



**Bloomington Tree Commission
Minutes of the meeting, 17 March 2021**

PRESENT: Kerry Bridges (ISA certified arborist); Tom Coleman, (Professor Emeritus, Department of Fine Arts, IUB; Indiana Tree Steward of the Year 2004); Laurel Cornell (chair, Professor Emeritus of Sociology and Studio Art); David Dilcher (professor emeritus, Geological Sciences, IUB); George Hegeman (Professor Emeritus, Microbiology, IUB); Erin Hatch (urban forester, City of Bloomington); David Parkhurst (Professor Emeritus, SPEA; Environmental Commission); Dedaimia Whitney (Certified tree steward, master gardener); Mia Williams (landscape architect, Indiana University).

CONSENT AGENDA

Approved minutes of February 2021.

Next meeting online via zoom 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, 21 April 2021

PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Mia asked whether planning documents could be posted ahead of the meeting. Erin said she would ask.

REPORTS

Urban Forester's report

Spring planting is getting started. Bloomington received "Tree City USA" for 2020.

George asked about the plans for the stretch of land from High to Arden to Faith Lutheran Church that is currently full of scrub. Erin said it is not part of the Jackson Street project and does not have an active plan to remove those trees. The city does not presently have the ability to police this kind of area.

She also reported that there have been two incidents where private property owners either mistakenly or deliberately removed large healthy trees belonging to the city.

She is working with the Legal Department on a formal process to address such incidents. One of the trees was a 20" oak in an ambiguously marked right-of-way and was probably removed by mistake. Bloomington doesn't have anything that protects specimen trees. The other was a similar sized maple along Kirkwood, that was in a clearly marked right-of-way, so it may be ignorance of the law or deliberate misbehavior. The city's recourse is a fine, or possibly a fine plus cost of replacement. Kerry estimated the cost of replacement would be \$8-12K, but Erin said the maximum permitted by the state is \$2500.

IU activity

Mia has fielded inquiries from other campuses about Arbor Day planting activities. She said that partly because of the US Tree Campus program, IU is committed to doing a student-assisted tree inventory on all the campuses this year. So far, she has met with half of the campus faculties involved. She's excited to see what the students will do with the data.

Environmental Commission (David Parkhurst)

The EC will hear from a member of the city council and consider several reports.

NEW BUSINESS

Dedaimia suggested that the city adopt the practice of publishing “do” and “don't” pictures regarding the mulching of trees both in the spring (now) and in the fall, when home owners are most likely to be mulching trees. Erin said she will reach out to the interested parties with a PR initiative.

ANNOUNCEMENT

American Forests has put out a 'tree equity' methodology that is meant to evaluate tree planting equity by neighborhood.

**Respectfully submitted,
Dedaimia Whitney
3/17/21**

Urban Forester Report
March 2021

Recent Activities/Events:

Tree Planting:

700 Block of W 4th St

3rd St Median near High St

E Hagan St

3rd St Park Memorial Tree

2700 Block of W Pinehurst St

Arbor Day Foundation Tree City USA 2020 Application was successfully accepted

Two of Three Seasonal positions began 3/15, both are returning employees

Upcoming Activities/Events:

March Parks Board Contracts:

- Davey Resource Group - Small/Young Tree Pruning of Downtown Trees
- Middle Way House - Wrapped in Love Partnership

Ongoing Activities:

Marking and Removal of hazard trees