

Manchester Tree Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

April 5, 2021

5:30PM

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Call to Order – *Chairman Stemmler called to order at 5:30pm.*

In attendance – *PW Director Dave Pracht, Mayor Mike Clement, Chairman Mike Stemmler, Board Member Nancy Miller, Board Member Jane Sharp, Alderman Megan Huether, Alderman Marilyn Ottenad, City Administrator Larry Perney, Parks & Rec Director Kat Schien, Recreation Supervisor Stephanie Hardesty, PW Worker Kevin Olsen, and Urban Forestry Consultant Andy Berg.*

Approve Minutes from January 18, 2021 Tree Advisory Board Meeting – *Nancy Miller made a motion to approve the minutes and Jane Sharp seconded. Minutes approved.*

Old Business

1. Tree City USA 2021 & Growth Award 2020 – Dave – *Dave explained that we just found out today from the Arbor Day Foundation that the City was awarded both the Tree City USA for 2021 and the Growth Award for 2020. Mike Clement asked if Andy Berg helped with this endeavor and thanked him for his help.*
2. Revisions to Tree Ordinance – Mike C. & Dave – *The revisions to the tree ordinance passed through the Board of Alderman and has been implemented. Mike Stemmler asked when we can expect to add new members to the Board. Mike Clement said that the revisions expand the Tree Board to 5 members (an increase from 3 members). 4 of the 5 members must live within City limits and we need one representative from each Ward (we can have 2 members from a single Ward). Mike Clement encouraged everyone to try to find 2 new members and all candidates should be sent his way. Kat mentioned that there was some interest expressed in a recent park survey her team had conducted.*

New Business

1. 2020 TRIM Grant Project Status – Andy & Dave
 - a. Park Tree Inventory & Maintenance Plan Complete – *Dave explained that we are wrapping up the TRIM project in its entirety. Andy briefly touched on the data and key findings of the inventory and explained that ash tree management is the top priority at this time.*
 - b. 100 3-gallon trees planted at Howard George Drive – *Andy expects a good success rate of these small trees (200 total) and plans to take a look within the next week or two to make observations.*
 - c. Educational Cards are almost completed and ready for printing – *Andy made a correction to this point saying that the cards are, in fact, finished and ready for printing. Dave will be printing the cards within the next week or so.*
2. 2021 TRIM Grant Project Ideas – Andy & Dave
 - a. Target park tree maintenance – *Andy feels that this will be the best avenue for a funding request via TRIM since we just completed the park inventory. Specifically, ash management (removal/replacement) would likely be the best option. Andy will find out if it's a good idea to apply for a 25K dollar grant considering the City had just done that in 2019. Otherwise, the 10K dollar grant should be doable.*

- b. Changes to the TRIM Program – *Andy simply mentioned that there are talks about some changes to the program (which is why the applications still have not begun yet). However, the changes will be seemingly insignificant this year and should not impact project ideas or potential funding.*
 - c. Potential extra funding through MDC & Municipal Park Grant Commission – *This is an opportunity for funding enhancements if the City elects to apply for and carry out a Community Conservation Grant through MDC. If TRIM and this conservation grant are combined (due to the changes as explained above), there is potential for increased funding for a park project.*
3. Arbor Day 2021 – Mike C.
- a. Yellowwood and 3 baldcypress (one is a memorial tree) planting at Schroeder Park. – *The yellowwood will be a “community” planting on April 24, 2021 at 9:00am, and will be an informal and relaxed event. Kat mentioned that she has not chosen an exact spot yet but there are plenty of options. Six days later, on National Arbor Day, the 2 bald cypress trees will be planted. One of the bald cypress trees is a memorial tree for the City Attorney whose family will be coming out to view the planting.*
 - b. Seedling Giveaway – *Stephanie is recruiting volunteer help for this event. Bagging of the seedlings is difficult due to Covid (social distancing and other guidelines). Stephanie thinks 2 volunteers at the same time is the best option to complete this project. The giveaway begins at 8am on April 24 and will be a drive-through. The bag with the seedling will have instructions for the scavenger hunt and there will be another sheet with other details and facts on the inside. A second bag will have supplies for the kid’s craft activity. The Board doesn’t think that the kid’s activity will be a problem since it will likely be a family-to-family activity and is outdoors. Stephanie plans to stuff 50 bags and she can always use the bags at camp, so it won’t be wasteful. About 400 seedlings are coming – the rule of thumb is that if one plans to plant them, folks can take as many as they’d like. Mike Clement encourages Stephanie to let us know when it’s time to volunteer for stuffing the bags to see if there will be some City staff available to help.*
4. Right-of-Way Tree Pruning 2021 – Dave
- a. DRG completed first round of classroom training for PW & Parks employees – *Dave explained that Andy came out and went over standards, PPE, etc. and is looking to continually improve.*
 - b. Dave and DRG are working on the RFP, to be released this summer – *The first draft is completed.*
5. Educational Workshops – Kat
- a. 2 tree tours at Schroeder Park – May & June – *Andy made a verbal correction explaining that they will be held in April & May. Kat explained that Andy will be doing these. Only a couple of registrants as of now, but hopefully have some last-minute folks show up.*
6. Other Topics – *Dave said the City is going to start rolling out more education on EAB – social media, website, etc. and wants to be proactive. The goal is to encourage residents to remove or treat their trees. Code enforcement will be busy with this over the summer and future years, and they will be working with Andy on this.*
7. Next meeting is July 12th – Venue TBD – *Mike is comfortable with Zoom for now and the Board agreed.*

Adjournment – Jane Sharp made a motion to adjourn, and Nancy Miller seconded at 6:20pm.