



Tree Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 19th, 2016 ❖ 7:30 - 9:30 pm Dogwood Room, City Hall

Present: Dennis Szymanski, Kathy Philpott Costa, John Tesner, Karen Jones, Christian Autor, Kate Reich, and Dan Sze.

1. **Approval of September Minutes:** The minutes from the September 21, 2016 meeting were approved.
2. **Public Comments:** None
3. **Old Business:** None
4. **Current Business**
 - **Comments on draft Streetscape Design Standards:** The Task Force's October 18 meeting included discussion of many issues related to use of sidewalk space. The TC will provide feedback on the current Design Standards draft in a memo, with points prioritized as follows: (1) standard setback should be greater than 20 feet, (2) planters should have raised planter edging; (3) the design standards should allow flexibility for multi-tree planters; (4) any eventual requirement for single tree planters should expressly apply only prospectively and not to existing planters, even if replaced or repaired; (5) maintenance agreements should incentivize planter maintenance by setting penalties for non-compliance; and (6) sodium calcium manganese acetate should be researched as an alternative de-icer that is healthier for the environment and less corrosive to streetscape.
 - **Code updates/modifications relating to urban forestry:** Moved to next meeting.
 - **Letter to FC News Press re: street tree protection:** Karen will send it in.

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5. Plan Reviews

- **Inns of Virginia** – The Fire Marshall requested that there be no planter at all in front of the door, but this has never previously been required. The TC will send a memo to staff stating (1) its continued preference for a double tree planter, with no tree or shrubs planted right in front of the door; and (2) its support for locating the backflow preventer on private property, as long as there is public access in an emergency.

6. Informational Items:

- Kate provided a tree frequency chart for street trees in Falls Church. Ideally, no single genus should make up more than 20% of the City's streetscape, and the chart shows that the City is well diversified, with no single genus representing more than 13%.
- **Future Business**
 - Tree canopy goals and strategies
 - Enforcement of site plan landscape violations
 - Update to Chapter 5 of the Comprehensive Plan: Environment (Virginia Tech graduate student project to update this chapter)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Staff liaison: Kate Reich, 703-248-5183 kreich@fallschurchva.gov

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