

Village of Fox Point Tree Commission

Minutes of December 12, 2024

A meeting of the Village of Fox Point Tree Commission was held at the Fox Point Village Hall on Thursday, December 12, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Present: Trustee Eric Fonstad (Chair), Jonathan Knopp & Catie Anderson

Absent: Kim Caviggiola & Ramsey Radakovich

Ex Officio: John Gall, Village Forester

Also in attendance was Matt Siesco of Wachtel Tree Science.

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.

A quorum being present, Eric called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. John introduced Mr. Siesco who is shadowing John in anticipation of John retiring at some point in the future.

2. Approval of Minutes.

Following discussion, the minutes of the August 15, 2024, meeting were approved.

3. Old Business.

a. Initiatives for Tree Planting on Private Property

John reviewed an outline entitled "Fox Point Initiatives to Encourage Tree Planting on Private Property" attached to these minutes. He reported Scott Brandmeier, Kevin Ausman, Eric Fonstad and he met the week before to discuss three possible initiatives designed to encourage tree planting on private property.

It was felt that one of possible initiatives, using stormwater utility incentives to preserve and enhance the tree canopy, was too challenging to implement and administer in Fox Point. It would require reworking the Village's stormwater utility, extensive and costly mapping of the existing canopy and impervious surfaces in the Village, and regular investment of Village resources to operate and maintain. In addition, such a program would only provide an incentive to plant trees with no way to assure the Village's investment would result in meaningful improvements to the tree canopy.

The other two initiatives, a discounted tree program and a tree planting rebate program, were seen as promising ways to encourage tree planting on private property. Eric noted the discounted tree program could be melded with the Village's annual tree planting program. Other than staff administration time, there would be no cost to the Village. The ability to buy trees from the Village at wholesale cost would be attractive to residents although residents would have to meet the Village's schedule on when trees would be available for planting.

The rebate program would be similar to rebates currently offered for rain barrels and rain gardens where participating residents get a rebate on their stormwater utility bills. Eric noted that Mr.

Brandmeier indicated at their meeting that he felt administrative costs of this program would be minimal. Residents would have to pay more for trees under this program than the wholesale program but would have more flexibility on when trees could be planted.

Both of these initiatives would have similar requirements. Residents would be required to file an application with information about the species of tree selected and proposed planting location. The Village Forester would select qualifying applicants. Selected applicants would have to attend a class on proper tree planting and care. Preference would be given to placing trees in areas of the Village with low canopy cover. The Commission felt it would not be necessary to have residents sign maintenance agreements.

After discussing the discount and rebate initiatives further, the Commission members determined that the two initiatives should be combined into a single program with discount and rebate options. They discussed how the program could be publicized, including using the Village website, distributing flyers, and having an information table at the farmers market and during the annual Village open house.

b. Discussion of Private Property Retention Alternatives

The Commission reviewed its previous discussions of ways to discourage private property owners from cutting down their trees. The stormwater utility option discussed earlier in the meeting was the best possibility identified by the Commission but that option was felt to be unworkable.

Following further discussion, the Commission asked John to work with Village staff to prepare suitable forms and other documentation to implement a tree planting on private property initiative with discount and rebate options for presentation at the next Commission meeting.

4. New Business

a. Forester's Activities Update year to date

John reported Lake Drive is scheduled to be reconstructed in 2025. He anticipates four or five trees will be removed in March. The Village will work with contractors to protect existing trees during the project.

Ten public trees were removed as part of the Bradley Road reconstruction. Eleven replacement trees are scheduled to be planted in 2025. In addition, trees will be planted West of new fencing being installed along a retention pond near the intersection of Bradley and Lake.

The Village plans to plant 120 trees in 2025 of 38 different varieties.

Twenty arborvitae will be planted along the footpath between Nokomis Court and Port Washington Road.

John and Matt met with Kapur Associates to review landscaping plans at St. Augustine Prep.

Training workshops were held during the year for residents and Village staff. The workshop for residents was lightly attended. Two workshops were conducted to Village staff, including instructions on tree planting and young tree pruning, chainsaw safety, and safe tree felling.

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

Jonathan circulated a photograph of a “WE LOVE OUR TREES” sign that could be adapted for use in the Village. He suggested a sign design contest for school children be conducted in conjunction with Arbor Day and that perhaps a sponsor could be identified to have signs made that could be handed out whenever someone gets a tree under one of the tree planting initiatives. John Gall said he will be meeting with representatives of Maple Dale School after the first of the year to start planning for Arbor Day and can propose the idea of a sign contest.

The next meeting of the Commission was scheduled for March 13, 2025 at Village Hall at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

FOX POINT INITIATIVES TO ENCOURAGE TREE PLANTING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY 12/05/2024

FIRST INITIATIVE: DISCOUNTED TREE PROGRAM

- A. Village Forester purchases additional trees (25 maximum) each year to be made available to residents to plant on their properties under this Program. Resident reimburses the Village for the wholesale cost of the tree.
- B. Residents submit applications for trees by a deadline date
 - 1. Species (from Recommended Street Tree List)
 - 2. Location approved by Village Forester
 - 3. Tree will be a 20-gallon container tree for ease of transport
 - 4. Village staff will deliver tree to residence
- C. Forester selects "winners" based on his determination of what is best for Village
 - 1. Applications reviewed once or twice each year
 - 2. Any unclaimed trees to be planted on Village property per Village Forester direction
- D. Winning residents attend "proper planting and aftercare tree care" class presented by Village Forester
- E. Resident plants tree and maintains tree for 3-years, *possible maintenance?*
- F. Village Forester monitors planted trees and reports annually on success of program

SECOND INITIATIVE: STORMWATER UTILITY INCENTIVES TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE CANOPY ("Trees are tools in stormwater mitigation")

- A. Expand stormwater utility charge calculations to include all impervious areas
 - 1. Currently only buildings are included - a rough approximation of stormwater impact
 - 2. Need to determine cost of changing ordinance and recalculating rates
- B. Provide credit against impervious areas for presence of trees, new and existing
 - 1. Trees reduce runoff and promote soil porosity and stability
 - 2. Use Portland, OR, model: trees within 25 feet of impervious surfaces reduce impervious areas for purposes of rate calculations (100 sq. ft. for new deciduous trees, 200 sq. ft. for new evergreens, and 1/2 existing canopy for existing trees)
 - 3. Need to determine cost of changing ordinance and recalculating rates
- C. Individual property stormwater charges set upon implementation of the initiative
 - 1. Current rates may need to be adjusted to account for impact of changes
 - 2. Once set, residents can apply to have charges reduced for planting additional trees
 - 3. Village can recalculate stormwater charges when existing trees are removed
- D. Annual report to Tree Commission on impact of this initiative

THIRD INITIATIVE: TREE PLANTING REBATE PROGRAM

- A. Village budgets \$X annually to fund rebate program. Possible sources include: Stormwater Fund and Emerald Ash Borer Management Fund
- B. Residents apply for rebate coupons

1. Possible amounts: based on caliper of tree purchased
 2. Residents purchase trees on list of recommended trees from local nursery
 3. Residents plant trees per Village Forester guidelines
 4. Residents redeem coupons by presenting receipts and photographs of planted trees to Village
 5. One time credit with a maximum rebate amount
- C. Conditions listed in First Initiative apply as appropriate
- D. Village Forester maintains records of trees planted under this initiative and reports annually to Tree Commission on impact of this initiative
-