

**City of Kalamazoo
TREE COMMITTEE
Minutes
June 2, 2020
DRAFT**

Zoom Webinar

Members

Present: Philip Dietrich, ECC Representative
Sean Fletcher, Director, Parks & Recreation, COK
Anthony Ladd, Asst. City Engineer/City Traffic Engineer, COK
Brian LaBelle, Forester, COK
Patrick McVerry, Deputy Director - Parks & Recreation, COK
Chris Patchell, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB)
Steve Skalski, Asst City Engineer, Water Dept., COK
Brian Vogl, Forester, Consumers Energy

City Staff: Karen Rutherford, Recording Secretary

Guests: Sam Chansler, Consumers Energy
Amy Hoeksema, Consumers Energy
Bill Jarrett, Consumers Energy

A. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd called the Zoom Webinar meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd completed roll call and determined the aforementioned members were present. He introduced the City of Kalamazoo's new Forestry Supervisor, Brian LaBelle.

C. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd introduced the guest.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (March 3, 2020)

Committee Member Phil Dietrich supported by Committee Member Steve Skalski moved approval of the March 3, 2020 Tree Committee Minutes. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Committee Member Phil Dietrich inquired about the donation offered by Mr. Tom Huff and asked if we determined a way to accept the money. Committee Chair Anthony Ladd stated they are working to draft a standard detail to accept donations. They need to identify a

group to accept the donation and to know where to spend it effectively. Committee Chair Anthony Ladd stated he will bring this up at next the meeting.

Committee Member Phil Dietrich asked about the sycamore tree on Bank Street that has been carried over on the agenda from the previous meeting. He stated the tree has been removed. Chairman Anthony Ladd stated he would follow up on this and a discussion will follow later in the meeting under Old Business.

E. NEW BUSINESS

Project Bronco – Consumers Energy - Tree Removals

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd opened discussion for Project Bronco. He noted due to the size and scope of this project, and the amount of people that are involved outside this committee, he is not sure a decision can be made today. He specified Sam Chansler with Consumers Energy has stated he would like to do this work sometime in August or September.

Mr. Sam Chansler shared documents on screen and explained Consumers Energy would be installing two new power lines coming from their substation. This will require removing several trees.

Mr. Bill Jarrett with Consumers Energy explained the layout of the new power lines. Committee Member Phil Dietrich asked why there will be two separate lines crossing of the river in forest and why go down on both sides of Harrison. It seems this layout design would cause more trees to be removed. Mr. Jarrett responded there needs to be two feeds into the substation by Pitcher. The reason they need to run on both side of Harrison is due to the amount of room required to run the lines.

Ms. Amy Hoeksema added the reason why there are two lines crossings and two independent lines is there are two circuits on the substation. Graphic Packaging wants to be sure if there is an outage, they will continue to have service. From a reliability perspective they requested Consumers do independent lines that are not on the same poles or next to each other. If one line goes down there is a better chance one line is still standing and able to provide the power they need. The lines need to be a certain distance apart and there is not enough room to put them next to each other. A discussion followed.

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd asked if someone could speak on the tree inventory list Mr. Chansler sent in. He asked if the total number showing under column, "Marking Incomplete" will increase? Mr. Jarrett stated they could not get into the water area and the number of trees would increase. A discussion followed.

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd stated it will be difficult to make a decision today without knowing the total number of trees that will be taken down. Mr. Chansler stated they have not marked all the trees but there will be roughly 250-300 additional trees that will need to be removed. A discussion followed.

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd stated the trees numbers are not identified by species and it makes it difficult to access a value to the trees. Mr. Chansler stated the proper method for assigning a value to the trees is timber value. The type of wood out there is cottonwood, elm, box elder, ailanthus, hackberry which is not quality trees. They are mostly pulp wood and pallet log size material. Timber appraisal would be the method to access the value for this type of wood.

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd asked about removal of the trees from the property versus chipping versus leaving some of the trees on the ground. He stated the Committee would look for Consumers to present a plan for what will happen with the trees once they are cut down. Mr. Chansler responded for the upland areas his plan would be to remove most of the larger trees and the smaller debris either mow it and process it on the ground, so it is shattered into pieces or blow it into forms of chips on the ground. For the wetland areas his proposal would be windrow the material down into the area so they would not have to haul it out. He stated the conditions would have to be just right to haul it out. He is not sure if the ground near the Kalamazoo River would firm up enough, for a long enough period, to allow them to haul it out. They could do more damage trying to remove it than leaving it. A discussion followed.

Committee Member Brian Labelle asked if removal of trees would cause additional flooding in this area. Mr. Chansler stated he did not know but once the area is opened up to sunlight there will be a diversity of plants that would come into the site. Committee Member Brian Labelle asked if there is a concern for invasive species like knot weed to move into this area. Mr. Chansler responded they can take steps to mitigate this by washing their equipment before moving in and out of the site to prevent any spreading.

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd asked if there were additional Federal or State environmental permits or any other permits Consumers will need to get outside the City approvals with the wetland area that is being considered. Ms. Hoeksema replied they submitted to EGLE for the application permit yesterday.

Mr. Chansler noted the compensation for the trees is made when they pay for the easement.

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd supported by Committee Member Phil Dietrich, made a motion to table a decision as they wait for additional information and will discuss this again next month. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

G. OLD BUSINESS

Bank Street Realignment

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd opened discussion regarding mature sycamore tree at the Farmers Market on Bank St. He stated he would like to do some investigating to see if the tree was removed. Committee Member Steve Skalski stated the tree is gone. Committee Member Patrick McVerry stated he spoke with Rachel from OCDA about the layout of the Farmers Market plan and where the tree stood, and she stated there was no way to alter the plan of working around the tree because it was taking up infrastructure. He stated he notice the tree

was gone about 3 weeks ago.

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd stated he would do more investigating on this and make a proposal on how to move forward.

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd supported by Committee Member Patrick McVerry, made a motion to revisit this next month, find out what happened, make a proposal if the tree is gone, get with the Consultant and make an equitable solution on site or near the site. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

GPS Location of Trees in Crane Park

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd asked what the status is for the GPS location. Committee Member Patrick McVerry stated our previous Forester had the information of the coordinates and exact tree species names and was working with the City Manager's office to put plaques at the base of the trees. They had sourced out to Otten Trophies to produce the plaques.

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd stated they should set up a meeting outside this meeting and get this going. Committee Member Chris Patchell stated the plans are all there and just needs to be completed. He stated they were waiting to work with someone in the IT department to set up the website. He suggested getting the plaques made and placed at the trees and work with IT to set the coordinates at a later time.

Committee Chair Anthony Ladd supported by Committee Member Chris Patchell, made a motion to set up a meeting within the next month to move this forward. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

H. PUBLIC COMMENT


None.

I. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

None.

J. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Anthony Ladd adjourned the meeting at 3:11 p.m.

Submitted by:  Date: 7-9-2020
Recording Secretary

Approved by:  Date: 7/9/2020
Staff Liaison