

Tree Board

May 11, 2010

The regular meeting of the Germantown Tree Board was held on Tuesday, May 11, 2010 at the Parks and Recreation office, 2276 West Street.

PRESENT

Wade Morgan
Kevin Young
Sidney Kuehn, Chairman
LeAnn Byrum
Pam Beasley

ABSENT

Dike Bacon
Paul Bruns
Mike Mabe
Shawn Posey

Roll call and establishment of quorum

The quorum was established with five members present.

Approval of Minutes for January and February, 2010

It was moved by Mr. Young, seconded by Mrs. Byrum to approve the January 12, 2010 minutes as revised. Motion approved.

There was not a quorum for the February 9, 2010 meeting. However, notes derived from the meeting were discussed. Landmark representatives were present and were asked to give their presentation. They requested a copy of the minutes but both the Chairman and the secretary listened to the tape and found the notes inaudible.

It was moved by Mr. Young, seconded by Mrs. Byrum to approve the February 9, 2010 minutes as amended. Motion approved.

Director's Report

Tree Inventory

Ms. Beasley reported that the outcome and results of the tree inventory conducted in the fall of 2009 has not been sufficiently reviewed. One of the things they did was to update the Management Plan, which includes medians, trimming guidelines, utilities, charts listing types and condition of trees. The budget and maintenance schedule is included as well. Everything has been completed and a copy has been forwarded to the Public Services Department because they are the department that maintains the pruning and maintenance of the trees for the City. This document is what they will work from. There are guidelines for pruning trees, when to prune, and diagrams of how to prune them, how to remove a stump, when a tree needs to be removed, etc., so the document serves as an educational tool for maintenance workers. The City does not have an urban forester or arborist on staff so it is the responsibility of the Parks and Recreation and Public Services departments to make sure that the workers out there

pruning a Crepe Myrtle or taking a small Oak tree down because of damage, etc., understand what the maintenance requirements are.

An inventory was conducted on 999 trees going west to east along Wolf River Boulevard starting at the City boundary and going past Houston High School, which included parts of Kimbrough and Farmington Blvd. Ms. Beasley stated that staff, with the assistance of the Tree Board, hope to, as grant funds are available, identify the north to south medians, which would include Hacks Cross, Riverdale, and Dogwood roads.

Ms. Beasley reported that she is working with Stacey Ewell, Marketing communications Manager, to insert several chapters that cover tree care on the website and copy the part of the document that covers the value of the medians trees. Items covered in this part of the inventory database regarding median trees include:

- Median trees reduce energy and natural gas from shading and acclimatizing that allows residents to save #3,300 per year
- Median trees intercept 868,000 gallons of storm water annually. The total dollar benefit to the City is \$8,549 per year.

Earth Day After-Action Review

Ms. Beasley reported that about 10 people were able to come together to plant sapling Redbuds and a few Dogwood trees along the Wolf River Nature Area portion of the greenway. The downside of the event is that a storm hit a few weeks later so it will be interesting to see how many survived. Ms. Beasley stated that she would like to see the event grow and suggested that the Tree Board help reach out to the schools and scouts. Ms. Beasley noted that Earth Day falls on April 22 each year but it may not always be a Saturday and suggested that the “event” be held on the Saturday preceding or following the actual day to draw more volunteers. Another idea to consider is to have sports teams/players get involved by planting trees in the park setting where they play.

Living Legacy

Ms. Beasley reported that the Living Legacy tree program has not grown in the past few years and said that she found a power point presentation done by a former Tree Board member. It provides basic information about what it is and how to give to the program. Ms. Beasley recommended that the Tree Board take this issue on and approach civic clubs and other groups to revitalize the program. The recommendation was met with approval and it was decided that the goal date for having the plan in place would be early August.

Tree Ordinance Update

Ms. Beasley stated that as a Tree Board, a written report needs to be delivered to the Mayor and Board of Alderman on the Boards activities. During Susan Murray’s tenure with the city, she attended one of the BMA meetings to present a brief annual report. Ms. Beasley reported that in her research, she found other cities that have urban forestry departments or Tree Boards that have provided an annual report and the templates can be used as a guideline. There is also the Tree City USA certification that staff has to fulfill annually. As the Parks and Recreation

Department Director, she is required to provide them with extensive details and everything the City is doing to prove that the City of Germantown is a “Tree City”. Some of the requirements in for the certification process include gathering documentation for:

- Beautification Commission programs about three such as the Poster Contest
- Tree Board programs such as the Arbor Day tree give away program
- Samples of Tree Board minutes
- The Growth Award, which provides proof of growth
 - All education and/or publicity articles
 - All public tree plantings, maintenance, etc.
 - How many labor hours did it take for tree removal, tree pruning, and tree replacement
- Continuing education programs such as the Urban Master Tree Program at UT, etc.

Ms. Beasley suggested that the annual report presented to the BMA could be derived from this thorough documentation of accomplishments. With the Chairman’s permission, Ms. Beasley will begin the “framework” of the report to the Board at the August of September meeting.

Mr. Morgan stated that since the Tree Board will not meeting in June or July, he suggested that the subcommittee meet during that time to work on the ordinance and decided to meet on June 8 at noon.

In closing, Ms. Beasley requested the Chairman meet with her to begin the development of the framework for the annual report and also to set long-range goals. There again, examples from other cities will prove to be valuable in developing these documents. Ms. Beasley reported that the City is in the process of putting together a Green Council of which the Tree Board will play a role. Pam will be in communication with Brown and Caldwell in Nashville. They specialize in municipal sustainability planning and have been invited to come and help the City Germantown get its sustainability program off the ground. Further details will be provided in the near future. Finally, Ms. Beasley stated that several communities are using their commercial tree companies, like Davey Tree Company or Jones Brother’s Tree Company and asking their arborist to come in and do some free lectures/clinics about trees. A good example is Casey Trees. They provided a program called a “tree walk” to explore historical avenues in Massachusetts, which sounds like a great opportunity for Germantown being that Germantown has a great historic district. Ms. Beasley suggested that the Tree Board propose the idea to Shawn Posey, the City’s Regional Urban Forester and provide him with a location. Another example would be a lecture series such as “Unnatural-born killers of Killers of Exotic Plants and How They Kill Trees”. Ms. Beasley mentioned that harmful plants and insects are affecting the City’s trees.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.