

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP TREE COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
Monday, April 18, 2016
5:30 pm

I. ATTENDANCE

The Tree Commission held its regular meeting on Monday, April 18, 2016 at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

Commission: Marc McDill, Chairman	Staff: Lance King, Arborist
Mike Jacobson, Vice Chairman	Dave Modricker, Director of Public Works
Darlene Chivers	
Troy Bayletts	

II. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. McDill called the Monday, April 18, 2016 Ferguson Township Tree Commission meeting to order at 5:38 pm.

III. APPROVAL OF MARCH 21, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. McDill made a motion to APPROVE minutes from March 21, 2016. Mr. Bayletts seconded the motion.

IV. PINEY RIDGE DRAINAGE PROJECT

Mr. King stated that he is working with Ron Seybert (Township Engineer) and David Modricker on the plan to resolve the issue of drainage and flooding of the homes and area of Piney Ridge. He stated that there are trees that will be affected by the proposed plans, which are mostly trees that were planted by residents in the right of way, but are not considered "street trees". Mr. Modricker outlined the scope of the swale that will be created. Mr. King showed the Tree Commission pictures of the trees that need to be removed to accommodate the proposed plans. One tree in particular is already becoming an issue for safety at an intersection and the removal of the tree will be beneficial in the future. Mr. Jacobson asked if the Township planned to replant trees in this area. Mr. Modricker stated that the Township does not have plans to replant the trees since the township has not acquired the easements to do so. Mr. Modricker also stated that the township was planning on posting these trees and going through the Public Hearing process since the ordinance states that is the process. A concern was expressed that the residents may ask that the trees not be removed, which in turn would change the scope of the work for the swale and create more problems in the future. Mr. McDill stated that since this tree is a safety issue that it could be taken down without having to go through the process of a public hearing. Mr. King stated the township could speak with the residents to obtain their consent. Mr. McDill and Ms. Chivers both expressed a concern that the Township may lose the trust of the residents if decisions are made without their consent or if the township went ahead despite talking to residents. Mr. Jacobson asked if a sign could be placed at each tree that is going to be affected giving notice that the tree is going to be removed. Ms. Chivers suggested that a letter should be sent to the property owners of the affected trees giving them notice as well. Mr. Modricker said that prior to the Tree Commission being formed the township would give notice to all affected residents of a proposed project that any object in the right of way should be removed or could be damaged by the contractor during the project. Mr. Modricker said that if the recommendation of the tree commission is to not have a public hearing, then a letter and notices would be sent to the

individuals affected by the project. The Tree Commission said that would be beneficial. Mr. King will put letters together and mail them out.

V. SUBBURBAN PARK TREE REMOVALS

UAJA is replacing a section of a sewer main that currently runs through Suburban Park. UAJA has proposed moving the current sewer line from along the back edge of the park down 33 feet into the park. This would affect several park trees and avoid the private trees along the properties bordering the back of Suburban Park. Mr. King stated that about twelve trees would be affected and among those twelve trees 6 are considered a greater loss. Mr. King showed pictures of the affected trees. Mr. King also explained that this is a separate project from the one discussed at the previous month's tree commission meeting. The proposed plan from UAJA was shown to the Tree Commission. Mr. Jacobson asked why the sewer line is placed where it is and if could be moved to avoid removing the trees. Mr. Modricker showed on the proposed plan where the existing line is, where the new line is proposed to go, and where all the other property lines are in relation to the sewer line. There is a basketball court directly below the proposed sewer line. The Tree Commission members asked if the sewer line could be moved to in between the existing sewer line and the row of trees that UAJA wants to remove. Ms. Chivers asked if the basketball court could be removed instead of the trees being removed. Mr. Modricker said that he would discuss the plans with Corey Miller at the Board of Supervisors meeting later that evening and hopefully get answers to questions that the Tree Commission has for the proposed plan.

VI. ARBOR DAY 2016

Mr. King said that everything is still on track for Arbor Day. Pam Ford is putting together a scavenger hunt. Centre Region Parks and Recreation is putting together a craft event. Ferguson Township is planting two trees in the parking lot and handing out the seedlings. Steve Miller will be present to read the proclamation. Mr. McDill asked if there is a plan if it rains. Mr. King stated that the day will go as planned even if it rains and that they would make use of the pavilions that are reserved in Tudek Park. The Tree Commission members will be at Arbor Day at different times as their schedules permit. Ferguson Township will provide lunch for the master gardeners since they are contributing their time.

VII. REVIEW ^{4th} DRAFT OF THE TOWNSHIP TREE PLAN

Mr. King stated that he incorporated comments from the previous Tree Commission meeting into the current draft of the tree plan. Mr. McDill stated that he still needs to give Mr. King comments on the Township Tree Plan. Ms. Chivers said that the Program Goals are very well laid out and very clear. Formatting issues will be addressed in the future. Pictures from Arbor Day may be incorporated in the Tree Plan layout.

VIII. WEBSITE REVIEW

Mr. King showed the TC what is on the township website as of right now regarding tree information. Ms. Chivers commented that what first appears on the website regarding trees is not attractive. Mr. King reviewed all the main points that are currently listed on the website. Mr. McDill stated that mulch volcanos need to be addressed on the website. Contact information is available for the members of the Tree Commission as well as the township arborist, Lance King. Mr.

Jacobson said that there needs to be menus to navigate the website. Mr. McDill said that there needs to be links to different parts of the website. The purpose of the Tree Commission needs to be clearly stated on the website. Mr. McDill asked if the new member of the tree commission had been determined. Mr. King stated that the new deadline to apply has not yet been met. Mr. McDill suggested ideas for the topics of the links on the website (trimming, tree diseases, permits, etc.). Mr. King showed that the website does currently list some of this information on the township homepage, for example Arbor Day. Mr. King will get in touch with Diane Griffin for design ideas for the tree aspect of the website. Ms. Chivers stated later that the approved list of trees needs to be on the website.

IX. ARBORIST REPORT

Mr. King updated the Tree Commission on the completion of stump removal for this year. There are a few stumps that need to be removed that were missed and a purchase order is being drawn up to take care of these. Mr. King said he met with Mr. Behrers and they staked out the new locations of the trees to be planted. Some of the locations need to be adjusted due to being on top of gas and cable lines, or driveways. Planting should start in the next few days. Mr. King said that the part time landscapers have started working at the township building. Mr. King stated that there has been an act of vandalism at the student housing complex in the Turnberry Development in which a tree was damaged. The tree will be replaced in the future. Mr. King is working with a homeowner on Setter Run Lane on an issue of mowing on top of roots. Mulch may be a suggestion for remediation of the problem. Mr. King stated a drunk driver damaged two Tulip Poplar trees on Shellers Bend. The township has been in contact with the driver's insurance company and they will pay to have the trees removed and replaced. Mr. McDill said that the cost is not going to be the cost of a tree that size. Mr. Modricker is not asking for the full value of the tree, only the cost of the replacement of the tree. Mr. King said that the township is going to plant a few replacement trees on Old Gatesburg Road. Galen Dreibelbis does not want to replace the trees himself so the money that was given to the Township as a maintenance bond will be used to replace the trees. Mr. King said that there are a few trees he was contacted about on Meadowview Drive in Thistlewood. He said that they are Ash trees that are falling apart and a survey is being done to determine if they are the township's responsibility. Mr. King spoke about the Young Scholars plan and that no landscape changes were being made. State College Alliance Church took the recommendations that the Tree Commission gave on their plan and made the changes. A variety of trees were used as well as native trees. The TC members were very impressed that the recommendations were listened to. Mr. King stated that Mr. Fozard replacement tree project is on hold due to Fox Hill's insurance certificate being incomplete. Mr. McDill asked about the remediation on Blue Course Drive. Mr. King stated he performed some soil testing. The results of the testing showed that there is no phosphorus and no potassium but high levels of nitrogen. The Tree Commission members suggested the use of PSU to test the soil samples instead of using the test kits from Lowes. Ms. Chivers said she would pick up some test kits from PSU for Lance. Mr. King will lay out plans for Blue Course once results are determined from the soil samples. Mr. King showed the Tree Commission members the Pine Grove Mills Stewardship Plan. The township owns a portion of the forest on Pine Grove Mountain. The only thing that had been done with the plan is the area was surveyed. The plan is at least 10 years old and the area has changed quite a bit. Mr. King said obtaining grant money is not possible. He said that when the plan was done there was a large amount of hemlocks but now those hemlocks are mostly gone. There is not much access to portions of the forest that the township owns. Using Google Earth and Webia, Mr. King showed the Tree Commission members exactly where the township owns in the forest. Mr. McDill suggested

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that a certain portion could be used as a recreational area. Mr. King said that a good portion of Slab Cabin Run is on these parcels. Ms. Chivers suggested to give the parcels to DCNR or use them as a trade in the future. The Tree Commission members would like to take a look at the forest and may try to include it in the township tour in the future. Mr. King will distribute the Pine Grove Mountain Stewardship Plan to all the Tree Commission members for review.

X. COMMUNICATIONS TO COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mr. McDill asked how to communicate to residents with too much mulch around the trees. Mr. King said he has hangers to put on the doors giving the residents notice.

XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The May 16th 2016 Tree Commission has been cancelled due to more than half the members being unavailable to meet.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the April 18, 2016 Tree Commission regular meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Modrick", written over a horizontal line.

David Modrick, Director of Public Works
For the Tree Commission