

MINNEAPOLIS TREE ADVISORY COMMISSION

Meeting of December 15, 2022

Held remotely via Zoom

Decision/Consensus/Assignment items are set out in bold.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ARE RESPECTFULLY REQUESTED TO REVIEW THESE MINUTES CAREFULLY FOR ASSIGNMENT AND ACTION ITEMS PERTAINING TO THEM

The meeting of the Minneapolis Tree Advisory Commission (MTAC) of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) convened at 5:30 p.m. on December 15, 2022, with the following Commission Members in attendance: Co-Chair Peggy Booth, Co-Chair Peter MacDonagh (U of M liaison), Steve Nicholson (MN Shade Tree Advisory Committee), Tim Keane), Giuseppe Marrari, Don Willeke (Mayor's Representative), Carol Sersland, Linea Palmisano (City Council), Ralph Sievert (MPRB Forestry Director), Steve Collin (Public Works),

Not in attendance: Susan Olmsted, Curt Hartog (Executive Director for MPS Facilities, School Board Representative), MPRB Commissioner Steffanie Musich (District 5 MPRB Commissioner).

Guests in attendance: Philip Potyondy (MPRB Sustainable Forestry Coordinator), Danielle Schumerth (Forestry Outreach Coordinator).

CALL TO ORDER AND MINUTES

Co-Chair Booth called the meeting to order. **The MTAC meeting minutes for November 17, 2022, were approved with the correction: Mary Magers, Forestry Department Administrative Assistant in attendance. Jane Olafun (sic) was also in attendance.**

EMERALD ASH BORER (EAB) TREE ASSESSMENT & REMOVAL COSTS

Palmisano will have more on tree assessments and removal costs at a future date.

Forestry has prepared a Private Tree Removal FAQ sheet for Homeowners. It was emailed to MTAC on December 15th. MacDonagh introduced the FAQ and provided an overview description.

Discussion followed regarding the possible edits. Sievert explained that this document was done using the city's communication and marketing staff with input from data analytics staff – who provided analysis of the numbers and locations – with additional information from Forestry. At this time, the Department does not have a specific number of trees and/or property owners that EAB condemnations may affect. Staff were also trying to analyze condemnations/assessments and who this might become a hardship for. In an analysis completed a few years ago, the general determination was that most assessments were under \$2,000 with the average being approximately \$700. Additionally, the tax assessments were concentrated in areas of the City averaging more than 50% people of color.

It's also possible that another publication could be developed to notify citizens of the EAB outbreak and its consequences.

The feedback from the MTAC would be needed within the next week. An email to Sievert would suffice. The FAQ document is planned to be posted on the website tomorrow.

It will be distributed on the website and perhaps also at community recreation centers. Perhaps also there would be public involvement activity.

UPDATE since the December meeting: The FAQ is posted on the website:

https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/PrivateTreeRemoval_QA.pdf

DISCUSSION OF DRAFT MTAC BY-LAWS

Booth introduced the MTAC Draft By-Laws e-mailed to MTAC members on December 13th. Co-Chair Booth described the process for By-Laws update and adoption: Today the Commission makes the changes they want and endorses those changes. The updated By-Laws are then presented to the Park Board by Sievert, and the Board approves the By-Laws. Thanks to Sievert, and Danielle Schumerth, and Carrie Christiansen (Planner) for working with the background material which MacDonagh supplied.

Booth then reviewed the existing By-Laws by highlighting important points. One point she highlighted was that a previous goal of the MTAC “coordinates fiscal resources” was removed.

Motion and second to approve the By-Laws and then entertain modifications/ consider the wording and make changes.

Discussion with friendly amendments:

Under Membership: Replace “are” with **“Shall be”** 15 members’

Under Compensation: Replace “is no” with **“Shall be no”** compensation’

Under Charge: Replace “appoints” with **“shall appoint”** members

Under Charge: insert the **City of Minneapolis**, and other agencies

Replace heading Commission “Role” with Commission **“Responsibilities”**

Replace heading “Formation and Retirement: with “Commission Formation and **Dissolution”**

Under Commission Formation and Dissolution: Replace ‘retired’ with **“dissolved”**

Under Commission Formation and Dissolution: Replace current sentence ‘The Commission can be retired through MPRB Board action’ with **‘The Commission may only be dissolved through MPRB Board action after a public hearing.’**

Under Meeting schedule: Replace ‘meets’ with **“Shall meet”**

Under Meeting schedule: Replace ‘monthly’ with **“at least six times per year”**

Under Commission Responsibilities: Add, at the end of point 6 **“affecting the urban forest”**.

Under Residency Requirement: Strike/remove “It is encouraged but not required that other MTAC members reside in Minneapolis.”

Under Meeting Rules and Item 4. Voting Requirements: Replace ‘shall’ with **“are expected to”** and add, after ‘attend’, **“a majority of”** all scheduled meetings’

It was suggested that the Forestry Department keeps track of the year a resident member is in of their two-year appointment (i.e., year one or year two).

A motion was made to adopt the amendments and changes to the By-Laws. The vote was in favor of adopting the friendly amendments. The secretary will make the updates and send for review.

MPRB FORESTRY DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Arbor Day is April 29th at Windom Park (Lowry Avenue NE and Johnson Street NE).

The Department is in the process of getting tree purchase bid specifications for 9,700 trees. There will be a variety of species and they are bare root. The tree delivery site will be under the Washington Avenue bridge. The one part of this process that has changed from previous years is that a portion of the money is from the ARPA (American Rescue Plan) fund. Therefore, the procurement staff must make sure that this is included in the bid specifications.

Inflation Reduction Act has money for urban forestry programs over the next 10 years to which the Forestry Department can apply.

Metro Transit is in the process of building large bus stops and proposing to remove trees as well as locations for future trees. **We should invite a Metro Transit representative to visit and present and field questions regarding their tree removal designs.** This is a region wide application/plan/effort.

Sievert described the Hennepin Avenue South project (from Lake Street to Douglas-block north of Franklin) and Craig Pinkala's efforts to rate trees in the corridor and prioritizing their preservation (using GIS maps). Kimley-Horn are the engineering designers. Green stormwater infrastructure vs good strong existing trees is being reviewed. Taking a healthy tree could be more "like moving a cemetery" in its impact assessment. Mapping tree locations could be like mapping utilities.

Shade tree short course –scheduled for March and MTAC members will be covered to attend.

Motion and second to have MTAC contact Metro Transit with the Met Council – action item regarding Metro Transit invite to explain the proposed bus stop designs.

Motion and second to send correspondence expressing MTAC's concern with the tree impacts created by Metro Transit's proposed and planned transit designs, with support requested from Sievert (representing the City Forestry Department) and Hennepin County (Dustin Ellis) as well as the Shade Tree Advisory group. MacDonagh take the lead in developing a communication stating MTAC's concern regarding the tree removal.

MTAC BUSINESS

Co-Chairs Booth and MacDonagh

Conflict of interest form was emailed to the MTAC on December 6th. **Each member is responsible for knowing if they have a conflict of interest and then completing the form.**

MTAC reappointment status. No news on status at this time.

MTAC's Co-chair position is open because of Booth's retirement from the Commission. MacDonagh would like to have a co-chair. MPRB President makes the final decision on the MTAC appointments and are made at the first 2023 Board meeting.

As Booth's last meeting: what advice might you have for us?

Booth has appreciated the commitment and passion of the MTAC members. She encouraged us to Respect all those who are engaged in engineering the City and making it a better place. She also encourages us to pull in more young people and people of diverse backgrounds. Be active in the

community to further MTAC's goals. Note to the MTAC for future Annual Reports, she has many photos to contribute to the Annual Report or other presentations.

Resolution of thanks to Peggy Booth for her many years of service at the next meeting.

Peggy makes her final motion to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT

The Commission's Meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Carol Sersland – Commission Secretary