

MINUTES
City of New Castle Tree Advisory Commission
February 5, 2018 – 4 p.m.
New Castle Town Hall

Members Present: David Robinson, Chair
John Antonio
John Lloyd
Tom Maddux

Member Absent: Marco Boyce

Mr. Robinson called the meeting to order at 4 p.m.

Minutes – One correction was made. **A motion was made to approve the minutes as amended. The motion as seconded and the minutes approved.**

New Applications

2018-01 – 124 East Third Street (Miller) -- Mr. Robinson said the sidewalk undulates quite a bit; there is a large depression, but it has nothing to do with the tree. There is one small root that raises the sidewalk a bit.

Mr. Robinson reported two more applications (2018-02 & 2018-03) along Second Street involving sidewalk issues. All three residents want to keep the trees. We need to determine if the roots can be pruned, shaved, cut off or some other action taken.

Mr. Lloyd suggested getting Russ Carlson to evaluate each tree and give us a determination. Mr. Robinson thinks the City will pay for the evaluations. Work would need to be put out for bid or the individual homeowner could take the lead. However, the question is whether the City will pay for work that is needed.

Mr. Lloyd reminded that this body recommends to the City what needs to be done. The City will not be responsible for repairing sidewalks, per the new ordinance. In evaluating certain issues the sidewalk must be removed to look at the root system. Mr. Lloyd said this has to be considered when assessing the problem. The Tree Advisory Commission should not be involved with removing or constructing sidewalks.

Mr. Robinson thinks the Tree Advisory Commission should recommend bringing in a consultant to see what needs to be done.

Mr. Lloyd made a motion to have the consulting arborist look at the three applications on the agenda tonight. The motion was seconded and approved.

Old Business

Harmony Street – Mr. Robinson said the Municipal Services Commission (MSC) has agreed to remove the trees, but will not remove the stumps or put in replacement trees. MSC suggested leaving the stumps in place; the Tree Advisory Commission does not agree. Discussion turned to the species of tree and quantity to plant. No decision was made at this time.

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New Castle Court House – City Administrator Bill Barthel has been contacted by several residents asking to leave the space open where the two Zelcova trees were removed. Mr. Robinson spoke with Cindy Snyder at the Court House and she has no opinion one way or the other. Mr. Robinson suggested deferring planting trees in front of the Court House at this time. We would remove the stumps and replace the brickwork.

Ash tree – Mr. Robinson reminded that the ash tree near the fountain on the corner of Third Street and Delaware Street will be removed. The Lions Club has indicated they will replace the tree. The Tree Advisory Commission previously discussed the replacement tree to be a London Plain tree.

Tree Projects -- East side (river side) of Route 9 -- Mr. Antonio spoke about the work he is doing for the Trustees on the east side of Route 9 in the Dobbinsville area. He said the Trustees have not mentioned planting trees in the area. Mr. Robinson has spoken to some Trustees and believes they intend to do a tree planting.

West side of Route 9 -- Most all of the trees are unhealthy and many need to be removed. Mr. Robinson said there is room for about 40 trees between Washington Street and Dobbinsville. The Tree Advisory Commission had previously discussed planting crepe myrtle trees. Perhaps we should approach the Trustees about matching the crepe myrtle trees on the east side of Route 9. Mr. Lloyd mentioned the possibility of a new condominium project in the area that may require plantings as part of the project. He suggested leaving some of the area open.

Mr. Robinson will speak with City Administrator Barthel about getting quotes. Messrs. Robinson and Lloyd will assess the area and provide a number of trees to include in the quote.

Mr. Antonio made a motion to proceed with the tree plantings on the west side of Route 9 from Washington Street to Dobbinsville. Mr. Lloyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

New Business

Mr. Robinson informed that Ron Vukelich has offered to donate six Japanese horn beam trees for planting along Delaware Street. There was a mistake with the nursery Mr. Vukelich used to order certain trees and he received the wrong trees. The nursery is replacing with the correct trees, so Mr. Vukelich is donating the Japanese horn beam trees. They have been planted elsewhere in the City and the Tree Advisory Commission would need to dig them up and replant them. Mr. Robinson said Mr. Vukelich has some workers who would help with the planting at a reasonable cost.

Mr. Lloyd made a motion to get the trees and plant them in front of the Methodist Church. The motion was seconded and approved.

Dobbinsville – Mr. Robinson was contacted by a resident who is upset that DelDOT removed a tree near his home (as part of their South Street/Seventh Street project). He

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wants a replacement tree, but the planting area is very small. Commissioners discussed planting an arborvitae as an option. Commissioners will look at the area soon.

Mr. Lloyd said that Asplundh has done or is going to be doing some pruning in the City on behalf of Delmarva Power. He suggested keeping a close eye on their work to ensure they pay attention to detail. Mr. Lloyd will look into getting a schedule of the work.

Public Comments – None.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Debbie Turner
Stenographer

(Stenographer not present at meeting; minutes transcribed from recording.)