



## Bloomington Tree Commission Minutes of the Meeting 19 September 2022

**PRESENT:** **Laurel Cornell** (chair, Professor Emeritus of Sociology and Studio Art); **Stephanie Freeman-Day** (PhD Student, SPEA); **Jeff Palmer** (Professor Emeritus, Biology, IUB); **George Hegeman** (Professor Emeritus, Biology, IUB); **Mary Welz** (Sycamore Land Trust Education Director, MC-IRIS Board Member); **Mia Williams** (Landscape Architect, Indiana University), **Tim Street** (COB P&R Operations and Development Division Director); **Haskell Smith** (new COB P&R Urban Forester); **Julie Ramey** (COB P&R Community Relations Manager)

**ABSENT:** **Dedaimia Whitney** (Certified Tree Steward, Master Gardener)

**MEETING SECRETARY** (for the purpose of drafting minutes): **Mary Welz** (Sycamore Land Trust Education Director, MC-IRIS Board Member)

### CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of minutes of meeting August 15, 2022.
- Next meeting will be 10 am on Monday, October 17th at the Rose Hill Cemetery Office

### REPORTS

#### Urban Forester's Report (Haskell Smith)

Haskell recently started in his new role as Urban Forester. He previously worked as the Urban Forestry Working Foreperson. In his update he provided metrics on tree removal and pruning to date and upcoming, current and upcoming contracted work, memorial plaques, as well as staff trainings. The RFQ for E Winston pruning for mature pin oaks is closed, and they are in the process of accepting proposals for the RFQ for Callery pear removal and replacement along the B-line. They will be resuming the Bicentennial Tree Plantings at 80 sites this fall in Areas 3 and 4 (with Crestmont as a backup location), 29 trees on order currently. Haskell is adjusting to new position, dealing with ongoing under staffing issues.

[Full report included separately]

#### Indiana University (Mia Williams)

IU worked on their tree inventory system wide this summer, the data for which is being processed currently, more to come. There will be fall tree plantings on campus, working with Sarah Mincey to engage students to work on this alongside crews.

In the wetland restoration at School of Education building, they are working to include more tree species.

During the campus tree advisory committee meeting, they took a look at soil compaction across campus and the effects on trees, working to amend soil compacting through various techniques.

Using tree inventory to make a case for emergency tree removals as leverage purchase of tree equipment for IU use, cost will pay for itself quickly (e.g. declining red oak costing \$7K in contracted work to Blue Stone). Trees are now being considered as capital assets and receiving the same or similar level of support as other such assets. The Woodland Campus Initiative meeting in June has helped to steer this change.

No report from Environmental Commission (Dedamia Whitney absent)

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- Review the changes made to Table 04-14: Permitted Street Tree Species
- Review the changes made to Table 04-15: Permitted Interior Tree Species
- Review the changes made to Table 04-18: Prohibited Invasive trees
- Propose a new table: Table 04-19: Prohibited Street Trees with Undesirable Characteristics

In previous meeting, commission made suggestions to add or otherwise make changes to the permitted street, prohibited, and poor characteristics tree lists in UDO. During this meeting, the opportunity was given for further discussion of these lists, and specifically for Mia and Haskell to comment since they were not in attendance for the previous meeting,

In introduction, Tim confirmed that the intention is to update the UDO annually, which can include recommendations for changes from the Tree Commission. The group was reminded that the Urban Forester role provides feedback on planting plans that go thru City Planning, including concerns for species selection, spacing, etc. Whereas the Tree Commission only does this for street tree plantings, not for developer projects.

### **Mia's comments & discussion:**

Raised concern about adding American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) to the permitted Street Tree list due to its low branching & poor response to pruning. Jeff provided an example of mature beech trees that are excellent street trees. The group conceded that since American Beech is difficult to propagate and expensive, it is unlikely it will end up as a common street tree so it doesn't matter if it is included in the permitted street tree list.

### **Jeff's comments & discussion:**

Jeff withdrew the suggestion of dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) as a street tree due to the occurrence of low branches and large mature size. The group confirmed that bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) is already on street tree list and since it doesn't form "knees" in well drained locations (only in consistently wet locations) it is fine to stay on the list.

Jeff pointed out that we are missing 3 oak species in the street tree list in order to be consistent to UDO:

- scarlet oak (*Quercus coccinea*)
- overcup oak (*Quercus lyrata*)
- black oak (*Quercus velutina*)

## Haskell's comments & discussion:

### Large street trees

- pin oak (*Quercus palustris*) - not ideal due to the requirements for pruning, not enough staffing to keep up with this
- hickories (*Carya* spp.) with smaller sized nuts - while they are slow growing and expensive, they are worth including due to their various good qualities and benefits
- catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*) is not ideal due to messy seed pods, catalpa worms as a defoliation & mess issue, large leaves are not ideal for storm drains, form maintenance is a burden to staff
- cucumber magnolia (*Magnolia acuminata*) - large tree, Indiana native, large persistent leaves, messy fruits, already on interior list, wait to learn more about it since it will be included in the Hopewell planting, a species to keep in mind for future consideration
- littleleaf linden (*Tilia cordata*) - city is moving away from many European and non-native trees that are widely planted, take it off the permitted list
- male ginko (*Ginkgo biloba*) - OK to keep as long as nursery doesn't "mistake tree gender", many are already in the urban landscape but not over represented in inventory
- elm hybrids & cultivars (*Ulmus* spp. etc.) - must be American elm cultivar hybrid or cultivar, hybrids from Switchyard list, provide specific cultivars and hybrids for the permitted street tree list to avoid and confusion

### Medium street trees

- sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) - move off of street trees, keep on interior due to colony forming habit and potential for staffing requirements for maintenance

### Small street trees

- pagoda dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*) - keep, but has low lateral branching and better in partial shade
  - Mary commented that the same could be said if serviceberries, flowering dogwood, and Eastern redbud
- red buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*) - keep, some good cultivars, though better as interior tree species

### Prohibited trees

- Keep separate table for Prohibited Invasive Trees to avoid potential conflict when updating UDO
- Suggest UDO provides separate tables for:
  - Prohibited "trees" with poor characteristics
  - Prohibited "plants" with poor characteristics
- To include on Prohibited Invasive Trees list:
  - Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*)
  - Japanese tree lilac (*Syringa reticulata*)
  - golden raintree (*Koelreuteria paniculata*)
  - Japanese zelkova (*Zelkova serrata*) (Haskell notes the also has seen it escaping)

- Mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*)
- Kousa dogwood (*Cornus kousa*) reported Early Detection escapes from cultivation noted by Mary
- Mary retracted the addition of bristly locust (*Robinia hispida*) since while it is being reported as an Early Detection invasive plant, it is more of a shrub rather than a small tree

#### **Laurel comments & discussion:**

Permitted Interior Tree Species (Table 04-15) is an opportunity for us to tell developers what we would like them to plant. We can be generous in our recommendations, and can include trees they might not otherwise think of. For the next meeting I'd like everyone to bring a list of 8-10 trees to include in this table. Be sure to include lots of native species!

Thanks to Jeff for offering the Carmel tree list during the meeting [see attachments]. If other people know of other lists, please collect them. We can use that information as part of our review of what our peers are doing.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **City of Bloomington Board and Commission Appreciation Event**

- After a two-year hiatus, Mayor John Hamilton is thrilled to invite you to The Annual (sort of) City of Bloomington Board and Commission Appreciation Event
- Please join your fellow board and commission members, staff, and elected officials for an evening of celebrating your accomplishments, sharing a good meal, and catching up on all the good things happening in Bloomington - thanks to your efforts.

Friday, September 30  
 Doors open at 5:30 pm  
 Cascades Golf Course Clubhouse  
 3550 N Kinser Pike  
 Plenty of free parking in the Clubhouse lot

##### **Proposal to return the Tree Commission meeting day back to Wednesdays**

- Due to schedule conflict for Dedaimia
- Group agreed to do a Doodle poll to determine ideal upcoming meetings days & times

##### **Tabled for next meeting(s):**

- How to revise the Tree Care Manual?
  - Should we make recommendations to City residents about what trees to plant?
    - Yes - group will work to add to the permitted interior tree list as an important resource for landowners, managers, and contractors for hire.
  - Or just omit tree recommendations from the Tree Care Manual?
  - Potential organization for a new section: Recommended Street Trees and Recommended Private Trees.
- List of recent accomplishments of the Tree Commission (for the Boards and Commission)

- event)
- Proposal of a memorial tree in honor of Tom Coleman (George Hegeman)

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Urban Forester Report, September 2022
- Carmel tree species recommendations
- Jeff Palmer's candidates for Tree Care Manual tree lists