

Shade Tree Commission Minutes
March 16th, 2017, at 7:00 p.m.
City Council Chamber

Attendees: David Ingram, Lee Gregg, Emilie Wood, Nancy Walker, John Kotowski, David Sincoff, Geoff Buckley, Code Director Ric Sirois, and Asst. Service Director Ron Lucas

1. Title 33: Tree Permit, Right of Way Issues, Public Land
2. Title 37: Landscape Ordinance Issues
 - a. Menards' Landscape plan was presented by Nick Branon, 5101 Menard Dr, Eau Claire, WI. The development is on two lots, 2009 and 2011 E State St, this was part of the old Columbia Gas property. They are proposing a 212,000 sq. ft. building, 5-acre lumber yard, and parking with 444 spaces. There is also an out-lot for future development and the need for detention ponds. They plan 286 trees around the property although the plans only included 72 large shade trees. The plans indicate that 460 large shade trees are required, a figure which needs to be checked. There is a sewer line on the west side of the property. The Commissioners were concerned about the low density of trees in the parking lots. Mr. Branon stated that increasing the number of trees in the parking lots will reduce the number of parking spaces. Although there is space on the property to extend the parking lots. The Commissioners also pointed out that the detention ponds, while designed to keep the water from leaving the area, are not going to be very attractive or help support any trees. The Commission is also very concerned to see existing trees removed that have taken many years to get to the size they are when there appear to be alternatives to the removal of those trees. This would also remove the possibility of using those existing trees as credit against the loss of trees in the built area. Tree banking was explained to Mr. Branon and that the owner has to present compelling evidence that they cannot meet the tree requirements. He noted that they plan grade the out-lot so the pad will be above the flood plain and ready for a building. Commissioners noted that the owners can be granted permission to plant trees in the Right-of-Way adjacent to the lot. It was noted that the development requires over 700 parking spaces and that they will go to the BZA for a variance. The Commissioners noted that two species listed in the landscape plans, Berberis and Euonymus, are invasive species and should not be planted. The review of the landscape for this development will be continued at the next meeting. The chair of the Commission offered to provide feedback on the plans and to meet with the owner prior to the next meeting in April.
3. Report by Ron Lucas
 - a. Earth Day and Arbor Day activity at Morrison Gordon School where two trees will be planting on Friday April 21st 9:30 am and about 1:00 PM. Ron will also do a tree-care workshop for the children. Ron was asked about the two ash trees near the school and if a tree could be planted to replace the ash trees, which are expected to suffer from the emerald Ash Borer.
 - b. Athens Beautification April 9, Ron plans a planting near the soccer fields on East State St. with the help of the Lions Club.
 - c. Tree City USA is in Marietta on April 20 and Ron plans to attend. Ron invited commissioners to come with him. This is our 27th consecutive Tree City USA award.

- d. A box elder will be removed from the ball fields at West State St. park.
 - e. There are some dead trees at West Union St. Cemetery. There is some space in the Cemetery and in West State St. Cemetery.
- 4. Maintenance of the tree canopy
 - a. The vine cutting along the bicycle path from the sewage works east to the overpass for 50 over East State St.
- 5. Other business
 - a. Code Office has purchased the first fully electric vehicle for the City's green fleet.
 - b. Are the Integrated Services sites on Charles St. in compliance with Title 37
- 6. Minutes of the February 9th 2016 meeting
Accept: John Kotowski, Second David Sincoff

Next meeting April 19th, 2017, 7:00 PM City Council Chamber. (Originally April 13th but changed owing to potential lack of quorum on that night)