

Tree and Landscape Committee Meeting
February 19, 2020
Davis Hall, City of College Park

Committee members: Rashawna Alfred, Chair; Oscar Gregory, CBE liaison; Todd Reitzel; Jim Meyer; Christine O'Brien; Janet Wagner

Staff: Brenda Alexander, Public Works Assistant Director; John Lea-Cox, City Forester

Guests: Scott Somers, City Manager

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Alfred Chair at 7:00pm.

1. Agenda reviewed. The order of the agenda was rearranged to accommodate Mr. Somers and Mr. Gregory. **Ms. Alfred moved to approved with changes. Seconded by Mr. Meyer. All in favor; motion carries.**
NB: The chair stated that the previous month's minutes would be reviewed at the end of the agenda to accommodate Mr. Somer's and Mr. Gregory's schedule, however, they were never reviewed during this meeting.
2. The College Park airport, 600 trees have been removed. City Council is very displeased. Army Corp of Engineers stated that they did not require a permit to remove the trees. The City does not regulate or own the airport; it's managed by Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC). Another 100 trees are planned for removal from Greenbelt Park. Phase II shows a parcel of land west of the community center and more trees are planned for removal. Ms. Alexander stated that MNCPPC maintains the trails and lands around the community center. The land south of Lakeland road is maintained by MNCPPC based on an agreement made many years ago. During the tree work, MNCPPC, stated that if a tree could not be pruned, it would be removed. Mr. Somers stated that there will need to be conversations with Prince George's County, the State of Maryland, and MNCPPC to see if further damage can be mitigated.

A memo needs to be drafted to Mayor and Council to include the following points:

- What is the timeline of mitigation?
- Minimum size requirements for replacement of trees.
- Species and location of all replacement trees
- What is the budgeted amount for the mitigation of trees?
- What was the original number of trees that were supposed to be taken down?
- In light of what occurred at the College Park Airport, TLB would appreciate communication from the Airport Authority and MNCPPC to the TLB.

Ms. Alfred made a motion to have the memo drafted. Seconded by Mr. Meyer. All in favor; motion carries.

3. Copies of Mayor and Council's resolution and information concerning the Committee on Committees were distributed. Mr. Somers presented the information to the Board and explained the thought process and reasons behind Mayor and Council's decision. All terms will expire on June 30, 2020. Those who are current on their terms will be assigned either a 1, 2 or 3 year term. A packet of information will be mailed sometime in March to all committee members. Committee members were reminded to follow the

Maryland Open Meetings Act. Mr. Somers invited the Board to send any further questions or comments through the TLB liaison.

4. Mr. Somers briefly discussed the Five Year Plan (2020-2025) that Mayor and Council are working on for the City of College Park. They have hired a contractor, PBI, to assist Mayor and Council with the implementation and execution of the plan. Most likely it will be a six month process for implementation. The Board inquired about having Storm Water Mitigation and Tree Canopy in the plan. Mr. Somers stated that these two areas could be a part of the development plan for TLB which would be sent to Mayor and Council to review.
5. There was a question of having a member of the City Planning Department present at the TLB meetings. In the past, when Steve Beavers was with the City, he regularly attended TLB meetings. Mr. Somers stated that perhaps it just needs to be communicated with the City Planning Director.
6. The Board reviewed recommendations for the Tree Permitting process. Mayor and Council want to encourage residents to plant more trees, however, there seems to be a need for further education with the residents. The ordinance, as it is written now, seems to be more punitive than positive to residents. Ms. Alexander reminded everyone of the tree program available for reimbursement up to \$150 for planting a tree on private property. She also stated that she planned for an increase to \$250 for individual tree replacement with a maximum amount of \$3500 in the next fiscal budget, which the Board will need to approve. Mr. Somers indicated that the tree canopy is very important and perhaps the TLB should consider asking for \$5,000-\$10,000 maximum amount for the next fiscal year. Ms. Alfred stated the TLB will draft a document with Ms. Alexander's assistance and send to the Board for review and comments before sending to the Mayor and Council.
7. Ms. Alexander discussed the upcoming tree work by Pepco and the need for more information to be sent to the residents. In the past the information has been posted in the weekly bulletin, the website, and door hangers, but residents still seem to be unaware. The TLB will work with the neighborhood community committees to disseminate this information.
8. Briefly discussed Good Neighbor Day. Decided to continue the discussion at the March meeting.
9. The decision was made to start the TLB meetings at 6:30pm. The next meeting will be on March 18, 2020 at 6:30pm.

The meeting concluded at 9:10pm. Respectfully submitted by Sheryl DeWalt, Contract Secretary.