

**City of Kalamazoo
TREE COMMITTEE
Minutes
March 3, 2020**

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

Members

Present: Philip Dietrich, ECC Representative
Anthony Ladd, Asst. City Engineer/City Traffic Engineer, COK
Patrick McVerry, Deputy Director - Parks & Recreation, COK
Steve Skalski, Asst City Engineer, Water Dept., COK
Brian Vogl, Forester, Consumers Energy

City Staff: Karen Rutherford, Recording Secretary

Guests: Monica Johnson, OCBA Landscape Architects
Tom Huff, Peregrine Company

A. CALL TO ORDER

Interim Chairman Anthony Ladd called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Interim Chairman Anthony Ladd completed roll call and determined the aforementioned members were present.

C. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Interim Chairman Anthony Ladd introduced the guest.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By unanimous consent the Committee adopted its meeting agenda as presented.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (February 4, 2020)

Committee Member Phil Dietrich supported by Committee Member Patrick McVerry moved approval of the February 4, 2020 Tree Committee Minutes. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

F. NEW BUSINESS

Farmer's Market Improvements – Tree Removal

Interim Chairman Anthony Ladd opened discussion for tree removals for the Farmer's Market Improvement Project.

Ms. Monica Johnson, with OCBA Landscape Architects, displayed the project site plan which indicated the trees they are asking to be removed. Additionally, she provided pictures of the trees.

Committee Member Steve Skalski asked if this plan considers the Bank Street Realignment. Ms. Johnson stated it does. Committee Member Brian Vogl stated the majority of the trees being removed are siberian elms. The sycamore is being removed because of the realignment of the road. The crab apples in front of the restrooms need removed because the building is being reconstructed.

Committee Member Patrick McVerry stated he was told a total of 32 trees plan to be removed and over the course of the four-phase project 132 trees will be planted. He stated there are twelve trees along the railroad edge they are hoping will survive through the construction. He noted fifty-five of the proposed 132 trees will be planted in the park and around the parking lot. The tree plantings will happen in phases with the project.

Interim Chairman Anthony Ladd stated when the plans go to site plan review, he will be looking for plans to replant the trees along with details for tree protection. He stated if the plans change, he would like to be notified.

Committee Member Phil Dietrich stated Natural Features Protection Overlay has guidelines for protecting trees during construction and asked Ms. Johnson if their plans included this. Ms. Johnson responded yes, it is included in their standard details and they practice this with every project.

Committee Member Steve Skalski asked if they have a list of the species of trees they plan to replant. Ms. Johnson stated she does not have that information. Committee Member Phil Dietrich noted they are looking for a variety of tree plantings.

Interim Chairman Anthony Ladd stated he likes the trees along the railroad tracks. They act as a natural sound barrier.

Committee Member Phil Dietrich supported by Committee Member Steve Skalski, made a motion to allow the removal of the trees with the plantings and species to be identified later. With a voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

Bank Street Realignment

Interim Committee Chair Anthony Ladd opened discussion for the Bank Street Realignment. He stated this project is in conjunction with the previous discussed agenda item.

Interim Committee Chair Anthony Ladd stated they will be revamping of Farmers Market. He explained the current street alignment comes in on a bad angle. The City has acquired the adjacent property in an effort to straighten out Bank Street and bring it straight into Lake Street at a more ninety-degree angle. To do this, there are five trees that need removed. He showed pictures of the trees on the monitor. The plan is to increase the parking. He stated one of the trees, a sycamore, needs removed because it is close to the road and growing within the future parking lot. The tree will also not survive the amount of construction going on all around it. A discussion followed.

Committee Member Steve Skalski asked if there is a plan for replanting. Interim Committee Chair Anthony Ladd stated he is not aware of any replanting plans. He stated he does not have the final plans for the project yet. Curb and gutter will be placed in this area. The parking lot will be larger to allow for additional parking.

Interim Committee Chair Anthony Ladd stated these trees will need to be removed within the month.

Committee Member Phil Dietrich and Committee Member Brian Vogl noted they are not in favor of removing the mature sycamore tree growing near the road and in the area of the future parking lot.

Committee Member Steve Skalski supported by Committee Member Phil Dietrich, made a motion to allow the removal of the four trees and table the decision on removal of the mature sycamore tree growing within the future proposed parking lot until the next meeting and until they get additional information about what is happening at this exact location. With a voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

G. OLD BUSINESS

GPS Location of Trees in Crane Park

Committee Member Patrick McVerry stated Perry Banta has a list of the trees with their coordinates in Crane Park and was working with Neal Conway to get the plaques made with the tree information. Interim Committee Chair Anthony Ladd stated he has Perry's files and will look for this information.

H. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Tom Huff with Peregrine Company stopped in just before the meeting started and stated he would like to make a contribution to the Tree Committee. He stated he is involved with the downtown development and has \$5,000.00 he would like to donate to plant trees in the Central Business District. He suggested he would pay for 50% in hopes the property owners would pay 50%.

Interim Chairman Anthony Ladd stated he would like to get his contact information and discuss the best way to do that. Possibly having the donation given to an organization to partner with the City or the Kalamazoo Downtown Partnership for the development of the downtown area. A discussion was held as to what type of tree would be best to plant in the downtown area.

I. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Committee Member Phil Dietrich stated he thought the committee meeting last month was good. He noted we should not wait too long to contact Mr. Huff regarding his donation. Interim Chairman Anthony Ladd stated he will get in contact with him.

Interim Chairman Anthony Ladd stated the new Forester, Brian Lavelle, will be starting in April. His main job will be to manage the Forestry crews. He has been a Forester for New York City for seven years, he graduated from the University of Michigan. He is a certified Arborist and has a few other credentials.

Interim Chairman Anthony Ladd stated Karen Rutherford has been working on a Tree Removal Permit Application. It is set up to where the applicant fills out the application. They bring it to the Tree Committee for a decision and the motion is added to the permit. The applicant and the Committee Chair would sign the permit. The permit would be filed, and a reminder would be set up to follow up in a year or so to be sure it was done.

Committee Member Patrick McVerry stated there is a Park and Recreation Advisory Board meeting tonight. He is going to suggest to the committee to assign a designated alternate for Chris Patchell for the time he is unable to attend the meetings.

J. ADJOURNMENT

Interim Chairman Anthony Ladd adjourned the meeting at 3:08 p.m.

Submitted by: Karen Rutherford Date: 6-2-2020
Recording Secretary

Approved by: [Signature] Date: 6/2/2020
Staff Liaison