

**Whitehouse Tree Commission**  
**Minutes of Meeting – April 26, 2018**

The meeting was called to order by Sheri Luedtke at 7:02 pm. Members Present: Chairperson, Sheri Luedtke, Amy Schultz, Dianne Toffler, Janet Traub, Chris Manzey, Elliot Tramer (for end of meeting), Staff Representative, Mark Thomas.

Sheri Luedtke double-checked our Tree Commission shirt order.

Amy Schultz moved to accept the minutes of the March 22, 2018 meeting. Chris Manzey seconded. Motion carried.

**Old Business:**

Review Tree City USA Award Ceremony –Sheri and Chris brought back ideas concerning projects for next year’s Growth Award. Both said they would bring them to the next meeting. Amy saw a t-shirt at the ceremony that said “Plant a Tree” and she thought this was a good message to homeowners. Not only should homeowners be concerned about their public tree lawns but also plant trees on their properties because of all the benefits these trees provide. Janet thought the shirt also said “Give a bird a home”. Once again, nice sentiment.

A discussion ensued about writing an article for the Summer edition of our Village newsletter titled “Why plant a tree”. More discussion under New Business.

Sheri indicted that she was going to the Village Council meeting on Tuesday, May 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm to report to Council about our Growth Award. There she would explain about our Tree Commission’s accomplishments; let them know this is our “sterling” award because we have earned the award for 10 consecutive years; read the Proclamation; and present the award certificate to the Mayor.

Flower and Farmers Market Planning --Sheri asked for volunteers to distribute any left-over saplings (from Arbor Day) to people at the Flower Market May 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. Sheri will cover May 5<sup>th</sup>, while Amy will be available May 12<sup>th</sup>. If there are any saplings left, further distribution dates will be discussed at next month’s meeting.

Tree Inventory --Mark reported that no new trees have been added to the inventory. The Village crew has been busy trimming trees along the main streets. After hazardous branches have been removed, the crew can then think about Young Tree training type of pruning. Amy and Dianne noticed that some of the trees at the new Route 64 round-about appeared to be topped. Mark said that Nilsson’s Tree Service is contracted to maintain these trees and the plantings in the round-about island. He is going to look into whether Nilsson’s pruning efforts conform to standard pruning practices.

Mark also reported that three trees (Horsechestnut, American Beech, and Basswood) have been procured for the Arbor Day ceremony on Monday, May 7<sup>th</sup>. He also has ordered the saplings and supplies necessary to wrap and label them. The labels this year are professionally printed plastic cards with a

picture of the mature tree, statistics like height and growth habits, and brief instructions for planting. These can be attached via twist-ties. All supplies will be placed in the Shelter house (behind General's Ice Cream store) for assembly on Monday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon. Mark, unfortunately, cannot be there this year. The tree planting is scheduled for 2:00 pm on May 7<sup>th</sup>. The third grade classes will walk over to the planting site where a Tree Commission representative will talk (using a hand out created by Amy) about each tree and guide the student as they throw shovel-fulls of dirt onto the already positioned trees. The tree holes will be dug by Boy Scouts (or Mark, if the holes are not done correctly). Mrs. Dawn Hillary is our contact teacher at the Elementary school.

Docs and Forms --Because Judy Kethel is no longer serving on the Tree Commission, her job of managing the Docs and Forms will pass to Dianne Toffler. Sheri will show her how to access the cabinet and the various files stored there.

Next Year's Growth Award -- Sheri suggested that there are two areas that the Tree Commission can gain points toward the Growth Award next year. First, we can get points for hosting the Tree Academy. Second, we should qualify for points because the Village development project downtown is using Silva Cells. The use of Silva Cells can be traced to Stephanie Miller's presentation to the Village Council where she explained the benefits of this type of enclosure system.

Janet brought up the Invasive Removal project of last fall. She expressed her concern that there was some confusion about the removal of the brush cuttings. Apparently these cuttings sat for a while before being removed. While the Tree Commission cannot get points for future Growth Awards by continuing the project, Janet felt that this project needed to be continued for at least 3 years. However, certain revisions needed to be made concerning the dress code for the UT students and who could administer herbicides (not UT students). Further discussion of this project will continue in the Fall.

## **New Business**

Summer Newsletter Article -- Sheri suggested that we pursue the idea of "Why residents should plant trees in their yards". An article could briefly discuss the benefits trees offer and provide the public with resource links on the internet such as TreeFund.org, TreesAreGood.org, and iTreeTools.org. Dianne volunteered to write the article. Janet suggested she refer to her Tree Academy notes because Stephanie had a section specifically illustrating the use of the iTree tool. Part of the article could contain a graphic showing a pie-chart with the various benefits illustrated. Stephanie Miller is giving a presentation at the Way Library in Perrysburg on this topic next month. Chris volunteered to use the iTree tool and get a graphic and take it over to Dianne to help her when writing the article. Also, the graphic could be sent to Jill for the newsletter. Dianne will contact Barb Knisely to find out the due date for the summer newsletter.

Master Plan – Janet and Dianne mentioned that during the Sophomore Tree Academy class that Stephanie Miller said there are exceptions to rule when using the standard metric in assigning trees in a Master Plan. Typically you have to be aware of the Family, Genus, and Species of trees in order to increase diversity. However, Elms are a bit tricky because the Dutch Elm disease can apparently be

spread via mycorrhizae on the trees' roots. So, one cannot plant Elm trees next to each other. Stephanie suggested that you can intersperse Hackberries with Elms. Janet has volunteered to go through our current Master Plan and note locations where elms were assigned. She already knows about Pine Vista Drive, Weckerly, and Providence Street (south of Otsego). She will then change the Master Plan tree assignments to reflect Stephanie's suggestion.

Also, Amy recommended that the Tree Commission members needed to walk some of the streets in new sub-divisions such as Steeplechase to assign trees to the Master Plan. She recommended that new members such as Dianne and Chris be involved since the process can be complicated. Janet will go to the County Surveyor to look at new Plats for these future tree assignments.

The Recipe -- Janet brought up the topic of Stephanie Miller's suggestion to use "the recipe" when planting trees in order to get them off to a good start. The recipe involves digging out 20 inches of soil by using a roto-tiller so the soil is aerated. Then mixing this ½ the old soil with ½ fresh topsoil. This new mixture is then replaced into the planting area and allowed to "rest" for a season. The tree hole is then dug in this rested soil. When Mark was asked if this technique was workable, he commented that in most cases it would not be practical because the Village crew does not usually know very far ahead of time the exact location of trees. Issues such as utilities and driveway locations may not be known a whole season ahead of time.

BASF and Nature Conservancy Meeting --Sheri went to a meeting co-sponsored by BASF (here in Whitehouse) and the Nature Conservancy. Ashley Decker with the Nature Conservancy gave a program which Sheri thought was very good on the Oak Openings region. Sheri wondered if she should contact Ashley to give a similar program later this year as part of our Tree Commission's education mission. The Millers (the bee people) cannot give a program this summer, so Sheri thought Ashley would be a good substitution. A discussion ensued and it was agreed that September might be a good time to host such a meeting. Sheri will contact Ashley and try to set this up.

At this meeting, Sheri procured 5 copies of the Oak Openings Homeowner's Guide. She is going to give a copy to each of the teachers who are bringing their classes to the Arbor Day celebration.

Janet Traub moved to adjourn, and Elliot Tramer seconded, and at 8:10 the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Manzey