

Commission Meeting Minutes
City of Takoma Park
April 13, 2021

The meeting convened remotely at 7:00 PM on April 13, 2021.

Attendees: Commissioners Carol Hotton, Chair (Ward 3), Nancy Cohen, Secretary (Ward 1), Bart Sheard (Ward 3), James Woodworth (Ward 2), and Marty Frye (Urban Forest Manager)

1. The Minutes from the March 9, 2021 meeting were approved (4-0) as revised and corrected on a motion by Carol Hotton, seconded by James Woodworth. Correction: The tree bulk buy has not been rescheduled for the Fall; it has been scheduled for the Spring 2021.
2. Public Comment: None
3. Urban Forest Manager Report (Marty Frye):
 - Marty Frye reported that the tree bulk buy program has been renamed to 'Plant a Tree' and that he had received 44 orders for 71 trees. The native shade trees will be planted on residential properties the week of April 26, 2021.
 - In addition, Marty Frye has identified 80 spaces, particularly in Wards 6 and 4, for tree planting. Some of these trees are replacement trees for previous plantings. A letter has been sent to adjacent homeowners requesting their approval for planting and their choice of specific species options. No planting dates have been scheduled but the goal is the second week in May. Commissioners Cohen and Woodworth requested a mapping of tree planting locations in the Plant a Tree program and the public planting.
 - The portal has been open for the roll out of electronic permit applications (tree impact assessments and tree protection plans). Electronic permitting will be more efficient, less redundant and save on paper and space.
 - The UFM also shared that Mike Tidwell, Takoma Park resident, is promoting efforts to remove vines from trees. With homeowners' consent, he has mobilized volunteers to cut vines on residential properties at no cost to the homeowner. This volunteer effort occurs every Saturday.
4. Chair's Comments:
 - Commissioner Hotton expressed her support for seminars on best practices on topics such as mulching, and tree protection and preservation. It was envisioned that the seminars would be offered to landscaping company personnel, property managers, and homeowners.
 - Commissioner Hotton shared that a City Council sub-committee was reviewing the existing Articles creating City commissions and committees as part of a broader review of City Commissions and Committees. She suggested that the Commission should be proactive in rewriting Article {2.16.020} which establishes the function of the Tree Commission. The adequacy of the Article was discussed, and the consensus of the Commission was to draft a revised statement for consideration by the subcommittee and/or Council. Commissioner Hotton volunteered to draft a revised statement and circulate it among Commissioners prior to the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Nancy Cohen
Secretary