

**WINCHESTER TREE COMMISSION
MINUTES
February 24, 2011**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Winchester Tree Commission was held on Thursday, February 24, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Administration Building at City Yards.

Mr. Farris, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Ms. Stickley made a motion to approve the January minutes; seconded by Mr. Roulston, motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

Members present: Mr. Patrick Farris, Ms. Allison Major, Ms. Kate Christen, Ms. Mary Stickley, Mr. T'ai Roulston, Ms. Donna Downing and Mr. Gerald Crowell, Natural Resources Advisory Board Liaison.

Staff present: Jim O'Connor, Tom Hoy, Clint Cantrell, Tim Stern, Perry Eisenach and Tom Denney.

Guests Present: Mr. Tom McCampbell, Mr. Lyle Anderson, Mr. George Pollash, Mr. Ron Crowe, Mr. Ron Perlik and Mr. Will Riley.

New Business:

1) Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative:

Tom McCampbell thanked the commission for taking the time to hear their presentation. Tom said that Mr. Pollash and Mr. Anderson from Weed Control would be conducting the presentation on the aspects and benefits of using tree growth regulator. Tom said that they are hoping to use the growth regulator in the city to slow down the growth of the trees to reduce trimming and maintain line clearance for a long time.

Mr. Anderson said that the regulator they are planning to use is called Profile. Mr. Anderson said that the regulator reduces the distance between the cells in the trees and makes the cells shorter which makes the tree itself more compact and dense. He said that the chemical moves up through the roots into the tree as the tree pulls water from the ground. Mr. Anderson said that the Virginia Department of Transportation uses this product to spray all of their right of ways on the interstates and now they only have to mow once or twice a year. He showed the commission members examples of treated and untreated trees. He said that trees that are in decline actually get healthier when treated with the growth regulator and they withstand droughts better. Mr. Anderson discussed the different types of application. He said the best time for application is one to three months before trimming. Mr. Anderson said that the chemical stays in the ground and doesn't move. He explained the benefits of using the growth regulator.

Mr. Farris said that the commission would like to make a decision at next months meeting after the members have time to get some information, do some research and discuss it. Mr. Farris asked if the product would be transported if someone dug up the earth and moved it. Mr. Anderson said that it would. Ms. Stickley said that some trees have other plants planted around them. She asked if they would be affected. Mr. Anderson said they would. Mr. Roulston explained that one of the missions of the Tree Commission is to try to increase the size of the tree canopy for the City of Winchester. He said that it seems that the tree growth regulator goes against that philosophy. Mr. Anderson said that there would still be the same amount of leaves, so it would have the same coverage from above. Mr. Roulston said that it reduces growth in all directions and reduces the diameter. Mr. Anderson said that treating trees and keeping them healthier will reduce the number of trees that have to be replaced with smaller trees and this will help keep the canopy larger. Mr. Roulston said that would speak more to targeted use of the product. Mr. Anderson emphasized that there is a major problem with the city trees being in the power lines. Mr. Roulston asked about trees that are currently under the lines becoming denser with the treatments and causing more problems when they grow into the lines. Mr. McCampbell said the goal is not to let them reach the lines. Ms. Major asked why the lines can't be buried. Mr. McCampbell said that the cost would be high but he isn't the person to answer that question. Mr. Farris encouraged all commission members to look over the literature and he will add it to the agenda for the March meeting so that it can be discussed.

2) Arbor Day 2011 Planning

Mr. Farris said that this year's theme is "2011: The Year of the Forest". Tim Stern said that the ceremony is scheduled for Thursday, April 7, 2011 and the rain date is Friday, April 8, 2011. The members agreed that Shawnee Springs would be the location for the tree planting ceremony.

3) Valley Avenue Improvement Project

Perry Eisenach said that he wanted to talk to the Tree Commission about two requests for tree removals. He said that the project will include replacing all of the sidewalks on Valley Avenue from Handley Avenue to Bellview Ave. Perry said that there are a lot of old Elm trees along Valley Avenue that have caused some of the sidewalk problems. He said that since there are older trees that are in poor condition, they feel that now is the time to take them down before the sidewalks are replaced. Perry said that they have looked at the entire project to determine which trees should be removed. He said the first request is for the trees in front of Handley High School. He said that there are seventeen Elm trees in front of the school that need to be removed. He said that Mr. Kevin McKew from Winchester Public Schools is present at the meeting along with Mr. Will Riley who has been working with the Garden Club of Virginia to develop the master plan for the Handley campus. He asked Mr. Riley to go over the plan and what they are trying to accomplish.

Mr. Riley said that they have been working completely independent from the sidewalk project as a committee with Winchester Public Schools and the Handley Board of Trustees to develop a restoration and preservation plan. He showed the commission members a diagram of the proposed plan. He said that one of the problems is the tree line is way too narrow. He said that he suggested using the Bartlett Laboratory method for sidewalks which has a layer of large stone, then a layer of fine stone and finally the sidewalk on top of that. He said that this reduces the damage that is caused by the roots. He said that they suggested making a wider six foot sidewalk as well as an eight foot tree lawn which will allow fifty to seventy-five years trouble free. He said that they suggest planting the trees on thirty foot centers which would allow having twenty-one trees instead of seventeen. Mr. Riley said that he thinks planting Princeton or Jefferson Elms would be a good idea. He said that Elms are an iconic image of the American landscape and these two species are resistant to disease. Gerald Crowell asked if they had thought about alternating species in case disease wiped out one particular species. Mr. Riley said that it is always an issue but the aesthetic value of having all of the same species of majestic trees would take your breath away in his opinion.

Perry Eisenach said that the second half of the project is from Jefferson to Bellview. He said that Tim Stern walked the entire project and reviewed the eighty-five existing trees. Perry showed the members a map with the thirty-two trees they are recommending for removal but he said Tim has identified eighty-one places that trees can be planted. Perry said the goal was to replace every tree that is removed with two new ones and the plan exceeds that goal. Ms. Major said that some of the Elms didn't look that bad. Perry said that they suggest that the Tree Commission take a look at the trees over the next month and make a decision at the March meeting. Ms. Stickley asked Perry if they plan to use the Bartlett sidewalk method on the entire project. Perry said that they do plan to use the method at Handley and on the rest of the project they are going to try to pick trees that don't damage the sidewalk and they will use rubber sidewalk where the existing trees are. Ms. Major asked what the timeline is for the project. Perry said that they would like to start the project at the beginning of the summer. He said he would like the commission to make a decision at the March meeting. Ms. Major said that the commission would vote on both of the Valley Avenue requests at the March meeting. Perry said that he would like the Tree Commission to walk the project to decide which species of trees they would like planted like they did on the two-way project. Ms. Christen asked Tim if he has a pattern in mind for the plantings. Tim said that he looks at different aspects such as power lines overhead or driveways nearby. He said that he doesn't have a template for how the trees will be planted.

4) Consideration of Tree Removal/Trim Requests

1311 Handley Avenue

Ms. Christen made a motion to deny removal of the tree located at 1311 Handley Avenue; seconded by Mr. Roulston, motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

521 S. Washington Street

Mr. Roulston made a motion to remove the tree located at 521 S. Washington Street; seconded by Ms. Christen, motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

Old Business:

Continuation of Retreat issues (To be continued and finalized by Arbor Day):

Ms. Major stated that these issues will have to wait until the March meeting.

Comments from Members:

- 1) Mr. Roulston gave a report from the January Natural Resources Advisory Board meeting. He said they continued their work on the “Natural Landscaping Zones”.

Adjourn:

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

**CITY OF WINCHESTER
 TREE COMMISSION
 STAFF REPORT FOR JANUARY 2011
 SUBMITTED FEBRUARY 24, 2011**

This report is a summary of contractor expenses and an activity listing of trimmings, plantings, removals and stump grindings for the month of January 2011.

**EXPENSES REPORT
 (Billings for January 2011)**

CONTRACTOR TRIMMINGS:	CONTRACTOR PLANTINGS:	CONTRACTOR REMOVALS:	TOTAL:
\$500.00	\$0	\$0	\$500.00

ACTIVITY REPORT

TRIMMING:	PLANTINGS:	REMOVALS:	STUMP GRINDING:
1518 Hockman Ave.			.
420 Hollingsworth Pl.			
Pleasant Valley Rd. (near Wal-Mart) x2			
Corner of Kent and Boscawen St.			
5 Trees	0 trees	0 trees	0 stump