

Tree Conservation Commission
Business Meeting Minutes
City of Atlanta, City Hall
Arborist Division, Suite 3800
December 11, 2019, 5pm

Commissioners present: Sarah Boles, Jack Cebe, Dina Franch, Nabil Hammam, Lawrence Richardson, Chet Tisdale, Elizabeth Ward. Katherine Moore (joined for hearing)

Staff present: Kathy Evans, TCC staff

Visitors: Stephanie Coffin and Bobbie Wagoner, Tree Next Door

1. **Minutes.** Review business meeting minutes from November. Minutes approved by all present.
2. **Membership.**
 - Jack Cebe moving into Registered Landscape Architect vacancy. (Joined in botanist, forester, horticulturalist/nursery worker position).
 - Several members need to register for vendor IDs in City system.
3. **Arborist Division update.**
 - Rate of inspections is up this year.
 - Commission members would like to see listing of yellow sign postings on web (as Parks posts). Also, would like to inquire about whether "no trees destroyed" sign or online list of active sites with "no trees destroyed" can be posted to inform public of construction sites where trees should remain protected.
 - Would like to see listing of approved DDH permits with simpler access than via Accela.
4. **Brief updates.**
 - **Tree Canopy analysis for 2018.** Imagery collected in Sept/Oct 2018 analysis ongoing.
 - **Water bill** info in water bill inserts continue. Ideas - consider adding information about public meetings or front yard tree planting availability (through tree recompense-funded plantings with our partners at Trees Atlanta).
 - **Atlanta's Native Forest Calendar 2020** (*the exceptional quality of Atlanta's urban forest*). Will be distributed via City and community networks including recreation centers, senior centers, water bill payment counter, NPU's, Park Pride, and other partners. TCC members distributing to: ASLA, GA Native Plant Society, GA Conservancy, and Sherwood Forest, Niskey Lake, Kirkwood neighborhood organizations, In future, consider Atlanta History Center, Carter Center, schools, other networks.
 - **Arbor Day 2020- Friday, February 21.** Council proclamation will be made and Tree Commission will explore lunch-and-learn format for presentation at City Hall on Arbor Day (possible topics: parks, watershed, green infrastructure, why trees? Why is Atlanta's forest special? ordinance update, ecological framework findings). Jack Cebe will help plan.

5. **Urban Ecology Framework**

- Susanne Blam will follow up with Ordinance writing team to request to update for TCC.
 - November presentation by BioHabitats sub-consultants focused on establishing recompense based on appraisal value of trees, utilizing Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers (CTLAA) methods.
 - TCC would like to discuss ideas and best practices for protecting existing trees in various settings:
 - defining priority trees (e.g. slow growing native trees)
 - requiring early review of development plans for sites with priority trees
 - coordinating tree protection efforts in all departments and processes within the City (urban design, variances, buffer encroachments, zoning, etc.).
 - Concerned about ongoing tree loss while the process continues

6. **Appeals.** Time provided for Commissioners to review appeal materials individually.

7. **Old Business.**

- TCC Work Session – tentatively scheduled for January or February. After discussion, members prefer to utilize meeting times to address ordinance and schedule yearly TCC general work session at a later date.
- Discussion.
 - How can zoning regs and tree ordinance be coordinated? For example, duplex construction involves such extensive site impact, there is no space for preserving existing trees and very little space for planting trees. Especially when they include off-street garages and/or parking for four cars.
 - How to address bad actors - tree cutters who remove trees without a permit, builders/construction professionals who damage or remove healthy trees on construction sites. (Recompense paid for these tree to be based on full appraisal value? Other actions under City Code for repeat violations? Publication of list?)

8. **New Business.**

- **One hearing** this month: This evening, Wednesday, December 11, 6:30p; four appeals.
- **Next month** will likely require two hearings – **January 15 and 22.**