

University Park Tree Committee Meeting Notes

January 31, 2013, 7:30 – 8:45 pm

Town Hall

Attendees: Lindsay Hicks (chair), Chris Aubry, Roy Alvarez (Town Council Representative Ward 7 and Tree Committee liaison) Len Carey (Town Council Representative Ward 4), Karen Sondak, Joanne Fletcher, David Dawson, Linda Strickman

1. Review and discuss Linda Verrill's proposed illustrated list of trees on the Town's Approved Shade Tree List.

The committee agrees that this is a useful publication.

- Suggestions were made to remove certain trees from the booklet (and thus from the University Park Approved Shade Tree List) due to problems with disease and possible invasive properties. These trees are the American Elm and the Sawtooth Oak. The American Elm is susceptible to Dutch Elm Disease, even though varieties have been developed that are resistant, they are not 100 % resistant. From the National Park Service web page on invasives: *Sawtooth oak is popular for use in street tree plantings due to its interesting foliage and fruits (acorns). It spreads by seed that is produced in large numbers and has been found in recent years to be escaping from plantings to become invasive in wild areas, displacing native plants. Because of this, land managers recommend against the use of sawtooth oak and suggest instead that landscapers use native oaks, of which there are many species to choose. Do not plant sawtooth oaks.*
 - We also believe that a note should be added to the document that states that the information provided is for the Shade Tree Reimbursement Program, and is not a general guide to recommended trees for UP.
 - To make the most basic information available about each tree "at a glance", Lindsay will put at the top of each page, statistics such as height, spread, fall color, flowers, and relevant landscape notes.
 - The committee also believes that a note should be added to the information so that residents fully understand the importance of the planning required before planting one of these large trees. Many canopy trees would be too large for typical Town lots.
 - Karen raised the question of having a similar list and information available for residents who want guidance on buying smaller trees. We will look into providing this information in the form of a link to a useful website.
2. Discuss committee goals and upcoming projects. Consider helping with tree choices and placement for plantings, and continued ivy removal from town trees.

In order to continue removing ivy from town trees, we will resume the "ivy league" activities. Lindsay will put together a form to send around to committee members, who will volunteer to run these activities. Each member can choose a date, time and location. We will publicize these on the Town website and the UP List serve.

We will gladly help with tree choices and placement and will ask Mickey Beale how and when we can be of use.

3. Review Tree Reimbursement request for trees not on approved list.

The committee agrees that the best procedure for granting requests for reimbursement for trees not on the UP Approved Shade Tree List is for the request to be made in writing before the tree is planted. If the tree is considered an appropriate choice, it could then be added to the List. Therefore, we suggest denying this request.

4. Update on the permit request from PEPCO to trim and remove trees in town; by Roy Alvarez.

Pepco is under a mandate from the Public Service commission to improve electrical service reliability.

Tree removals:

The Town and Pepco are close to an agreement for approximately 40 trees to be removed by Pepco. The Town has been advised on this action by the town arborist and the Director of Public Works. This list will be publicized before the removals.

Tree trimming:

This remains a big concern. UP is working on an agreement with Pepco that will grant them a permit to do prescribed trimming approved by the arborist and public works director. The goal is to prevent poor pruning practices. The permit can be rescinded if conditions are not met.

Pepco is likely to give the Town approximately 20 trees. The exact number will be determined during the ongoing negotiations.

5. Len Carey, of the Public Facilities and Services Committee, brought the members of the committee an opportunity to take part in the planning of the new Veterans' Memorial. Please let me know if you would like to represent the committee.

Next meeting: Thursday, February 28, 7:00 pm, Town Hall. Agenda will be sent and posted at least one week prior to the meeting.