

Town of University Park: Committee on Trees, Parks, and Environment
MINUTES for the meeting,
Wednesday, 6/9/2021

Members Present/Absent Beth Alvarez, Roy Alvarez, Chris Aubry (Chair), Eric Erickson, Matt Jasinski, Laurie Morrissey (Council Liaison), Karen Sondak, Joe Thompson, Tiegh Thompson

GUESTS: Karin Burghardt

CONVENE: 7:10 PM

ADJOURN: 8:50 PM

Matters discussed at this meeting:

1. Next steps, Ordinance/Legacy Tree program, amend town code, Chapter 16.
 - a. Current Status Committee spent much of the meeting discussing members' comments/recommended revisions to Town Attorney Suellen Ferguson's draft ordinance of 4/15/21. Chair Aubry will consolidate and provide back to TPE members for review before Liaison Morrissey provides back to Town Attorney. Most of the committee's concerns were that the initial draft did not differentiate between current role of Town Arborist and the Committee's request for a Registered Consulting Arborist.
 - b. Legislative strategy, LIDAR etc. Members discussed new Council Members and agreed to speak with all three, as assigned per their coinciding wards. Chair Aubry again expressed frustration with the lack of obtaining a baseline measurement for the canopy in over four years.
2. Community Tree Planting 2021: Chair Aubry will contact TPE members and ask that they gather at the Pollinator Meadow in the coming weeks to specifically site specifically plants for the 10/23/21 planting. Karen Sondak has volunteered to sketch the plan.
3. Other business : Dr. Karin T. Burghardt, Dept of Entomology, UMD, provided a cicada update, starting with town officials response to her cicada response recommendations regarding dangers of improper netting. Within a week of the 5/12 meeting, Dr. Burghardt contacted DPW Director Beall, recommending that any netting deployed to protect city trees from cicada damage be removed unless it had not openings that would allow cicadas to gain access, provided ample space to prevent branch compression, and was not excessively bound at trunk to point of girdling. Director Beall referred Dr. Burghardt to the Mayor; she has not yet heard back.

Dr. Burghardt then provided a cicada update, indicating the egg laying/tree damage is peaking at present and we can expect the cicadas to be present for another three weeks. She has noted numerous street trees that have been not thoroughly netted have dozens of cicadas laying eggs with no risk of predation by birds, mammals, etc. She also shared her extensive knowledge of cicada behavioral habits.