

The Tree Commission Meeting for the City of New Castle took place on February 6, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. in the City of New Castle's Town Hall.

Members Present:       John Lloyd, Chairperson  
                                  Chip Patterson  
                                  Erv Thatcher  
                                  Tom Truman  
                                  Nancy Coning  
                                  Susan Keyser

Members Absent:        Fran Peden  
                                  Mark Miller

Mr. Lloyd convened the meeting at 5:30 p.m. Roll call was taken.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the 1/9/12 meeting.

#### Old Business

Russ Carlson has looked at the Douglas fir tree in the park and did not recommend pruning and a replacement tree will take a long time to reach the size of the current tree. Mr. Truman noted poison ivy in the tree that should be removed.

29 The Strand – The pin oak tree is entangled in wires and it is recommended the tree be removed. The top of the tree is dead. **Ms. Keyser made a motion that the tree be removed and Mr. Truman seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

141 E. 3rd Street – Norway maple tree that was cut severely for power lines. The shape of the tree is dictated by the primary wires. Mr. Patterson is not happy with the work that was done and questioned removing the tree. It was decided that no action be taken at this time.

#### Removal Requests

15 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street -- Sycamore tree in front of Mrs. Miller's house. Russ Carlson recommends removal of the tree. **Ms. Keyser made a motion to remove the tree based on Mr. Carlson's recommendation. Ms. Coning seconded and the motion was approved.**

242 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street – Mr. Carlson was not uncomfortable with the hole in the sycamore tree (15-20 ft. up the tree). There are disease organisms at the base of the tree caused by vehicles hitting the tree. Mr. Carlson does not recommend removal.

211 Harmony Street – Mr. Carlson suggested we could remove a large root section of the Kwanson cherry tree followed with extensive trimming to help balance it. A nearby homeowner requested removal of the tree.

Zelcova die-back – Mr. Carlson is still reviewing.

Memorial Park (4th and 3rd and Chestnut) – Mr. Lloyd reported a crab apple tree with severe fire blight. Mr. Carlson recommends the large leader containing the fire blight be removed prior to the spring. There is other dead wood in the tree that should be removed and trimming is needed. A requisition will be submitted.

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Locust tree in the circle near the sailing club – Mr. Carlson recommends removal of this tree. There is a lot of large dead wood in the tree and there is a cavity in the trunk of the tree. **Mr. Truman made a motion to remove the tree. Ms. Coning seconded the motion.** Ms. Keyser asked if a replacement tree will be planted. Mr. Lloyd said no immediate plans are being considered. Mr. Thatcher said in the next few years there will be a lot of construction in this area with the Living Shoreline project and raising of the dikes. It is not a good idea to consider planting another tree at this time. **The motion was approved.**

Mrs. Jodlbauer's tulip tree – Mr. Carlson recommends installing steel plates over the major root that runs to the wall. Work has started and discussion about grinding of the tree stump followed. Mr. Lloyd said more sidewalk is being installed than we would like to see. It encroaches on the existing tree. Steel plates would help to suppress the root and would benefit the homeowner, but that is the homeowner's decision. There has been no prior permission granted to cut the roots on this tree. Mr. Truman does not recall this particular tree being discussed prior to tonight. Discussion turned to who has permission to cut roots not greater than 1 inch to 1-1/2 inches in diameter, the open area around the tree (sidewalk/pavers), and the type of material used on top of roots that the ordinance mandates. It was agreed the Tree Commission will communicate with the homeowner about the open space around the tree and the materials being used.

639 Clymer Street (corner of 7th and Clymer) – Mr. Lloyd reported a pin oak that is showing no growth. He recommends removal. Ms. Keyser expressed concern with removal. This is not an emergency so it was decided to watch the tree for another year and revisit the matter.

31-39 East 4th Street – Zelcova severely pruned for utilities and needs to be removed. **Mr. Truman made a motion to cut the tree down. Mr. Thatcher seconded the motion and the motion was approved.**

44 West 4th Street – Mr. Lloyd considers the Kwanson cherry tree at this location to be dangerous and should be removed. Ms. Keyser said the homeowners in the area are protective of their trees and suggested Mr. Lloyd consult with the homeowner if a decision is made to remove the tree.

300 Harmony Street – There is a silver maple with three main trunks in front of this house. The homeowner is requesting removal. Ms. Keyser will look at the tree and sidewalk again. Mr. Lloyd recommends removal and asked that fellow commissioners look at the tree before a decision is made. Cost for removal of the tree and stump grinding would cost approximately \$400.

#### Pruning Requests

West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (near sailing club) – Five (5) trees need to have their branch levels raised. Vines have been removed. The fire department experiences problems with the GPS and radar antennas on its rescue boat coming into contact with the low branches. Ms. Keyser questioned the need for the pruning.

119 Delaware Street – Now is a good time to prune this tree. Some of the branches are high. *(Discussion followed.)*

Penn Street (near Progressive Club) – Tree branch levels need to be raised. The fire department and garbage truck are experiencing problems.

#### Budget Report

Mr. Lloyd reported a total of \$29,785 in expenses to date (July 2011 to present).

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Chairman's Report – A letter was sent to Delmarva Power expressing of our displeasure with the poor work recently performed in the City by their contractor, Asplundh. Mr. Lloyd has met with several representatives of Delmarva Power and their contractors. Recent work was reviewed and all agreed the work was not up to Delmarva's standards. Remedial work is now being done and everything will be corrected. Their pruning cycle is typically three years; however, fiber optic cable is being run in the City requiring earlier pruning.  
*(Discussion.)*

Mr. Lloyd would like to step down from his position as chairperson. No interest was expressed by fellow commissioners. Mr. Patterson reminded that there are two vacant seats currently on the Tree Commission. One commissioner resigned and two others have been unable to attend for many months.  
*(Discussion about the structure and path forward of the Tree Commission followed.)*

Members Reports

Erv Thatcher – There is a dead tree on the edge of the swamp behind Mr. Hines' former house. He is unsure who owns the property--the Trustees, City, or DelDOT. Mr. Lloyd will look into ownership.  
Nancy Coning – The homeowner at 65 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street has requested that her tree be pruned.

Adjournment

There being no more business to address, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

***Debbie***

Debbie Turner  
Stenographer