

**CITY OF ST. CHARLES, IL
TREE COMMISSION
THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2013**

Members Present: Valerie Blaine, Jon Duerr, Suzi Myers, Ron Ziegler

Members Absent: Bill Bangs, Ralph Grathoff, Pam Otto, Phil Zavitz

Staff Present: Chris Adesso, Marcelline D'Argento, Mark Koenen, Peter Suhr, Nicole Wang

Visitors: Mayor, Ray Rogina; resident William Lynch

Speaker: Phil Graff, Graff Tree Care

1. Opening of Meeting and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was convened by Comm. Ziegler at 7:03 pm.

2. Roll Call

Four Members of the Tree Commission were in attendance; a non-quorum.

3. Introductions

The Commissioners and staff introduced themselves to Mayor Rogina.

4. Minutes - Review and Approval

Deferred until the September 12, 2013 meeting.

5. Presentation and Discussion of City Forestry Plan / Ordinance

Mr. Graff presented information on the City's Spring 2013 Reforestation Plan, which focused on species diversity and space diversity [no mono-cultures]. Mr. Graff noted the City of St. Charles has done good work in keeping up on tree removals and replacements, generally replacing Ash trees infested with the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) with new trees on a one for one basis.

Mr. Graff described previous species-specific diseases such as the American Chestnut fungal blight in the 1930s; Dutch Elm disease in the 1960s; and currently EAB, which first appeared in the 1990s. Mr. Graff noted the pattern of disease/infestation, and stated Maples may be the next natural tree disaster. Maples account for 31% of the City's public trees. By comparison, prior to EAB, Ash trees accounted for 22% of the City's public tree population.

Mr. Graff explained how 750 planting sites were assessed in preparation for Spring 2013 planting. Criteria for planting including soil conditions, light and shade levels, grow space, streetlights, street signs, parkway width, and street traffic were reviewed. Complimentary resources such as FEMA flood data, county soil maps, and information from the National Wetlands Inventory were utilized in conjunction with Google Earth and Global Positioning System (GPS) information. Data was gathered and entered into the City's Global Information

System (GIS) for each tree site, and the species best suited for each site were selected. Maps and planting lists were then provided the City's planting contractor. Mr. Suhr reported that prior to the EAB infestation, the City planted 100 - 150 trees annually, while 800 trees will be planted in the fall of 2013.

Mr. Graff reported that a representative from Graff Tree Care attended and gave a presentation at an international conference in San Diego. The conference was held by ESRI, an organization that offers GIS applications and services related to environmental issues. Mr. Graff was pleased to report the topic of Graff Tree Care's presentation was the use of GIS by the City of St. Charles and Graff Tree Care [as described above], and was well-received by the international audience.

Comm. Ziegler emphasized the importance of educating residents on tree care, and gave examples of improper care such as volcano mulching and the use of weed whips in close proximity to trees. Mr. Graff stated overall the City's public outreach has been good, with a strong Arbor Day program. Mr. Koenen noted residents often depend on landscapers for tree care and suggested education may be required for landscaping workers. Mr. Adesso noted the professional organization of the Illinois Landscaping Contractors Association. Mr. Suhr stated the City may consider having certified landscapers practice in St. Charles, and cited McHenry County requires certification for snow plow operators.

6. New Business

Deferred until the September 12, 2013 meeting.

7. Committee Reports

Deferred until the September 12, 2013 meeting.

8. Communications

Deferred until the September 12, 2013 meeting.

9. Comments

The Commissioners and staffed thanked Mayor Rogina for his attendance at the meeting, and thanked Mr. Graff for his presentation.

Mr. Lynch commented he is a resident of St. Charles Township and attended the meeting to obtain information relevant to the removal of several trees on his private property. Mr. Lynch found the meeting to be informative.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.