

# CHARLOTTESVILLE TREE COMMISSION

Tuesday, May 3, 2022

5:00 – 7:00 pm

Virtual|Electronic Meeting

<b>Call to Order</b> ( <i>P. Van Yahres</i> )	<b>5:00</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approval of April Minutes</li></ul>	
<b>Staff Report</b> ( <i>R. Anthony, S. Gaines</i> )	<b>5:10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction of Urban Forester</li><li>• Microsoft Teams description</li></ul>	
<b>Heat Watch Charlottesville Report</b> ( <i>Susan Elliott</i> )	<b>5:30</b>
<b>Committee Reports</b> ( <i>P. Van Yahres</i> )	<b>6:00</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Education &amp; Advocacy (<i>M. Rylander</i>) <i>ReLeaf Environmental Career Fair</i> (<i>P. Van Yahres</i>)</li><li>• Arbor (<i>J. Aten</i>) <i>Arbor Day and Clark School Tree Planting</i></li><li>• Codes and Practices (<i>V. Metcalf</i>)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>Zoning ordinance</i></li><li>○ <i>Cville Plans Together Schedule</i></li></ul></li></ul>	
<b>General Public Comment</b>	<b>6:30</b>
<b>Items/Announcements Not on Agenda</b>	<b>6:45</b>
<b>Action Items for Next Meeting</b>	<b>6:55</b>
<b>Adjourn</b>	<b>7:00</b>

(†) At the discretion of the Chair, public comments related to particular agenda items may be solicited at that point in the meeting.

This virtual/electronic meeting is open to the public. You may participate electronically by registering at [www.charlottesville.gov/zoom](http://www.charlottesville.gov/zoom) or via telephone by using the number provided with the Zoom registration. Or you may contact staff at 434-970-3182 to receive the dial in number. In addition to the Zoom webinar, this meeting will be available on the City's streaming platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, and [www.charlottesville.gov/streaming](http://www.charlottesville.gov/streaming).

*Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in the public meeting may call the ADA Coordinator at (434) 970-3182 or submit a request via email to [ada@charlottesville.gov](mailto:ada@charlottesville.gov). The City of Charlottesville requests that you provide a 48-hour notice so that proper arrangements may be made.*

## Tree Commission

### April 2022 Minutes

**Date:** April 5, 2022

**Time:** 5:00PM – 7:00PM

**Location:** Remote via Zoom

**Attending:** Peggy Van Yahres, Jean Umiker-Sebeok, Jody Lahendro, Victoria Metcalf, Holly Lafferty, Donna Shaunesey, Makshya Tolbert, Mark Rylander

**Absent:** Jeffrey Aten, Mark Zollinoffer, Tim Padalino, Jeff Pacelli

**Staff:** Chris Gensic (Riaan Anthony absent)

**Guests:** Irene Peterson, Lauren Hildebrand (Utilities), Stacey Smalls (Public Works), James Freas (NDS)

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Peggy Van Yahres.

1. **March Minutes** were approved by acclamation.

2. **New Members Introduced:** Holly Lafferty, Donna Shaunesey, Makshya Tolbert

3. **Staff Report** by Chris Gensic

- **Urban Forester position:** Chris announced that the new forester, Steve Gaines, will be starting soon and will attend the next meeting.
- **Canopy Study:** Contract work is complete. Reports have been distributed to the Tree Commission and can be released to the public. Jody asked that we make sure the canopy study is provided to Charlottesville Plans Tomorrow. Mark R. volunteered to review the executive summary to produce a paragraph for the city website and review whether the weighting system (to determine where to plant) is clear to the public. Chris reminded the Commission it can create and recommend its own weighting system to prioritize locations and neighborhoods to receive trees. The algorithm used by the consultants might also be revised. Peggy notes the GeoPlanet very recently developed a tool that links and measures health benefits of trees in neighborhoods,
- **Parks & Rec Projects** was doing stream restoration in two locations but determined tree loss in Meadow Creek near the disc golf course was going to negatively impact trees and so opted not to pursue the project. Parking expansion in Tonsler park has been reconfigured to preserve group of existing London Plane trees.
- Chris also noted that the Tree Commission's state of the Forest has received excellent press coverage this year.

#### **4. Energy Saving Trees Program**

Irene Peterson of the Department of Utilities presented the program, which is intended to create tree planning on private property in the city. The Arbor Day Foundation developed the program (Including free I-Tree software) Residents are able to visualize the location and benefits of the trees. The City pays the cost of the trees (selected from TC-generated City Tree List) and Utilities implements the program. Residents are responsible for planting and care. 250 trees total were reserved in the first 48 hours of the program. Residents will pick up trees the last weekend in April.

Discussion: Makshya asked whether there would be follow-up on care and maintenance of the trees over time. Irene noted that residents are given detailed instructions Mark noted that it's not always clear to homeowners what their responsibilities are for caring for the trees the city provides. Lauren Hildebrand noted that the City reminds homeowners to call 811 (Miss Utility) to avoid utility lines. City can identify gas lines and can approximate lateral lines for water and sewer.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

New members have been added to committees.

##### 5. Education & Advocacy (Mark R.)

- Mark spoke at March 21 Council meeting to Advocate for \$100k Tree Planting budget (which had been reduced to \$75k) and \$105K Emerald Ash Borer line item.
- Peggy reported on the Releaf program's planning and participation in the upcoming Earth Day Environmental Career Fair at CHS.
- There was a brief discussion of TC process evaluating requests to partner with other community organizations. Mark R. to follow up with Peggy.

##### 6. Arbor Committee (Peggy)

- Clark Elementary had planned a tree planting for Arbor Day April 29<sup>th</sup>
- Arbor Day April 29<sup>th</sup> CATS event at the American Elm at Sojourners church in Belmont.

##### 7. Codes & Practices (Vicky)

Lauren Hildebrand (Utilities), Stacey Smalls (Public Works), James Freas (NDS) introduced themselves, their backgrounds and work their department does.

Tree Commission sent a list of questions related to trees to the three departments and the list was reviewed with Vicky moderating.

- a. Site plan review process / NDS: James described the collaborative process and how tree preservation that can be ensured. The arborist is the party who needs to identify whether the trees in the plan are in compliance with city ordinances and whether best practices are being followed.

Jody asked if there is a flow chart or diagram about how a site plan moves through the city's system. There is not but James described the interdepartmental process that results in a comments letter being returned to the applicant.

b. Chris Gensic notes that Parks & Rec authority is limited. Tree fencing is observable but there may not be someone at the city observing that trees are planted properly. The timing of such an inspection would be challenging in a typical construction process.

c. Vicky asked James what NDS hope to see changed in the code review. He asked the TC for our comments for the next phase (Mid April). Post-meeting note the TC comments were sent. James described the next step of the Charlottesville Plans Together Code rewrite is an Approach Report. Feedback from that report will be presented to Planning Commission and Council to give the group permission to develop the code.

d. James proposes that incorporation of trees require more flexibility in the code.

e. Lauren noted that most of Utilities work is done in right of way and most of that is replacement and repair of existing lines. Sewer work in yards more likely to affect trees.

f. Jody noted the difficulty of utility easements reducing opportunities for street trees. Lauren noted that State requires certain clearances for spacing between utilities. Utilities would like to have 10 feet between utilities and trees but has flexibility though evaluating of site-specific conditions to be considered.

g. Stacey noted (earlier) that much of the tree protection aspects of Public Works involvement with trees comes through its administration of the Virginia Stormwater Management program in site plan review. He also mentioned Kristal Rittevoold and environmental division is happy to meet with Tree Commission to collaborate on areas of interest.

8. Public Comment: None

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM