

The Tree Commission Meeting for the City of New Castle took place on September 12, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in the City of New Castle's Town Hall.

Members Present: John Lloyd, Chairperson
 Chip Patterson
 Erv Thatcher
 Susan Keyser
 Tom Truman
 Mark Miller

Members Absent: Fran Peden
 Nancy Coning

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Lloyd at 5:35 p.m. Roll call was taken.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the minutes of the June 2011 meeting. There was not a quorum for the July 2011 meeting.

Old Business

46 E. 3rd Street-Arborist Report – Homeowner Nancy Jodlbauer presented to the Commission. A tree in front of her home is heaving the sidewalk. It is about 6 inches from her step. Her insurance company has informed her the sidewalk issue is a safety matter and must be addressed immediately. The Tree Commission communicated with the insurance company advising the matter is being discussed. (*Ms. Jodlbauer detailed the situation.*) Mr. (Russ) Carlson's report was raised. Ms. Jodlbauer has read the report but believes the remedy in the report "postpones" current problems. Mr. Carlson's report says proper repair of the sidewalk entails lifting the brick and locating the roots that are causing the problem. Some roots under 1 inch to 1-1/2 inches can be cut. Ms. Jodlbauer said the roots causing the problem are larger. Raising the sidewalk would cause a problem with drainage and water in her basement, her foundation can be jeopardized, and her front steps compromised. Ms. Keyser agrees the problem roots are large. She would like the tree to be removed and another tree planted that is more appropriate. Mr. Miller and Ms. Keyser would like to speak to Mr. Carlson to better understand the drainage issue.

Mr. Truman made a motion to remove the tree. Mr. Thatcher seconded the motion. Mr. Miller does not feel he has the information needed to vote on this matter tonight. Mr. Truman withdrew his motion.

Mr. Lloyd asked the homeowner if she objects to deferring until October. She is concerned with getting the matter resolved before the winter months.

207 Brylgon Avenue-Arborist Report – The report on a red maple with leaf disease was reviewed.

14 West 4th Street-Arborist Report – The report on a willow oak being infected by a roadside problem (herbicide) was discussed. Mr. Lloyd has sent a letter to a neighboring resident recommending they not apply the herbicide again and the ramifications if the practice continues.

100 Stuyvesant Street – Two (2) Bradford pear trees – one had been cut by the homeowner and the other needed trimming. The Commission received a quote from Bob Rizzardi of \$380 to perform the work on both trees. The homeowner was going to pay half and the City the other half. The Commission needs to decide who will cut the tree and how the tree can and should be cut and the cost. Tree, Inc.'s quote was \$275. Mr. Patterson supports Tree, Inc. doing the work; Mr. Lloyd agrees. (*Discussion followed.*)

West 4th Street (between 4th Street and Williams Street) – A storm on 6/9/11 caused damage to a maple tree near the tennis courts that resulted in its removal. Its structure was poor.

Elm Trees – Mr. Lloyd reported that injections have been done on six (6) elm trees (approx. 8/9/11). He informed Ms. Keyser of an elm tree to be added to our inventory (corner of 3rd and Chestnut Street on Trustee property). The tree is in poor condition and discussion followed about possible causes. Russ Carlson has been requested to look at the tree. Ms. Keyser was aware of this tree but was told it was on private property.

230 East 2nd Street – We have given approval to remove one limb from a sycamore tree and have received a request to remove two (2) more limbs. Ms. Keyser is not in favor of removing additional limbs. She has looked at the tree and does not see any reason to remove more limbs. Mr. Lloyd would like the other Commissioners to look at the tree.

New Business

Mr. Lloyd received a copy of a letter from Mrs. Beverly Ross dated 8/18/11 to Jim Whisman concerning open area between the curb and sidewalk where Mr. Whisman wants to plant three (3) trees.

Mrs. Ross lives near the area of Delaware and 7th Street where the trees are being proposed. Photos of the area were provided to the Commission to further explain her position. Copies of these photos will be supplied to Chief McDerby as well. There have been a number of near-miss accidents at this location and she expressed concern with the trees creating more of a hindrance to motorists. There is already a traffic problem at this location. She has approached City Council on this matter. Yellow curbing has been extended and has helped a little. (*Discussion followed about location for planting, feasibility of planting, and street width.*) The Tree Commission would determine the number and size of trees if a planting is done. Mr. Lloyd wants to see what Chief McDerby's opinion is on this tree planting. Mr. Whisman's input would be helpful as well. (*Commission members discussed the potential planting with John Whisman, son of Jim Whisman.*)

111 The Strand – Mr. (Chris) Cashman lives across the street at 112 The Strand. He is requesting that a spruce street across the street be removed. He is willing to pay for the removal, restoration of the sidewalk, another planting in that location or elsewhere in the City. He said the tree blocks a large portion of his view as the reason for his request. He has spoken to the homeowner who has no problem with the tree being removed. That person has a garden that would likely benefit from the tree's removal. Ms. Keyser noted the tree is healthy. Mr. Patterson expressed concern with the rationale of obstructing views and that it is not the practice of the Tree Commission to remove a healthy tree. Discussion turned to possibly planting a more appropriate tree at this location. The consensus of the Commission was to not entertain this request.

202 East 6th Street – Diseased elm tree at the rear of this location behind Churchman's Auto. It is on Trustees' property and they had it removed.

Vandalism – Mr. Thatcher believes an ash tree in Battery Park has been damaged with a hatchet. It was estimated the damage was inflicted within the last three (3) weeks and is high in the tree. The tree was planted 20-25 years ago. Mr. Thatcher asked the police to look at the tree. Mr. Lloyd would like Russ Carlson to give us an evaluation/appraisal of the tree (estimated to be approx. \$10,000) making it a felony vandalism. The police will handle the situation from there. Insurance will be notified.

Mr. Lloyd distributed a list of tree removal requests, tree pruning requests, and tree planting requests. Ms. Keyser would like to look at the planting requests, look at the location and discuss. She has looked

at the trees on the list of tree removals. She and Mr. Lloyd will discuss the planting requests before the end of the month. A list of trees versus structures was also distributed for review. Most of these involve trees against houses and are submitted by homeowners. Mr. Lloyd advised Commissioners to consider, prioritize and vote on each location. *(Additional discussion.)* There are 13 Bradford pear trees remaining on Casimir Court in Van Dyke Village; some are more dead than alive. The homeowner at 4 Casimir Court, requesting 4 removals, does not want another tree planted. At 211 Harmony Street there is a Kwansan cherry that has caused the homeowner and a neighbor a significant amount of money to repair their sewer system. Ms. Keyser noted the tree is not the cause of the sewer problems. At the recycle area there are cork screw willows that need to be removed. They are both hazardous trees and limbs are falling from them. The area can be added to the plantings list.

Mr. Miller made a motion to remove the cork screw willow trees. The motion was seconded by Ms. Keyser and approved.

At the Heritage Trail they are concerned with not being able to see what is happening on the trail. We do not wish to reduce or remove the canopy.

903 Clayton Street and 803 Clayton Street, the small trees at both locations are dead.

Ms. Keyser made a motion to remove both trees. Mr. Truman seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

116-118 East 3rd Street – One maple tree has a lot of dead wood in it and the other maple tree is storm damaged.

Mr. Miller made a motion to remove both trees. Ms. Keyser seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

124 East 4th Street – During the recent hurricane a tree was uprooted and has been removed.

Mr. Lloyd requested the Commissioners to look at the remaining trees on the list to discuss.

Chairperson Report

Mr. Lloyd reported some work was performed over the summer, mostly trimming trees away from houses. This is part of a requisition for a purchase order that Mr. Lloyd submitted and received. The purchase order is for all the work with Tree, Inc. (\$5,175). We would like to do a root feeding with the elm trees (Bartlett), but if we decide to do that, a requisition will be submitted to the City.

Council President Barthel received correspondence from 212 Brylgon Avenue about a red maple on the 14th Street right-of-way. The homeowner is concerned the tree will fall on his house and would like to see the tree removed. The tree has a cavity on the back and is leaning. *(There was discussion about the cost of removal of trees and ownership of trees.)*

Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Patterson will attend the next City Council meeting (9/13/11) to explain how our monies are spent. Mr. Lloyd's intention is to prepare a list of requests from residents, get pricing, prioritize the list and submit a requisition. Commissioners were encouraged to attend the meeting.

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Adjournment

There being no more business to address, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie

Debbie Turner
Stenographer

