

ACT Meeting, March 15, 2011

Attending: Charles Jackman (chair), Ethel Dutky, Richard Olsen (guest), Bob Trumbule, Lesley Riddle (liaison Public works), Mike Fox (guest).

Review and approve minutes: defer to next meeting

Call to order at 7PM, meeting in the New Deal Café

Group Discussion about Tree List Project.

Richard asked what Nurseries Greenbelt Public Works is required to use and what is our existing recommended tree list? Lesley explained that although there are some recommended nurseries, Public Works may purchase from other sources.

Richard comments on Industry Trends in Urban Trees. Ash (*Fraxinus* species) is out (Emerald Ash Borer); American Elm (*Ulmus Americana*) – use only disease resistant cultivars. No seedling elm stock available.

The Asian Long-horned Beetle (ALB) is a serious potential threat to many shade trees species. Unlike many long-horned beetles, ALB attacks healthy trees. Maples are one of the favorite tree genera seen infested in China. A new disease on Black Walnut (Thousand Canker Disease) will cause major damage in the mid-Atlantic if/when it is found here. It was recently detected in Tenn. Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides* and cultivars) is now on invasive species lists. Some alternatives to Norway maple include: Shantung Maple (*Acer truncatum* and subspecies) a small (20 to 25 feet tall) round-headed tree with a neat outline and regular branching pattern. The subspecies mono is called the “Painted Maple”. Spring foliage is colorful, turning dark green, also has nice fall color.

Amur Maple (*Acer ginnala* and cultivars). A small tree (15 to 18 feet) often confused with Tartarian Maple (*Acer tartaricum*). Both small trees can be weedy (many seedlings). Hedge Maple (*Acer campestre*) is a medium sized tree (25 to 35 feet, sometimes to 70 feet). Good in dry alkaline soils, and withstands drought well.

Trident Maple (*Acer buergeranum*), a small (20 to 25 feet) graceful tree. Excellent red fall color. Older bark has pretty exfoliating character.

Red Maples (*Acer rubrum* and cultivars) are very widely planted in Greenbelt. Suggest look for locally adapted trees. Red maples don't age well in the mid-Atlantic.

Diversify our Oak species. Most oaks used here are white oak, pin oak, willow oak and some red oaks. Richard suggests try adding in some Overcup Oaks (*Quercus lyrata*). This bottomland (flood plain) species tolerates wet sites. Patuxent has good locally adapted trees.

Burr Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) also called the Mossycup Oak, a large forest tree (to over 70 feet), can be used as a distinctive specimen. It is tolerant of high pH and dry sites. We discussed the Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*). A native oak with a very wide growing range, it performs well in the mid-Atlantic. It is a large tree and requires excellent maintenance as it ages. We like this tree, it has a fine texture and nice form.

What is coming for oaks: More grafted oaks and more hybrids.

Bald Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) is a deciduous conifer, very tough and does well in compacted soils and wet sites. Ethel suggests that we contact the Cypress Swamp Park in Calvert County to obtain stock from that locally adapted population.

Lesley suggests that we should not forget Hawthorns. Lesley likes the Littlehip Hawthorn (*Crataegus spathulata*) a small tree (to 20 feet) or shrub native to the SE US. It has white flowers, fruit and seeds eaten by wildlife, and develops interesting exfoliating bark.

Japanese Pagodatree (*Sophora japonica*), although popular and widely planted, it has now been found to have weed potential and develops a serious canker problem when exposed to hard freezes and other stresses in production, shipping and in the landscape. We hesitate to recommend planting more Sophora.

Crapemyrtles. We all noticed how well the various crapemyrtles (*Lagerstroemia* species and hybrids) held up during the brutal (HOT and dry) 2010 summer. The USDA National Arboretum has an excellent poster on this genus. The hybrid cultivar 'Fantasy' is a small tree that is widely planted and is performing well in mid-Atlantic landscapes. The species *L. fauriei* was used in the Arboretum breeding programs. This small to medium sized tree (20 to 25 feet) has potential as a landscape tree. It has dark red bark which exfoliates to reveal a very smooth bark, thus the common name "Monkey Slip Tree". We agree that Crapemyrtles are especially good for hot sites and are in favor of using more of the larger species/hybrids.

Consider Crabapples (*Malus* species and hybrids) Always select cultivars with good disease resistance (look for resistance to Apple Scab and Fire Blight), this is a pretty, tough flowering tree. There are many hybrids with good disease resistance providing great variety in flower color, fruit color and size and habit. Some cultivars to consider include: 'Adirondiack'; 'Narragansett'; and 'Prairie Fire'.

The lace bark elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*) although a beautiful tree with good Dutch Elm Disease, it has become a weed problem in some southern areas. It thrives in hot, dry conditions. One cultivar to consider is 'Frontier'. This tree is readily available and was derived at the USDA National Arboretum through crossing a European species (*Ulmus minor* subsp. *minor*) with the lacebark elm (*U. parvifolia*). 'Frontier' combines resistance to both Dutch Elm Disease and Elm Yellows with attractive appearance and excellent tolerance to heat and drought. Another interesting old (from 1924) elm hybrid is 'Accolade'. Developed by the Morton Arboretum, it is a big tree (75 feet) and has durable DED and Elm Yellows resistance.

Discussion of Climate Change impacts on landscape and forest tree selection should encourage us to consider more Southern species and look for heat and drought tolerance. Dr Olsen predicts that as the mid-Atlantic grows hotter, the Sycamore and London Plane trees will decline and be unable to persist.

Persian Ironwood (*Parrotia persica*) has great potential for our area. It is a medium sized tree (20 to 40 feet). It is a slow growing plant, tolerant of stress; has wonderful fall color provided it is growing in full sun.

Report from Public Works by Lesley Riddle

A large willow oak in a playground near Gardenway needs to be removed because it is in very dangerous condition. ACT agreed that it should be removed.

Recently removed a number of Callery Pears along Hanover Pkwy and Kara Court due to storm damage. Another storm casualty, a very large maple came down in the Greenbelt Cemetary. This was a big cleanup job. A planting that functions to screen the cemetery is needed. Lesley suggests trying Cryptomeria and Bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*). Ethel suggests that American Holly could also be used. Bob suggests trying some *Thuja plicata* (aka Western Giant Arborvitae).

More removals: Two red oaks along Laurel Hill and some small maples along Empire Place.

Possible good news? The large willow oak near the Community Center seems to be callusing over the lightening strike.

Should Greenbelt join the Baltimore Washington Partnership for Forest Stewardship?

Charles moved and Bob seconded a motion that Greenbelt should join this organization. All were in favor.

Reminder from Lesley:

Arbor Day and Earth Day are on April 16 at Schrom Hills Park. A rain garden will be built and planted.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, April 5 at 7PM at the New Deal Café.

Meeting was adjourned at 9PM