

Shade Tree Commission

6-13-24

Streaming is available at www.ci.athens.oh.us/video

1. Establish Quorum

- Three of four members present; Christine Fahl, Tristan Kinnison and Michael Lincoln.
- We are looking for other members so please email Christine Fahl at cfahl123@gmail.com if you are interested.

2. Disposition of Minutes

- Minutes of April 11, 2024 meeting were approved.

3. Updates

- Environment & Sustainability Commission
- Environmental and Sustainability Commission met last Wednesday. David Riggs and Christine Fahl attended. The Commission has several initiatives in planning including; pollinators, sustainability and leaves.
- “Leave the Lions” program; dandelions are beneficial because they are first to emerge for pollinators. Looking toward a spring roll out.
- “Leave the Leaves” program. Leaves are beneficial because they help beneficial insects overwinter. The city code has to be checked to determine ramifications.
- We need to get the pollinator program back on track, which the Sustainability folks want also. It requires rewriting a small section of the landscape ordinance, which means it’s on the legislative agenda as well.
- The Sustainability Commission is developing environmental resource page, which our commission can contribute to and items could be linked to both websites.
- The Sustainability Commission also discussed a bio blitz which we could do next spring as a combined effort.
- Arboretum
 - On our website there is a link to minutes and videos of the presentation done last June by our intern, Zan, about a city-wide arboretum. Next steps will be for the two commissions to apply for an intern to help us out, likely in the fall. Good undertaking for a student who needs a capstone project.
 - We apply to organization, join, then establish a mapping program. We’d like to find a tree mapping program that can be used by anyone. We hope to have the protocol in place before bio blitz in the spring.

- Legislative
 - Some of the landscape ordinance needs to be rewritten to make sure we can proceed with pollinator and programs like “Leave the Lions” and “Leave the ILeaves”.
 - Christine and David will work on it and send the commission drafts, with a timeline of August/September.

4. Title 33: Tree Permit, Right of Way Issues, Public Land

- Tree Permit Request - 60 Columbia
 - Mt. Zion Baptist Church is requesting a Bradford Pear at Congress and Carpenter be removed to put in an accessible drive.
 - Approved.
- Tree Permit Request - 32 W. Carpenter
 - Columbia Rd. It’s on city property in non-developed “paper alley”. The tree is leaning into neighbor’s property, and they are concerned that it will fall. In Ohio revised code, a property owner has the right to cut branches from neighboring trees that are over your property.
 - Approved.
- Tree Permit Request - 131 W. State
 - It’s a swamp white oak on the ROW right over sewer line and the owner has had sewer line cleared several times. This is a Health and safety issue.
 - Approved but recommend replacing with a smaller tree that has fewer root issues.

5. Title 37: Landscape Ordinance Issues

- None

6. Maintenance of the Tree Canopy

- None

7. New Business

- Fall tree planting program. Arbor Day folks say they can plant about 20 trees in a weekend. We’re taking orders for trees so contact us if you’re interested in a street tree. There is a form to fill out.
- Christine would like to look into signs noting the trees are part of the city’s tree planting program, so they will spread awareness that the trees and planting are available to any property owner in the city. It would help with branding for the commission.
- Videos. First video up on the website about removing vines from trees. Stream from our website.

8. Old Business

- None

9. Announcements & Other Business

- Next meeting July 11.

10. Adjournment

Minutes submitted by Michael Lincoln