

City of Urbana, Illinois

Minutes of the Urbana Tree Commission Meeting

Wednesday, December 1, 2010

Members Present: Jeff Dawson, Darin Eastburn, Thom Fehrmann, Michael Stevenson

Members Absent: Frances Kuo, Barbara Anderson, Larry Hanks

Staff Present: Michael Brunk, City of Urbana Arborist

Introductions and Approval of Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 1:43pm.

The minutes from September 1, 2010 were presented for approval. Eastburn moved to approve the minutes, Fehrmann seconded, and the minutes were approved.

Champaign County Audubon Society Article

Eastburn discussed an article that appeared in the monthly Audubon Society article which discussed the removal of local Ash trees. He reported that the article had a negative tone, and resulted in several emails and phone calls from citizens and Audubon Society members who felt that the Ash tree removals were a disservice to the community. He said he had been asked to write a response to the article explaining the necessity of the removal program, and that article would appear in the latest edition of the newsletter. Brunk reiterated that any tree removed by the City was considered for replacement as per Urbana's tree replacement program.

New LRC Product: Pulverized Top Soil

Brunk introduced a sample of pulverized topsoil which is now being sold at the Landscape Recycling Center. He explained that there is a push to market compost at LRC because the site has been producing more than it could sell. As a solution to this, a percentage of soil is mixed with the compost and then screened to produce the pulverized topsoil, which creates a material with structure so that it can be used for backfill, in addition to being friable and not prone to clotting, so that it can also be used as a topsoil. He reported that it has been selling very well. He said that to his knowledge, LRC is the only local site selling this material.

Winter Tree Removal Program Update

Brunk distributed the winter tree removal lists. One list detailed ash tree removals; the other list included all other removals. Brunk said some trees will be removed by City crews and some by contractors. Fehrmann inquired as to the average cost to remove a city ash tree; Brunk said that it costs approximately \$700 per tree. He said that there were 55 ash trees targeted for the year, and that there are less than 450 city-owned ash trees remaining. He said it would take approximately 8 more years to reach the target of 300 City ash trees. He explained that while failing and declining ash trees were still being removed at that time, crews might begin removing healthy trees in the coming year.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Eastburn announced that in February or March there would be an Audubon program on the benefits of planting native trees. He said he would take several *Under the Canopy* brochures to that seminar.

Brunk said he would send out an email to all commission members to confirm that 2011 Tree Commission meetings would still take place on the first Wednesdays in March, September and December.

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, Eastburn moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 2:17pm.

Femi Washington, Recording Secretary
Tree Commission