

**City of Kalamazoo
TREE COMMITTEE
Minutes
October 1, 2019**

Stockbridge Main Conference Room
415 E. Stockbridge, Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Members

Present: Perry Banta, Forester, COK
Orrin Dorr, Public Works Division Manager, COK
Patrick McVerry, Deputy Director - Parks & Recreation, COK
Chris Patchell, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB)
Steve Skalski, Asst City Engineer, Water Dept., COK
Brian Vogl, Forester, Consumers Energy

City Staff: Karen Rutherford, Recording Secretary

Guests: Dominic King, Consumers Energy
Anthony Ladd, Assistant City Engineer, COK
Marcie Ramsay, Business Owner
Jill Waskowsky, Resident
Helen Wyss, Resident
Joe Wyss, Resident

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Orrin Dorr called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Chairman Orrin Dorr completed roll call and determined the aforementioned members were present.

C. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Chairman Orrin Dorr introduced the guests:

Dominic King, Consumers Energy
Anthony Ladd, Assistant City Engineer, COK
Marcie Ramsay, Property Owner
Jill Waskowsky, Resident
Helen Wyss, Resident
Joe Wyss, Resident

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Perry Banta requested adding a New Business Item, 326 Cork St. – Tree Removal Request, to the October 1, 2019 Agenda.

Committee Member Steve Skalski supported by Committee Member Chris Patchell, moved approval of the October 1, 2019 Tree Committee Agenda as changed. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (September 3, 2019)

Committee Member Steve Skalski supported by Committee Member Chris Patchell, moved approval of the September 3, 2019 Tree Committee Minutes. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

F. NEW BUSINESS

119 N. Church St. - Removal Request

Chairman Orrin Dorr opened discussion for the tree removal at 119 N. Church St.

Ms. Marcie Ramsay stated she and her husband recently purchased this property. The trees along the front of the property have overgrown and encroached onto the roof of the building damaging the roof structure. They are restoring the building and the existing trees are not very attractive. Ms. Ramsay stated she spoke with Forester, Perry Banta, who sent his crews out and trimmed the limbs away from the roof. She would like to remove all the trees and replace with some type of ornamental lower growing trees that do not grow above the roof line. This would improve the curb appeal. Ms. Ramsay suggested planting flowers in the curb lawn. There is concrete damage from the tree roots.

Chairman Orrin Dorr asked Committee Member Perry Banta about the health condition of the trees. Committee Member Perry Banta stated he recommended the tree on the south end be removed because it is overcrowding the tree next to it. He stated he is not in favor of planting flowers. A discussion followed.

Ms. Ramsay stated the soil is above the grade of the concrete and asked if they could get grates around the base of the trees. Committee Member Perry Banta stated he is not in favor of the grates but of open space. He stated the mulch can be placed at grade level.

Committee Member Steve Skalski supported by Committee Member Perry Banta, made a motion to allow removal of the southern-most tree and 3rd tree from the south and replace with three appropriate size and species of trees for the tree planting area. With a voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

Reed St. Park - Removal Request

Chairman Orrin Dorr opened discussion for the tree removal at Reed Street Park.

Committee Member Patrick McVerry stated there are several trees in the northeast section of the park, along the existing fence line, that are beyond their age limit. He spoke to the homeowner who lives next to the park and she is in favor of removing the trees. As part of the park improvement project they will be replanting trees in the park away from the fence line.

Committee Member Perry Banta stated there are three trees that are completely dead and one that is 80% dead. He stated 2 are being transplanted.

Chairman Orrin Dorr supported by Committee Member Steve Skalski , made a motion to allow the removal of four trees and replacement will be as in the landscaping plan for the park project. With a voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

S. Burdick St. and Inkster Ave. – Planting Request

Chairman Orrin Dorr opened discussion for a tree planting at S. Burdick St. and Inkster Ave.

Ms. Jill Waskowsky stated this area is a City lot where they put the curve in at S. Burdick and Inkster Ave. It is a corner lot with a pumping station located on it. About 20 years ago, Todd Pryor had given her and her neighbor permission to plant on the property. They planted fruit trees and gooseberries. Since then most of the trees have died and the gooseberries have dead branches. She has removed the dead branches and she is requesting to plant a Tupelo tree that can grow in this zone level. The tupelo are good urban trees, pretty colors in the fall, and produce a small fruit. It takes two or more tupelos to produce the fruit. This planting would be purely for aesthetics.

Committee Member Perry Banta asked how close to the sidewalk would it be planted. Ms. Waskowsky stated there is room. He stated there is an ash tree in this area in poor condition. He will inspect it to see if it needs to be removed.

Mr. Patchell asked if she planned to plant two trees. Ms. Waskowsky stated there is not enough room for two trees. Discussion followed.

Committee Member Orrin Dorr supported by Committee Member Chris Patchell, made a motion to allow planting of the tupelo tree. Forester, Perry Banta, will do an assessment of the ash tree and if the tree is in a heavy state of decline as they suspect it will be removed. With a voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

738 Village St. – Planting Request

Chairman Orrin Dorr opened discussion for a tree planting at 738 Village St.

Ms. Helen Wyss stated all her curb lawn trees are gone and is requesting to plant a persian ironwood. They bloom in the spring and are colorful in the fall.

Committee Member Perry Banta stated he is familiar with ironwood in general. They grow about 30' tall and it is not on the City Ordinance - Do Not Plant list.

Committee Member Steve Skalski supported by Committee Member Perry Banta, made a motion to allow the planting of the persian ironwood tree. With a voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

1122 Royce Ave. – Tree Removal

Chairman Orrin Dorr opened discussion for a tree removal at 1122 Royce Ave.

Anthony Ladd stated there are two trees in this location he is requesting to be removed. Committee Member Perry Banta stated the tree was most likely struck by lightning and lost a large limb. The break is just on the other side of the union for the large lead that extends over the house. This poses a danger to falling onto the house. The tree is growing into the power lines, the roots have caused sidewalk heaves which has been repaired with asphalt. Mr. Ladd is requesting to remove the tree and replant a low growing species that will fit into the curb lawn space.

Mr. Ladd stated the tree to the east of that tree is healthier however the tree is starting to grow into the driveway and there is an electrical pole on the opposite side of the driveway making it difficult to get anything but a car into the drive. It will not get any better as the tree grows more into the driveway. Mr. Ladd is requesting to remove the tree and replant a low growing species that will not heave the driveway or driveway approach.

Committee Member Perry Banta stated the tree to the right of the property needs removed due to the mushrooms growing at the base, it has had significant damage with the previous limb loss, and it should be removed from a public safety stand point. The tree on the left is growing into the driveway and with the electrical pole on the opposite side of the driveway, it makes it incredibly difficult to enter the driveway. The tree is going to continue to grow and make it more difficult.

Committee Member Steve Skalski asked if two trees were appropriate in the space. Committee Member Perry Banta stated it is extremely tight. There is not enough space for two curb lawn trees.

Committee Member Perry Banta suggested they plant one tree in the curb lawn and plant another tree in another area at the City's local street park.

Committee Member Steve Skalski supported by Committee Member Perry Banta, made a motion to allow removal of the two trees and replant one tree in the curb lawn and replant another one at the City's local street park. With a voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

710 Howard St./810 Howard St./812 Howard St. – Tree Removals

Chairman Orrin Dorr opened discussion for tree removals at 710 Howard St., 810 Howard St., and 812 Howard St.

Committee Member Perry Banta stated there is a total of four trees that Director James Baker is requiring to be removed. There have been two accidents at the cross walk, and he is concerned

for the safety of the children who cross there. Director Baker wanted Committee Member Perry Banta to bring this request to the Tree Committee to allow for any objections. Additionally, these trees are under a three-phase electrical line. Committee Member Perry Banta explained when pulling off Merrill Street onto Howard Street these trees, in combination with the signs and poles, are making it difficult to see on-coming traffic from the opposite direction. Due to the number of accidents, the crosswalk, and the vision obstruction, Director Baker is requiring these trees be removed. A discussion followed.

Chairman Orrin Dorr stated since this is a safety issue the board does not have to vote on it. Committee Member Perry Banta wanted to bring it to the attention of the board and make them aware. There were some residential concerns and Director Baker wanted the Tree Committee to be aware. There will be no replacement trees planted.

326 Cork St. – Tree Removal Request

Chairman Orrin Dorr opened discussion for the tree removal at 326 Cork Street.

Mr. Dominic King, with Consumers Energy, distributed a picture of the tree with the marked sidewalk where they need to excavate the gas pipeline. He stated they have a high-pressure pipeline that runs through this area. Through analysis and testing they believe there is an issue with the pipeline, i.e., corrosion, pitting. The dig location is at the base of the tree. Mr. King stated water will settle around the pipeline and the tree roots will grow around the pipeline separating the coating from the pipeline. Mr. King is requesting removal of the tree to assess the pipeline and fix the coating and/or any other issue they may find.

Committee Member Perry Banta asked if there is any risk with the second tree near this location. Mr. King responded no. The most they excavate around the pipeline is ten feet. The survey tools they use are very accurate. A discussion followed.

Committee Member Perry Banta asked if Consumers Energy has plans to replace the tree. Mr. King stated they are willing to replace provided the tree replacement is not too large where the root system would grow down and destroy the coating of the pipeline. There are primary lines running over head with secondary lines.

Committee Member Perry Banta supported by Committee Member Chris Patchell, made a motion to allow removal of the tree and replant a tree in the curb lawn on the opposite side of the street. With a voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

G. OLD BUSINESS

GPS Location of Trees in Crane Park

Committee Member Perry Banta stated there is no new updates for this project.

Consumers Energy Meeting with Residents

Committee Member Perry Banta and Anthony Ladd attended the Consumers Energy meeting with residents. Consumers Energy met the requirements that was discussed at the August 5, 2019 Tree Committee meeting. There will be a Pre-Construction meeting.

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts (KIA) – 224 S. Park St.

Committee Member Perry Banta stated KIA planted three trees at 224 S. Park and three trees at the Lovell Street Park as was required of them from the September 3, 2019 Traffic Board Meeting.

H. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

I. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Committee Member Chris Patchell asked if there is a policy to maintain newly planted City trees. He voiced his concern with the number of trees that have been planted over the past few years that have died. He stated he has helped raise the funds to purchase these trees and would like for them to stay alive.

Committee Member Perry Banta stated the City does not have a policy. He stated one of the things he is working on is to find a contractor who will do two things: 1) give a 12-month guarantee on the trees they plant and; 2) provide a 3-year watering cycle.

Chairman Orrin Dorr suggested the Forester keep track of the trees that are planted and re-arrange the forestry crews to water newly planted trees once a week.

J. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Orrin Dorr adjourned the meeting at 3:13 p.m.

Submitted by: Karen Rutherford Date: 1-7-2020
Recording Secretary

Approved by: Orrin Dorr Date: 1/7/2020
Staff Liaison