

City of Hyattsville Tree Board Meeting Minutes

Friday 9 July 2021

Zoom Meeting

Present: Gloria Felix-Thompson, Millard Smith, Taylor Johnson, Randy Fletcher

Staff: Dawn Taft, Lesley Riddle

Visitors: Ann Barrett, Matt Carl, Scott Wilson

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 pm.

1. **Minutes.** Taylor Johnson motioned to pass the June minutes and Millard Smith seconded. The minutes from the June meeting were approved.
2. **Remarks.** Dawn Taft mentioned that she was hitting a wall with the real estate people in PG county and explained to the guests, that we are trying to include information about tree ordinance/permits for removal into a “welcome kit” that would be given to new home buyers. Taylor is going to reach out to realtors in Takoma Park to see how they are doing it. Ann Barrett is a member of the Prince Georges County Association of Realtors and said that she would reach out to them to see how this can be done, if she gets involved with the tree board.
3. **Permits.** 15 Permits: two (2) were too small and N/A, ten (10) were approved, one (1) was denied, two (2) are outstanding and awaiting a 2nd opinion
4. **Tree Plantings.** Dawn Taft is working on more grants and has applied for two. There will be fall tree plantings and there is hope for volunteers to help plant. Casey Trees will be involved. Lesley Riddle mentioned that the city did receive a grant from the Chesapeake Trust. Gloria had a question about huge trees that threaten two properties and what can be done to help if the property owners are not in a position to take them down. Lesley mentioned that the city can inspect the trees and get code compliance involved and that the property owners should reach out to the city to see what can be done to help.
5. **Future of Heritage Trees Program.** We will ask the city council for a \$1,200 budget for next year’s program. We voted not to hold an art or essay contest for the program this time. We need to think of new opportunities, education. There are only so many heritage trees in the city.
6. **New business.**

- a. Guest Matt Carl was introduced. He is going to be working on a new video for the city of Hyattsville on Eco-friendly practices in Driskell Park and may feature some of the wonderful trees in Hyattsville and how the city is treating them. They are at the beginning stages of this video.
- b. Dawn mentioned that we are revamping the initiative and objectives of the tree board and are editing the current tree ordinance.
- c. Dawn and Lesley talked about Hyattsville's Watershed Implementation Plan and mentioned that the only other city that has one is Annapolis. It is very special that Hyattsville is putting one of these plans together. They talked about the food forest, Silva cell installation and the value of trees. No one had comments to add to the draft of the plan, and we all said that it was well thought out.
- d. There was a motion to skip the August Meeting. Randy Fletcher motioned, Taylor Johnson seconded, the motion was passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 PM but was called to order again at 2:19 PM.

7. Additional New business Discussed.

- a. Randy talked about the Clay property and mentioned that the PG County Planning Board Staff had recommended to oppose the zoning change from R-80 to R-20 to the Planning Board.
- b. Millard Smith asked about the proposed development in the parking lot near Driskell Park and if the plans to build houses there is moving forward.
- c. Scott Wilson talked about how trees help reduce storm water runoff and mentioned that there will be a significant number of mature trees cut down to widen an ally near Oliver. He wondered if the community will take a position on this matter.

The next tree board meeting is Friday, October 1, 2021 at 1:30 pm.

The meeting readjourned at 2:22 PM.