

Advisory Committee on Trees, Jan 3, 2017

Call to order 7:10PM

Present: Charles Jackman (chair), Ethel Dutky (recorder), Robert Trumbule (member), Erin Josephitis (Environmental Coordinator), Connor Roessler (Chesapeake Conservation Corps member), Brian Townsend (staff liaison).

Review and approve November 2016 minutes with corrections.

Old Business:

Large Willow Oak in Library/Community Center lawn.

We discussed this large Willow Oak which has been in decline for several years. Decline is usually caused by damage or diseases of the roots. Attempts to reverse the decline (fertilization, aeration, mulch) have not slowed the decline. At present over half of the canopy has been removed because of death/decay in trunk and large branches. ACT is very concerned that this tree is a dangerous tree. The extensive decay in the trunk and branches can cause large parts of the tree to break and fall without warning. We advise that this tree be removed as soon as possible. We are very sad to lose this old tree.

New Business:

Arbor Day Celebration, April 8, 2017.

Arbor Day will be celebrated with a tree planting in Buddy Attick Park. Several areas near the parking lot were cleared of brush and trees by PEPCO during the recent line clearing. Brian suggested that a "Food Forest" theme be used to guide in selection of the trees. One tree suggested by ACT is the Oriental persimmon, *Diospyros kaki*. This is a small/medium sized fruit tree with a spreading crown. The bright orange fall fruits are beautiful and edible by both people and wildlife. It is not considered potentially invasive. Shadblow is another small native tree (*Amelanchier* spp.) that would be suitable and attractive. The white early spring flowers are followed by blue fruit, highly attractive to birds and people. Large native fruiting shrubs and the native hazel nut could also be used. In areas where tall trees could be used, the native red mulberry (*Morus rubra*) should be considered. Red mulberry has a mature height of 60 to 70 feet so is not suitable near utility lines.

Tree Tour set for May 20, 2017

The Public Works Open House is scheduled for May 20. We decided that the ACT "Significant Trees of Greenbelt Tour" could follow the Public Works Open House. We could do the tour in the early afternoon from 1 to 2 PM. The bus would leave from and return to the Public Works building.

Tree Master Plan

The City is moving forward with the Tree Master Plan. Ms Rachel Comte (Project Manager for the Tree Master Plan) has requested a meeting with ACT. We will invite her to our next meeting. Brian has collected a selection of documents on tree projects and ACT Recommended Tree lists. He will provide these to Ms Comte prior to the next ACT meeting on February 7, 2017.

Citizen requests a meeting with ACT.

Greenbelt citizen Cheryl Gleason has requested a meeting with ACT to discuss her concerns about the removal of "Bradford Pears" along Lake Crest Drive. She is also concerned about the plans to replace these trees. ACT will invite her to our February meeting.

Tree Expenditures

Brian presented a compilation of expenditures from fiscal 2016 on tree related items including both staff and volunteer labor; leaf removal; tree inventory; contract Arborist services; and other specific expenses. We had a detailed discussion of this topic and the need for additional labor for tree maintenance such as irrigation of recently planted trees.

Martin Luther King Day volunteer activity.

Erin Josephitis reported that she has organized a “Tree Protection” workday for Monday January 16, 2017. The volunteers will construct and install cages around trees near Buddy Attick Lake. Brian informed us that we have a new resident beaver. Now that the work on dredging and repairing the fore bays is done, the beavers can work to further protect Buddy Attick Lake from excess sediment in storm water.

Adjourn 9:15 PM

Next Meeting: Tuesday February 7, 2017 at 7 PM at the Public Works Building.

Submitted by Ethel Dutky