

Whitehouse Tree Commission

February 22, 2024

Attendees: Sheri Luedtke, Pres., Amy Schultz Vice Pres., Diane DeYonker, Chis Manzey, Elliot Tramer, Steve Connelly Council Rep., Brian Petrell Staff Rep., Guest Chuck Kethel, Michelle Tippie

I: Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 19:27.

II: Motions to accept the following minutes were passed unanimously:

November 16, 2023: Motion by Amy Schultz, seconded by Diane DeYonker
January 25, 2024, as corrected: Motion by Chris Manzey, seconded by Elliot Tramer
(correction: last paragraph page 2 change update to updated)

III: Old Business

A: Disc Golf at Sandra Park

Elliot Tramer has drafted a memo for presentation to Council revoking the Tree Commission's approval for a Disc Golf Course at Sandra Park due to ODNR's unease with its location. The grant work was submitted, and approved, prior to the suggestion of the Course locating in the same area. Stephanie Miller, with ODNR, stated the grant would not have been approved if they had known a Disc Golf Course would be incorporated into the area. It is a concern to the Tree Commission that this will jeopardize the goodwill of the ODNR which Whitehouse has enjoyed and deter them from considering future grant applications submitted by the Village.

Chuck Kethel, Representative for the Disc Golf group, and designer of the course, has assured the Commission that the design was created to avoid the newly planted trees, using them to guide the players through the course not using them as obstacles for course play. The course is geared for amateur play, taking into consideration the fragile state of the young trees.

Brian Petrell suggests the Commission and the Golfers work together to demonstrate that conservation planting and community recreation can co-exist successfully. As a show of good faith, the Golfers must provide the protective 6' fencing for all 50 trees, approximately 700 feet.

After discussion it was decided to ask Stephanie Miller to our Commission meeting in March to get a clearer opinion from her and assure her that the Commission did not intend to cause offense. Sheri Luedtke will reach out to her to see if she is available to attend in person or schedule a Zoom meeting if not.

Steve Connelly stated he would advise Council of our concerns and let them know the path we are taking regarding this issue.

B: Tree Inventory

Brian Petrell reported that the Village outsourced the removal of a large Sugar Maple in the Village Park that was deemed hazardous and a 2nd Maple tree at Logan and Eastview. The Multi-Use Path berms have been cut/mowed and the trees have been pruned to shape them up along Cemetery and the Park, and Waterville St. and 295.

The trees in the Westwyck area have been trimmed and Oak Brook will be next to have the trees "lifted" to prevent damage from trucks and buses.

An ADA compliant boardwalk was installed across the swale at Sandra Park. There were no rails installed, just a kick board. Additional work has been done on the walking trail.

Tree Commission cont.:

Brian suggested planting the Arbor Day trees in the Village Park this year to replace the trees removed and limit the distance the school children have to walk to attend as available spots along the Multi-Use trail are moving further from the center of town.

C: Forms and Documents: None

D: Facebook Ideas: Springtime planting guide.

IV: New Business

A: Arbor Day Planting:

The Village of Whitehouse Arbor Day Celebration normally occurs the 1st week of May following the Elementary School annual testing. Sheri Luedtke will contact the teachers to determine the best day of that week to schedule the event. Brian Petrell suggested contacting Lucas Soil and Water to purchase the 200 saplings for the celebration. Diane DeYonker has contacts within Soil and Water so she will make inquiries.

Sheri would like to include the Tree Planting guide and the word puzzle designed by Chris Manzey in the bags for the saplings.

If the trees are to be planted in Village Park they will need to be large trees. Chris Manzey suggested Hickory. Brian Petrell will scout locations in the park and further discussion can take place in March.

B: Project Ideas for Growth Award:

Michelle Tippie has left a message for Craig Bauer of Ohio Compost asking if they would host a Composting seminar for the community. Commission members suggested a mid-July date on site at Ohio Compost. The event could be advertised at the Farmer's Market, on the digital signs, in the Mirror, on Facebook, and in The Neighbors magazine.

C: Review Tree Ordinance:

Members were asked to do their annual review of the Village Tree Ordinance and bring any comments or concerns to the March meeting.

Brian Petrell questioned planting "refused" Street Trees that have been prepaid for in the new Subdivisions in other empty locations in the Village. The Village Solicitor will need to review the language of the contract to determine if the funds can be used outside of the designated subdivision. The Commission also needs to clarify if a Street Tree can be "refused", as the location is part of the Master Plan to establish the Urban Forest inside the Village. If the refusal is due to an obstacle (overhead lines, hydrant) the Commission can review the location and assign another variety of tree.

V: Other Business:

Lori Bauer from Whitehouse may attend next month's meeting as a potential new member of the Commission. Chuck Kethel would like recommendations from the Commission on native conifers that he would like to plant on the South side of Sandra Park before the ditch that would act as a barrier to yards along the Disc Golf Course. He also wishes to add key codes to each tee to identify the trees along the course.

A motion to adjourn was made by Amy Schultz at 20:24 and seconded by Diane DeYonker. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,

Michelle K. Tippie