

MINNEAPOLIS TREE ADVISORY COMMISSION

Meeting of August 18, 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 August 18, 2022, with the following Commission Members in attendance: Co-Chair Peggy Booth, Co-Chair Peter MacDonagh (U of M), Steve Nicholson (MN Shade Tree Advisory Committee), Carol Sersland, Tim Keane, Don Willeke (Mayor's Representative), Ralph Sievert (MPRB Forestry Director), Steve Collin (Public Works), Curt Hartog (Executive Director for MPS Facilities, School Board Representative), MPRB Commissioner Steffanie Musich (District 5).

Not in attendance: Susan Olmsted, Giuseppe Marrari

Guests in attendance: Philip Potyondy (MPRB Sustainable Forestry Coordinator).

CALL TO ORDER AND MINUTES

Co-Chair Booth called the meeting to order. **The MTAC meeting minutes for July 21, 2022, were approved.**

MTAC 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report presentation to the MPRB has been rescheduled for September 7th
Time on the agenda and how to access will be forthcoming.

Booth presented the Annual Report PowerPoint for our review. The consensus is that it is a stellar presentation with important information for the Board to digest. This Report may be presented to a City Council committee also, depending on the City's current processes.

The major edit discussed was to broaden Recommendation #1 from 'park' trees to "trees on publicly owned property".

Booth wanted to discuss the point about increasing tree canopy on private property and an existing ordinance regarding removal and replacement of EAB trees on private property. The City, however, needs to put funds towards this activity. How is the ordinance worded? **(See August 23rd, 2022 email from Chair Booth with links to the City ordinance:** The ordinance language is in [399.60 Abatement of Private Property](#) .) Private property including rental properties could use incentives to plant trees. For example, rental properties are regulated in 'tiers' in which properties are affected by different regulations based on their assigned 'tier' (e.g. inspections). Tree replacement could be a way of incentivizing owners to get into a higher tier. Focusing on the importance of planting on private property might be another way to approach this issue, to the MPRB. Emphasis on the ratio of ash trees on public vs private is 1 to 4 (40,000 public removed vs 120,000 private to be removed). In other words, there are four times as many private as public.

The suggestion was made to present existing remaining canopy as a percentage of what will be lost. But the department can't provide an accurate percentage. An estimate of the number of trees could be provided: 200K ash in Minneapolis and 40K are/were in the street and park population...remaining 160K would be on private property and/or woodlands. Question about the Number of trees that have been condemned on private property? **Potyondy can check on this.**

Use the Report Presentation as a 'recruitment' tool to get volunteers or students involved.

MPRB FORESTRY UPDATE

Sievert started his report regarding Green Minneapolis (GM) and forest credits applied to Minneapolis. The process is now in the hands of GM and the Forestry Council. There could even be a check, i.e. dollars, to the Forest Department in 2022. Comment was made regarding carbon credits and that sequestration is a 'fool's errand' because the carbon will be released eventually from the tree. One factor in the carbon credits favor, however, is that an urban tree is 12 to 14 times more valuable for carbon sequestration than the same tree in a forest as well as other factors.

Mature tree decline is occurring throughout the City. Sievert doesn't have a specific cause to point to, though examples were poor arbor practices from long ago, injuries, safety. Potyondy mentioned the number of 2,000 trees that have been affected.

Davey Research representative visited the Department on how to use *Tree Keeper* and how to make it be more effective in its use. *Tree Keeper* tracks the reason for the trees' demise. Actually, there are 2-3,000 trees coming down per year as part of regular maintenance and other causes. It was asked if tree maps could be posted online?

An offer has been made to the selected candidate for Forest Outreach Coordinator (FOC). The candidate has passed the background check, so the start date is being negotiated and the finalist needs to inform their current employer, and then the announcement can be made.

Watering trees continues.

Tree planting with Xcel Energy will take place on September 10th near St Anthony Pkwy and Stinson in NE. They will be planting 80 trees. **Sievert will send a notice.**

Survivability study is ongoing. Potyondy met with Robert Buck, the volunteer researcher for the study.

Some discussion about former MTAC members and participants. See blog on Robin Garwoods canoe trip down the length of the Mississippi River:

<https://robingarwood.com/artwork/4983433-gone-on-the-river.html>

2022 MTAC Assignment Updates: MTAC City Council Liaison

Follow up to the July meeting's City Council rep discussion— Lisa Goodman has been out of town and Willeke will contact her. **Musich will contact Andrew Johnson to find an appointment to join the MTAC. Booth is looking for volunteers to follow through on City Council ordinance on proactive ash removal and planting. Booth will schedule a presentation before the City Council Committee.**

MTAC FIELD TRIP

MacDonagh scheduled a tour of Heritage Landing (Hwy 55 and Aldrich) public housing for our October 20th meeting. **Could we start at 4:30 pm (base on the daylight factor)? Yes, we can. MacDonagh will send a note with details.**

NEW BUSINESS

Booth mentioned the City Trees fall low-cost tree program/sale sponsored by the Minneapolis Health Department will be starting (350 trees). (Booth sent the announcement in an August 17th email). Sydney Schaaf is the contact. Ms. Schaaf also informed Booth of a Community Forestry Corps Member (a part of AmeriCorps) starting with the Department at the end of August. This individual would be offering free pruning services to people who participate in the tree program. **Booth will follow up with Ms. Schaaf regarding a short presentation.** Tree sale list comment: no conifers included. Consideration is that more conifers be included in the planting. The lack of conifers may be a timing issue because planting in the fall trees don't have time to establish. Tree Trust oversees the tree selection. (In addition, often there is a conflict between what we want and what the public thinks they want.)

ADJOURNMENT

The Commission's Meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:00 p.m.
Respectfully submitted: Carol Sersland – Commission Secretary