



Town of Holly Springs
Tree Advisory Committee
6:00 PM **Monday, January 8, 2024**

Regular Meeting
Holly Springs Town Hall Council Chambers
128 S. Main Street, 2nd Floor

Agenda

- 1. Call to Order (6:00 | Rachel Woods)**
- 2. Agenda Adjustment (6:01 | Rachel Woods)**
- 3. Minutes (6:02 | Rachel Woods)**
 - a. October 9, 2023 Minutes
- 4. General Business**
 - a. Tree Pruning Event Planning
 - b. Arbor Day and Creek Week Planning
 - c. Street Tree Replacement Funds
 - d. Tree City USA Application Updates
- 5. Other Business (7:15)**
- 6. Next Meeting (7:25 | Gina Clapp)**
- 7. Adjournment (7:30 | Rachel Woods)**

In accordance with ADA regulations please contact the Town Clerk's office at least 48 hours before the meeting to request an auxiliary aid or service needed to participate in this meeting:

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Town of Holly Springs

Tree Advisory Committee

Minutes: October 9, 2023

Development Services • 128 S. Main Street • P.O. Box 8 • Holly Springs, NC 27540

Agenda Item 1: ROLL CALL

The Tree Advisory Committee met on Monday, October 9, 2023 in Town Hall at 128 South Main Street at 6:06 P.M. when quorum was established.

Members Present: Marissa Parker, Vice Chair
Ginny Suever
Russell Lichtenstein
Eric Dean

Members Absent: Kelly Oten, Chair

Ex-Officio

Members Present: Danielle Hewetson, Town Council Representative
Chris Deshazor, Planning Board Representative
Joanna Holder, Planning Board Representative (alternate)
Susan Smith, Parks & Rec Advisory Committee
Bridget Peters, Junior Member

Ex-Officio

Members Absent: Sarah Larson, Parks & Rec Advisory Committee

Staff Present: Sean Ryan
Aaron Prichard
Conor Ryan
Taylor Jackson
Melissa Harden

Others Present:

Agenda Item 2: Agenda Adjustment

No Agenda Adjustments

Agenda Item 3: Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes for the July 10, 2023 meeting.

Motion by: Chris Deshazor

Seconded by: Eric Dean

Action: *The committee voted in favor of the motion. (3-0)*

Agenda Item 4a: Wake County LCA/TCA

Tim Maloney presented the Board with a summary of the findings of the Wake County Land Canopy Analysis and Tree Canopy Assessment. The presentation covered the purpose and scope of the study and how it fit within the goals of the Wake County Board. The presentation covered the methodology and

findings of the land cover analysis. The presentation covered the findings of the tree canopy assessment, including the change in canopy over a 10-year span from 2010-2020. The presentation covered the recommendations from the study, including an identification of planting areas and a description of the next steps Wake County plans to take.

Danielle Hewetson asked a question about comparisons between larger and smaller municipalities and how to reconcile differences between them, using Raleigh and HS as examples. Mr. Maloney responded first by describing Raleigh's redevelopment efforts, then noted how unincorporated areas made comparisons difficult, using Mecklenburg county as an example of a place that is mostly built out. Mr. Maloney concluded by stating that it's difficult to compare municipalities across the state and in different counties, and noted that the study wanted to set a baseline for where the canopy is now and then do another study in the future to see how ordinances impact change.

Susan Smith asked question about whether there was a certain type of tree that made up the canopy in poor health. Mr. Maloney replied that there was not a way to discern whether a specific species was responsible for the poor canopy.

Marissa Parker asked for the name of the consultant that helped conduct the study. Tim replied that the consultant was Davey Resource Group.

Marissa Parker asked whether there was a benchmark prior to 2010-2020 to compare the current study to. Mr. Maloney responded that there is not.

Eric Dean asked whether there were benchmark municipalities to consider acceptable loss. Mr. Maloney responded that the other municipalities in the study can be used to benchmark.

Marissa Parker asked about where to get the data at the parcel level. Mr. Maloney replied that the information was given later in the slideshow.

Chris Deshazor asked about the model showing tree possible locations and whether the tool allowed for estimating the budget required to fulfill all possible planting locations. Mr. Maloney replied that the tool accommodated that.

Marissa Parker asked for clarification that the tree planting priority locations were based on heat islands. Mr. Maloney added that social equity was also part of the calculation. Mrs. Parker asked about whether types of trees are recommended based on those priorities. Mr. Maloney noted the data didn't cover that and to ask local experts, though strongly recommended the use native species.

Eric Dean asked about soil classification and how the soil can inhibit growth. Mr. Maloney noted that the soil survey can help guide process for choosing trees.

Joanna Holder discussed tree-friendly policies and HOAs and asked if there are things to encourage or discourage for tree-related policies. Mr. Maloney replied that it should be guided by local decisions and that the study was not meant to make policy recommendations.

Danielle Hewetson asked if slides from the presentation will be made available to the Board. Aaron Prichard replied yes.

Susan Smith asked about where the tips and tricks for the canopy tool are located on the website. Mr. Maloney said that the tips and tricks are not available yet and that the guides are in the works

Agenda Item 5a: Street Tree Replacement Program

Aaron Prichard updated the Board on the success of the Town's Street Tree Replacement Grant Program, noting that the amount of funding allocated had been used to fund 14 grants, but that there remained 23 grant applications unfunded. Mr. Prichard asked if the Board would like to allocate additional funds in

order to cover more of the applications that remained, at the expense of funding a Town-led tree replacement project.

Danielle Hewetson asked if all of the funding has been qualified, in that they are covering the replacement of decayed, diseased trees. Conor Ryan answered that Staff cross-references the trees up for replacement with the aerial imagery provided and with the Town's street tree database. Mrs. Hewetson asked if the remaining \$30,000 is already spoken for through a different project. Aaron Prichard noted that Staff is using \$30,000 from the previous year to fund replacement through a Town project. Mrs. Hewetson asked if the funds roll over, and if there were ways to get better rates since one subdivision is spending half of fee rate on replacement. Mr. Prichard replied that landscapers were advertising a \$750 deal for replacement.

Russell Lichtenstein noted that the nine-tree replacement application is from his company and that the \$3,000 quoted for the tree replacement is not all inclusive.

Joanna Holder asked about for more background info on trees and the grant program.

Chris Deshazor asked if the Board can approve moving the remaining \$30,000 to the grant program without the \$3,000 application, and asked if the application in question is for an established neighborhood as old neighborhoods may want bigger trees. Mr. Deshazor said that he supports moving money to grant program.

Danielle Hewetson asked if Staff is keeping applications open. Conor Ryan responded that the applications currently on the waitlist would go through our normal permit approval process. Mrs. Hewetson noted that she supports moving the \$30,000 to the grant program.

Russell Lichtenstein asked about Staff's process for checking funding granted against the funding request. Conor Ryan responded that Staff checks at the beginning and end of the process to ensure the reimbursement matches the request.

Eric Dean asked about checking to make sure the new trees are installed correctly. Conor Ryan responded that yes, Staff inspects the trees to ensure they were installed correctly.

Susan Smith asked if Staff vets vendors and landscaping companies. Aaron Prichard says Staff does not and any conflicts regarding the work being done should remain between the contractor and the homeowner.

Russell asked if Staff helps homeowners with the application process. Aaron Prichard said yes, Staff will go back and forth with the applicant to get the application right.

Susan Smith noted feedback that HOAs tried to apply for the program themselves but found it difficult, and if Staff will do anything to tailor the application process to a group rather than an individual.

Susan Smith and Russell Lichtenstein discussed whether to disqualify HOAs as applicants. Aaron Prichard said Staff will bring back any proposed changes to the program to the Board for input.

Danielle Hewetson asked about changing the process away from first-come, first-serve and pondered whether it would be good to go to prioritization areas instead, based on the canopy assessment and the Town's own research. Marissa Parker and Susan Smith agreed. Mrs. Smith noted that it would be good to use the Town's new 311 tool for the purpose as well, as the Town can gather historical data from 311 and portal.

Joanna Holder asked whether there was any education Staff provided to homeowners on how to take care of street trees and whether it would be good to add such education to the program. Danielle Hewetson agreed.

Susan Smith asked about how Staff holds the landscapers putting trees in responsible for their health, using gator bags as example. Russell Lichtenstein noted that depending on season, gator bags aren't necessary.

Marissa Parker asked to make sure it was in the minutes to note she and Danielle Hewetson's discussion on prioritization areas for street tree replacement.

Marissa Parker asked about where the \$21,000 asked for fully funding the remaining applications was coming from. Aaron Prichard replied that it was coming from the total \$40,000 for tree replacement from budget.

Marissa Parker asked what the Town would do with the remaining \$30,000 if not used for the grant program. Aaron Prichard noted that it would go to a Town-led program similar to the one going on now. Mrs. Parker asked how trees are chosen for the Town program. Sean Ryan noted it was from the street tree database and it was difficult for Staff to find trees. Mrs. Parker asked if there were any reasons not to use the funding. Mr. Ryan noted that there were no current plans for the funds and that the grant program was a cost-effective way to get the trees replaced.

Russell Lichtenstein asked why the program was so popular this year. Aaron Prichard noted that the website, webpage, and newsletter helped, and that the updated HOA contact list helped.

Joanna Holder asked that if Staff wanted to plant some new trees in areas not owned by the Town, where the money for funding would come from. Aaron Prichard replied that the trees for the grant program are street trees not open area trees. Mr. Prichard and Sean Ryan noted that there is a different pot of funds for street and canopy trees, and that street trees are in the ROW, thus being in the Town's jurisdiction, but the Town holds homeowners responsible for maintenance.

Marissa Parker asked where the funding for putting in new trees comes from. Sean Ryan replied that new trees in new development come from the developer, not the Town, though if it's done with a Town project then the Town pays for it through its general landscaping budget.

Joanna Holder asked where the funding for filling Womble Park would come from. Sean Ryan noted that funding would have to come from Town Council.

Susan Smith asked about the dead and dying trees around Womble Park. Sean Ryan noted replacement would come from the Town's budget.

Marissa Parker noted that the \$10,000 and \$40,000 split between homeowners and the Town seemed disproportionate, and asked about how moving the funds around would work. Aaron Prichard noted that \$40,000 was allocated, and the Tree Advisory Committee in past determined how it would be split, and noted that the \$10,000 wasn't fully used last cycle, though with the \$40,000 the Board has flexibility in allocation. Sean Ryan said that the funding has been moved around as part of the pilot program and tested in different proportions, and noted that the new data and current applications can help determine path for next grant program cycle.

Susan asked if all plantings will go on in the planting season. Aaron Prichard said yes, and that deadline was December 17 for work being done and January for applicants to submit the receipt to get reimbursement.

Aaron Prichard clarified that the \$3,000 application for nine red maples applied for by the HOA would go back to review, but that the rest of the applications would be funded normally, and that the sliding funds over would only be for this year.

Danielle Hewetson motioned to allocate remaining budget to fund all applications on waiting list. Chris Deshazor seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion by: Danielle Hewetson

Seconded by: Chris Deshazor

Action: *The committee voted in favor of the motion. (4-0)*

Agenda Item 5b: Hollyfest 2023

Aaron Prichard updated the Board on Staff's efforts for Hollyfest, including the giveaways planned for the event. Mr. Prichard then notified the Board that volunteers from the committee were needed, and asked whether the Board would like to do a children's activity at Hollyfest.

Danielle Hewetson and Russell Lichtenstein clarified that Kelly Oten would bring tracing for the children's activity.

Russell Lichtenstein asked about big giveaways for Hollyfest. Sean Ryan clarified that Staff would be doing the tubing giveaway at Hollyfest and tree planting at Arbor Day instead of tree giveaway.

Agenda Item 5c: 2022 Tree City USA

Aaron Prichard updated the Board on the status of the Town's 2023 Tree City USA application, including the deadline and the requirements to receive the recognition. Mr. Prichard went into detail on the requirement for the Town to spend \$2 per capita on tree-related expenses, and defined what expenses are eligible to count toward the requirement.

Agenda Item 5d: Arbor Day & Education Events

Aaron Prichard informed the Board about Staff's early planning efforts for Arbor Day and requested the Board's feedback on holding the event at Ting park.

Chris Deshazor noted the weirdness of planting trees on turf at Ting Park, and asked if Womble would be a better spot. Marissa Parker agreed that it would be nice to do in nature and have area to spread out. Aaron Prichard noted that the planting at Ting didn't result well previously as it ended with dead or diseased trees. Taylor Jackson noted that the trees had all been replaced. Eric Dean agreed that Womble would be a better spot. Sean Ryan noted that Staff would discuss with the Parks and Rec team to see if there was a spot at Womble and that Staff would bring proposed locations back to the Board.

Agenda Item 6: Other Business

Marissa Parker asked if everyone would get a copy of the slides and access to the land canopy analysis and tree canopy assessment.

Joanna Holder introduced herself to the Board since it was her first meeting present.

Danielle Hewetson welcomed Bridget Peters to the Board and thanked her for being there.

Sean Ryan reminded the Board about the Chamber of Commerce Christmas Tree event, noting that it would fulfill the 4th event the TAC has to hold annually.

Agenda Item 7: Next Meeting – January 8th, 2023

Agenda Item 8: Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Motion by: Danielle Hewetson

Seconded by: Chris Deshazor

Action: *The committee voted in favor of the motion. (4-0)*

Conor Ryan
TAC Clerk