

# Village of Fox Point Tree Commission

Minutes of February 2, 2023

A meeting of the Village of Fox Point Tree Commission was held at the Fox Point Village Hall on Thursday, February 2, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

## 1. Roll Call

**Present:** Trustee Eric Fonstad (Chair), Kim Caviggiola (via conference telephone), Jonathan Knopp, Louise Petering, and Ramsey Radakovich

**Absent:** None

**Ex Officio:** John Gall, Village Forester

Also present for the first part of the meeting was Scott Brandmeier, Village Director of Public Works.

At the beginning of the meeting, Mr. Fonstad confirmed that Kim Coviggiola could hear the proceedings and could be heard by the others in the meeting.

The meeting notice was mailed to the *North Shore Now* and to all others as required by the State open meeting laws, and posted on the Village website and bulletin boards.

A quorum being present, Mr. Fonstad called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

## 2. Approval of Minutes.

Following discussion, the minutes of the October 13, 2022, meeting were approved.

## 3. Old Business.

### a. Discussion of High Value Tree Management Draft Ordinance

Mr. Fonstad reported that, in line with discussions at the last Commission meeting, he and the Village Forester prepared a draft ordinance designed to protect high value trees in the Village. The draft ordinance was forwarded to the Village Attorney for legal review. After the agenda for this meeting of the Tree Commission was set, the Village Forester received a confidential memorandum from the Village Attorney which indicated that the Tree Commission should consider taking a different approach. Mr. Gall and Mr. Brandmeier reviewed the principal points of the memorandum, a copy of which had been sent to Commission members prior to the meeting.

The discussion turned to looking for incentives for keeping high value trees rather than penalties for removing them. Mr. Brandmeier noted that large trees have a direct impact on stormwater management issues and suggested that it may be possible to use the stormwater utility fees to encourage property owners to retain high value trees.

Following further discussion, Mr. Brandmeier volunteered to work with the Village Attorney to investigate whether stormwater utility fees might be used in this way.

It was the consensus of the Commission members to defer consideration of Chapter 285-11 (Restrictions on Cutting) and Chapter 310-20 and 23 (Clear-Cutting) until Mr. Brandmeier reports on his discussions with the Village Attorney.

Mr. Brandmeier left the meeting

## **b. Discussion on Reduction of Pesticide Usage**

Forester Gall noted that the Village currently uses herbicides to control broad leaf plants, primarily around shrub beds along Lake Drive and planting beds along Santa Monica. He said that the Village could develop guidelines for the Department of Public Works to use when applying pesticides. He distributed the turf management plan used by Whitefish Bay as an example of such guidelines. Mr. Radakovich noted that the Milwaukee County Parks Systems also has an integrated pest management plan. He offered to distribute copies to Commission members to be discussed at a future meeting.

## **c. Marketing the Tree Commission Mission**

The Commission members discussed Bellevue, Washington's tree promotion and awareness campaigns and noted the extensive involvement of volunteers there in making residents aware of the value of trees. While Fox Point is a much smaller community, the Commissioners felt that some aspects of Bellevue's programs could be developed in Fox Point. Forester Gall offered to review the list of significant trees put together by the previous Village Forester with the goal of updating and expanding the list. The Commissioners endorsed the idea of having a "Tree Commission" car in the Village's 4th of July parade. Kim Caviggiola offered to try to find a convertible car that would be suitable for the parade. Jon Knopp offered to investigate badges that could be placed by homeowners in their lawns to show their support for trees.

## **4. New Business**

### **a. Forester's Activities Update year to date**

Forester Gall reported that 106 new trees will be planted in the spring. He expects this number to go down in future years as fewer ash trees are removed, meaning that fewer replacement trees will be needed.

Arbor Day will be observed on Friday, April 28th, at Maple Dale School this year. A Swamp White Oak will be planted at the school as part of the program.

### **b. 2022 Forestry Activities Annual Report**

Forester Gall reviewed his 2022 Forestry Annual Activities Report, a copy of which was distributed to the Commissioners prior to the meeting. He noted that fewer storms during the summer resulted in fewer tree losses. In 2022, 392 public ash trees were treated for EAB. The remaining 408 ash trees under treatment are scheduled to again be treated in 2023. We currently have 800 ash trees under treatment. Forrester Gall reported that he responded to 101 requests from residents to prune street trees. With the conclusion of the ten year emerald ash borer initiative, he has been able to restart training pruning of younger trees. In addition, he was able to restart the ward pruning cycle, focusing on trees located in Ward 9 in 2022.

## **5. Any other matters that may come before the Tree Commission (informational only – no action taken).**

The members of the Commission discussed the importance of enforcing sight triangles at intersections so that motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists have a clear view of oncoming traffic.

The next meeting of the Commission was scheduled for May 11, 2023, at Village Hall beginning at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.