

Village of Fox Point Tree Commission

Minutes of December 8, 2016

A meeting of the Village of Fox Point Tree Commission was held in the Village Hall Conference Room on Thursday, December 8, 2016, at 4:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Present: Trustee Eric Fonstad (Chair), Judy Shirley, Karen Grube & Nancy Warner (Louise Petering joined the meeting at 4:15)

Ex Officio: John Gall, Village Forester

The meeting notice was mailed to the *North Shore Now* and to all others as required by the State open meeting laws, and posted on the Village website and bulletin boards.

Trustee Fonstad called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes.

After correcting some typographic errors, the minutes of the June 16, 2016 meeting were approved.

3. Old Business

a. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Project Status/Revisions to Plan

Forester Gall reported that 118 ash trees are slated for removal this fall, 75 by the village's contractor and 43 by village staff. Only about one third of the ash trees being removed will be replaced by new plantings due to the unsuitability of the locations of the removed trees. The village's contractor is taking the logs and chips from the removed trees. Some of the wood will be made available for burning at the Longacre Pavilion during ice skating season.

Forester Gall is adjusting the ash tree treatment program in 2017 to only use soil injection on trees of less than 12" diameter. He stated two reasons: 1) soil treatment is less effective as EAB spreads; and 2) there is some concern about the potential build up of the chemical in the soil. He noted that he is considering eliminating soil injection treatments in 2018.

Forester Gall noted that he will be reducing his hours with Wachtel beginning in January 2017 but will continue to serve as the village's forester. He expects that this change will give him more time to evaluate the condition of the 500-600 ash trees that initially were not classified as either clear candidates for treatment or removal.

The members of the commission discussed preparedness for the expected sudden development of EAB in the village.

b. Leaf Composting

Forester Gall reported that this year the village arranged to have Liesener's Topsoil take all of the village's leaves at no cost to the village. Liesener will compost the leaves and will provide the village with 20 yards of composted leaves in the spring for use by village residents. The composted leaves will be made available to residents in the same manner as wood chips have been made available for use as mulch. Some of the composted leaves will be used by the village

for tree planting. Ms. Grube and Ms. Shirley reported that they contacted several other communities and contractors about composting practices and were unable to obtain much useful information.

c. Diseased Elm Removal

Forester Gall reported that 2016 was a difficult year for elm tree removal. Twenty elm trees were removed, including several that were very large. The cost to remove elm trees has nearly doubled (from \$30/inch to \$58/inch) because of the high cost of removing these large trees. Forester Gall stated that it is not feasible for the village to remove large elm trees. He noted that \$20,000 was transferred from the EAB program in 2016 to cover the added cost of removing diseased elm trees.

4. New Business

a. Bay-Lake RPC Tree Planting Grant

Forester Gall reported that the village received an award of \$8,300 from the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission to fund tree planting. This grant comes with a 25% local matching grant bringing the total amount to about \$11,000 which will fund the planting of about 60 trees. The trees will be planted by village staff. The village plans to plant about 100 trees in the spring and hopes to do a fall tree planting with this extra money. He noted that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find good tree stock for planting. The village is planting about three times as many trees as it used to. Other communities in the area are also planting more and new construction projects are using more trees as well.

b. Bluff Cutting Wye Lane

Forester Gall reported that he was notified on August 11, 2016 that trees were being cut on the bluff on a property on Wye Lane. No tree cutting permit had been obtained. Forester Gall and the Director of Public Works talked to the homeowner's contractor and were able to obtain commitments to remove debris, clean up the site and take steps to stabilize the bluff. He noted that most of the trees removed were ash trees. Some trees were "topped" to open the homeowner's view of the lake from the top of the bluff. About 51 ash trees were left with high stumps (3-4 feet off the ground) in an effort to protect the bluff from erosion. The homeowner has planted about 85 trees and shrubs to replace the removed trees. The homeowner was also billed \$700 for extra time spent by village staff on this matter.

The members of the commission discussed steps that could be taken to educate residents who own bluff or ravine property of the importance of protecting bluff and ravine vegetation. Mr. Fonstad offered to work with Forester Gall to draft a letter that could be sent to these owners.

c. Arbor Day and Bird City

Forester Gall reported that village resident Stephanie Bennett has offered to donate a tree for planting during the Arbor Day observance. Ms. Grube stated that the Garden Club will work with the school on plans for Arbor Day as the date gets closer. The Garden Club will again be underwriting the Bird City program for 2017.

d. Indian Creek Woods - Ash Removal and Replanting

Ms. Shirley recommended that the village contact Mike Wendt to determine whether the arborist class that Mr. Wendt teaches at MATC North would be interested in removing ash trees in the lower part of the Indian Creek Woods as a training exercise. Forester Gall said that he walked through the area and estimates that ash trees make up about 85% of the trees. He agreed with Ms. Shirley's suggestion of planting tamarack to replace removed ash trees. Ms. Shirley said that she is working with the Fox Point Foundation to raise money to pay for replanting the area. It was noted that there are a large number on ash trees on Stormonth School property that should be addressed at some point.

e. Discuss Future Meeting Dates and Topics

The next meeting date is Thursday, March 30, 2017, at 4:00 p.m.

5. Any other matters that may come before the Tree Commission (informational only – no action taken).

Ms. Shirley asked at the Forester Gall about the status of the benches that the village was planning to build using wood recovered from elm trees that were removed. He said that the wood is currently being dried and should be ready for use in the spring. The village expects to have enough wood for two benches. Ms. Grube reported that the Garden Club has money it plans to use for beautification in the Indian Creek Woods area and would like to have a bench placed there.

Ms. Grube reported that the planting plan for the rain gardens in front of Village Hall and the Police Station have been found and that the gardens were examined to identify invasive plants. The north end of the rain garden in front of Village Hall is doing well but the south end is overgrown with invasive plants. The Garden Club is working with village staff to improve the condition of these beds. The village has some money available to purchase plants for replanting.

Ms. Petering suggested that the Forester add tulip trees to the list of recommended trees for planting in the village. Forester Gall noted that turkish filbert trees are being removed from the list due to their susceptibility to a fungal blight.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.