

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES, IL
TREE COMMISSION
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2012**

***Joint Meeting of the St. Charles Tree Commission,
Batavia Tree Commission, and Geneva Natural Resources Committee***

Location: Hickory Knolls Discovery Center
3795 Campton Hills Road, St. Charles, IL 60175
Website: www.stcnature.org Telephone (630) 513-4399

- Members Present:** Bill Bangs, Co-Chairman; Valerie Blaine; John Duerr; Ralph Grathoff; Suzi Myers; Pam Otto; Phil Zavitz; Ron Ziegler, Co-Chairman.
- Members Absent:** None.
- Morton Arboretum:** Andrea Dierich.
- Batavia Tree Commission:** Scott Haines, Chairman; Frank Saupp; John Dillon; Bob Lootens; Dr. William Whiteside; Kevin Summers; Chuck Siegler.
- Geneva Natural Resources Committee:** Carrie Carter; Dan Ludwig; Jeanine McMillen.
- St. Charles Staff:** Peter Suhr, Public Services Manager; Chris Adesso, Public Services Division Manager; Marcelline D'Argento, Public Services Administrative Assistant; Nicole Wang, Public Services Administrative Assistant.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair, Bill Bangs at 7:10 p.m.

2. Introduction of Commissioners from the Tri-Cities

3. **Speaker:** Andrea Dierich, Illinois Forest Pest Outreach Coordinator at the Morton Arboretum. Topic: *EAB Update for the Tri-Cities and Forestry Planning with Regard to Other Current and Potential Pests.*

Andrea Dierich, Illinois Forest Pest Outreach Coordinator at the Morton Arboretum discussed the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer ("EAB") infestation in the United States and in Illinois from 2003 to 2012. Ms. Dierich noted she works with the Illinois Department of Agriculture, and within Illinois EAB is moving along transportation corridors from north to south. Ms. Dierich also focuses on how to provide factual

information and prevent the spread of Asian Longhorn Beetles (“ALB”), Thousand Cankers disease, and Burr Oak Plague. There is an exponential curve pattern of EAB infestation, and four years after infestation EAB becomes visible. EAB has an approximately twelve year cycle from start to finish; Kane County is now at the 6 – 8 year phase of the cycle which is marked by ash trees with limbs dropping and creating a public hazard.

Mr. Ziegler asked when the EAB will stop attacking a tree, and why dead ash wood is quarantined. Ms. Dierich explained the pest stays in the tree until there is no more living tissue, which is needed for reproduction. Dead ash wood can harbor EAB eggs, and there have been cases where untreated ash trees were cut down and still had insects/larvae inside. The EAB can fly from 1 to 3 miles but generally moves from tree to tree. EAB is often spread through state parks and camping areas where firewood is brought in from other locations. Ash trees are showing more rapid signs of decline due to the drought and longer mating period, and there will probably be an upswing in EAB devastation.

Additionally, Ms. Dierich provided an example of the ALB, which eats multiple types of trees, although it favors maple trees. The ALB appeared in the Chicago area in 1998; although it is now considered eradicated, it can return at any time. The main indications of ALB infestation are large round exit holes in trees. The ALB also targets the following types of trees: buckeye; elm; willow; and horse-chestnut; ash; birch; linden; and locust. The ALB does not favor oak trees. The ALB is currently in the southern portion of Ohio about 40 miles from the Indiana border. The ALB is much larger in size than the EAB. Maple trees tend to survive longer and withstand greater damage than ash trees.

Mr. Bangs noted the City’s current fall planting is mainly maple trees. Ms. Dierich reported that to ensure diversity planting should be 10% specific species (i.e. Norway maple); 20% of genus (i.e. Norway maple, sugar maple, silver, red maple) and 30% of family (i.e. include box elder in the maple family).

Ms. Dierich provided maps of ALB infestation in Ohio and the United States. The maps indicate Illinois is an “at risk” state. Ms. Dierich spoke of a private resident in Worcester, Massachusetts, who first found ALB in 1998.

Ms. Dierich also provided maps of Black Walnut Thousand Cankers disease, which is not currently in Illinois. However, it is a concern because there is a large amount of wood moved in and out of Illinois. The main sign of the disease is unusual wilting in black walnut trees.

Mr. Duerr inquired about the Gypsy Moth and Ms. Dierich reported spraying has been effective since the 1990’s.

An additional inquiry was made regarding the status of the Japanese beetle. Ms. Dierich said she works only with large area pests, not the Japanese beetle, and suggested

connecting with Stephanie Adams, a plant pathologist in the Morton Arboretum plant clinic.

4. Discussion: Topics of Mutual Interest

Mr. Suhr stated 35% of the trees in St. Charles are maples. Mr. Suhr asked the representatives from Batavia and Geneva if they had tree diversity plans in place and if they limited the residents' selection of types of parkway trees. The representatives replied affirmatively.

Ms. McMillen reported Geneva allows residents to plant their own trees in the parkway and requires residents to obtain their own JULIE, however, diversity cannot be controlled. Geneva also has a 50/50 plan and they are compiling a list of trees favorable for parkway planting. Geneva's goal is to plant 300 trees per year, and the Natural Resources Committee wants to add 50 to 60 more trees per year.

The representatives from Batavia suggested a permit system be required to control tree diversity and to limit planting of weak-wooded trees. Batavia has strong ROW permits, but does not charge a fee for the permit itself. Through the permit process, Batavia controls the types of trees residents can plant in the parkways.

5. Discussion: EAB

Mr. Bangs asked about the success of EAB treatment. Ms. Dierich stated, yes, EAB treatment is effective if trees are treated early. When there is < 30% canopy loss, there is 99% success rate. She discussed different products/chemicals for treatment and indicated various universities are conducting research. Information is available regarding insecticides by acreage and also as a guide for homeowners. Ash trees as small as 2" in diameter can be invaded by the EAB. The Illinois Department of Transportation ("IDOT") is holding an open meeting on October 24, 2012, which will address roadway infestations. She noted there is a type of wasp used as biological control for EAB; the wasp is non-stinging and prefers sandy soil. However, it's difficult for the wasp to reproduce in Illinois because we don't have sandy soil conditions other than baseball fields and other places where sand is brought in where it didn't already exist.

Mr. Ziegler inquired as to the effectiveness of injection treatments against EAB. Ms. Dierich reported injection treatments are effective and better for the environment because the ground around the tree does not absorb the chemicals.

Meeting break at 7:50 p.m. Meeting resumed at 8:10 p.m.

Mr. Suhr provided an update on the City's EAB program. There were 5,400 ash trees in the City initially; 300 trees are under treatment; the City is removing and replacing almost all ash trees. St. Charles is at the top part of the curve mentioned by Ms. Dierich. During a 3 year period, the City will remove 3,000 ash trees. The cost of the EAB

program is \$3 million to remove and replace the trees. The removal process is going faster than anticipated.

Mr. Haines of Batavia provided an update on their EAB program, which is smaller in scale with 300 trees removed in 2011 and 500 – 600 trees to be removed in 2012. They are now half way through. Mainly trees 20” and smaller are still to be removed. Batavia is not replacing tree for tree; they are replacing only through the 50/50 program. In 2013 they will offer small trees. He discussed the subdivision on Western Avenue, which has 200 homes and 200 ash trees. They are working on diversity and tree surveys, but currently have mainly maple and ash trees.

Mr. Dillon reported that in 1999 Batavia passed an ordinance and executed agreements with housing developers in order to control parkway tree diversity. Batavia charged builders a fee which went into a fund for tree planting, whereby the city could control species and spacing of trees. The ordinance is still in effect.

Ms. Carter reported that Geneva has a 50/50 program and plants 285 – 300 trees per year. Geneva has held fund-raising events and last year a wine fund-raising event netted \$7,000. The Geneva Natural Resources Committee (“GNR”) held the wine event at the Geneva History Center. Geneva also raised funds through “Rain Barrels on Parade” decorated rain barrels which were sold to residents and netted \$5,000 in the past; this year’s proceeds were \$1,000 as perhaps everyone interested in having a rain barrel participated previously. GNR gives the funds raised to the City of Geneva and collaborates with the city to complete projects. Additionally, the Lions Club donated \$500 to plant white oak trees in Geneva.

Mr. Bangs asked if Batavia was holding any fund-raisers. Mr. Haines explained that approximately 5–7 years ago Batavia had a “Heritage Oaks” program. Seeds were collected from 3 different types of oak trees which were then propagated by a local nursery. The trees were put back into the community and given away as part of an Arbor Day celebration. He noted Batavia uses email blasts to remind residents to water.

Ms. Blaine commented that the Forest Preserve is growing acorns for planting by the Forest Preserve.

Mr. Ziegler noted Ash tree seed collection is needed so we can someday grow ash trees again. Ms. Blaine stated this would be a good project to have school children get involved in; Ms. Otto will follow-up on this suggestion.

Mr. Dillon asked if there is any mandatory removal of ash trees. Mr. Suhr stated the City has a hazard tree ordinance, but it has not been used to any great extent yet. Batavia has an ordinance that requires the removal of hazardous trees within 30 days. Mr. Adesso commented the removal of ash trees by Homeowners’ Associations and private owners is really increasing.

Mr. Suhr asked if there were any suggestions for grants for EAB. There was a \$20,000 Mayors' Caucus previously, but there are no re-grants. The Illinois DNR has small grants available.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

/md