

MINUTES  
City of New Castle Tree Advisory Commission  
January 7, 2019 – 4 p.m.  
New Castle Town Hall

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

Mr. Robinson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Roll call followed and a quorum was declared.

**New Applications**

**101 E. Third Street – Bob Short**

Mr. Short submitted an Application to have a Mulberry tree removed. Mr. Maddux noted that he inspected the tree and recommended that the tree be removed.

**Mr. Maddux made a Motion to remove the Mulberry tree at 101 East Third Street. The Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.**

Mr. Robinson suggested that one or two trees be planted in place of the Mulberry tree, and Mr. Short stated that he would speak with Ron Vukelich. Mr. Robinson noted that Mr. Vukelich would probably want to plant Parrotia trees, which are the same tree species in the area.

**Miscellaneous**

**Harmony Street**

Mr. Robinson asked if the Commissioners had seen the Paper Bark Maple trees on Harmony Street and how nice they look.

Mr. Boyce joined the meeting at 4:03 pm.

**Tree Roots in Sidewalks**

Mr. Robinson stated that he spoke with Mr. Barthel about issues with tree roots in sidewalks, and Mr. Barthel advised that was a property owner issue and it is not a Tree Commission concern. Mr. Lloyd asked what the procedure would be if someone submits an Application to have a tree removed stating roots upheaving the sidewalk as the reason for the removal, and Mr. Robinson stated the Commission would pass it on to the City Council. Mr. Robinson noted that the Commission's practice has been to approve tree removal if there is structural damage to a building, not because there is sidewalk upheaval caused by the root system. Mr. Robinson added that he recommended City Council establish a policy. The Commissioner's conducted a discussion of various circumstances that would require tree removal, and it was noted that Mr. Vukelich has done an outstanding job of addressing sidewalk issues throughout the City and in most cases there has been no damage to the tree.

**Mulch**

Mr. Lloyd asked if there had been an update on mulching trees, and Mr. Robinson advised he had a conversation with Mr. O'Neal in which he requested that established trees not be mulched.

**Trustees of the New Castle Common**

Mr. Robinson noted that there are a number of issues with trees on Trust property and suggested that the Tree Commission draft a letter outlining the issues: (1) trees that require attention from a professional

arborist, and (2) removal of the six Kentucky Coffeetrees planted at the tennis courts, three on Third Street and three on Fourth Street, that drop leathery pods which accumulate on the streets and in the gutters. Mr. Robinson noted that he had a conversation with one of the Trustees, but nothing has been done. He also recommended that the letter include the mulching issue. After discussion, the Commissioners agreed that a letter should be sent to the Trustees, followed up by personal contact. Mr. Robinson noted that the practice of the Trustees is to read correspondence received aloud at their meetings and the Commissioners could attend the meeting to stimulate discussion. Mr. Maddux will draft a letter.

Mr. Antonio joined the meeting at 4:16 pm.

### **Various Tree Issues**

Mr. Maddux noted several issues:

- A Norway Maple tree on the property adjacent to the post office on Delaware Street has been damaged severely by trucks and suggested it was becoming hazardous.
- A Silver Maple tree at 1200 Delaware Street next to Domino's Pizza should be removed. During discussion, the ownership of the property was unclear, and Mr. Boyce will try to determine if they are in the DelDOT right-of-way and report at the next Commission meeting. During discussion, it was noted that there is a written procedure in the Ordinance for tree removal by either the City or the property owner, and that the City has the authority to demand tree removal. Mr. Boyce noted that about 50 years ago many Silver Maple trees were planted in the City and they are all reaching their end.
- Mr. Maddux suggested the Commissioners inspect the pruning that was done by the City on the Ash tree in front of the Arsenal.

### **Sewer Main**

Mr. Boyce noted that he had experienced issues with a sewer backup caused by tree roots, which was a County issue. He added recommended that anyone experiencing similar issues, particularly on The Strand, call the Emergency Line for assistance. He also noted that they were very responsive and offered to assist with cleanup.

There being no further business, Mr. Robinson called for a Motion to adjourn the meeting.

**A Motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:25 pm was made, seconded and unanimously approved.**

Kathy Weirich  
Stenographer