM.
4. Hearing tomorrow will begin at 6:45 pm. Commissioners' comments should be brief.
5. Updates on Council Ordinance Revision.
 - a. Last version passed July 29. A few small changes have been made since then. Jessie will circulate final version when it is available in the next few days.
 - b. Trees rated lower than 5 get no replacement. This places more burden on Public Works for replacement. How will City make up for lost funds/ replacement trees?
 - c. Resolution on Tree Canopy specifies creating a detailed strategy for tree planting by March 2021. New species planting list, and strategies for outreach and education, in process.
 - d. Addition to Ordinance: if more than 10 tree removed, a community meeting must be held in advance and documented in meeting minutes submitted as part of permit application. Directed toward major developments, such as the Montgomery College construction.
 - e. Donna Wright will write up summary of changes in Ordinance for website and newsletter.
 - f. Increase in tree replacement fees to \$350.
6. General Comments on process.
 - a. JB notes utilities are still exempt from Ordinance, and track record varied: PEPCO fairly cooperative but WSSC not so much.
 - b. Preference for natives desirable but should not be mandatory.
 - c. NC: revision process unnecessarily complex. Addition of subcommittee on revision and inclusion of community input, complicated process. Frequently, City Council seemed

unfocussed on process. Previous revisions depended more on staff and attorney input, less community outreach, which made process more efficient, though less inclusive.

Meeting adjourned 7:35 pm