

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

Street Tree Advisory Committee Meeting
November 15, 2006

The Street Tree Advisory Committee (STAC) met in formal session at 3:00 P.M., Wednesday, November 15, 2006 in the City Manager's Conference Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Frederick Halback, and the following were present:

1. ROLL CALL

Frederick Halback, Chairman
Gina Burrell
Greg Dunn
Sally Ann Freeman
Chuck Lippi
Robin Nadeau

Absent: Gordon Wilson

Ex-Officio: Pat Henderson, City Parks Supervisor

Staff Present Mark Knight, Director, Planning and Building
Lynda Burgess, Research Clerk
Cathy Dupont, NCO Coordinator
Sharon O'Keefe, Administrative Coordinator

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
October 18,2006

MOTION

Mr. Lippi moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Gina Burrell and approved by a unanimous voice vote.

3. REVIEW OF THE TREE CITY USA
APPLICATION FOR
RECERTIFICATION

Mr. Halback addressed the Committee as follows:

- Requested that they reconsider their position of last month and vote to approve the Tree City USA application.

- Understood that there was frustration by some committee members regarding the progress, mission and purpose of the committee.
- Explained that the City of St. Augustine had the distinction of being recognized as a Tree City USA and had maintained that status for the past 23 years.

Mr. Dunn addressed the committee as follows:

- Informed the committee that St. Augustine had been awarded the Sterling Tree Award in 2001.
- The award acknowledged the city as having gone above and beyond in the care, planting and maintenance of trees,

- Qualified for a Growth Award for a 10 year period.
- Only 18 cities in Florida have been awarded this distinction.
- The actual letter of commendation was either, misplaced or never sent to the city.
- He was working on obtaining a copy of the award.

MOTION

Mr. Dunn moved to approve the application for the Tree City USA Recertification and the Growth Award Application. The motion was seconded by Ms. Nadeau and approved by a unanimous voice vote.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Freeman explained that she had not been aware, when she joined this committee, that it was not a city board such as HARB or PZB. She asked that the responsibilities of the committee be more defined.

Ms. Burrell revealed that she also had not been aware the committee was not a city board, and believed that the City Commission had led her to believe it was.

Mr. Halback responded as followed:

- Explained that the committee was not a city board and did not have authority to make changes, only recommendations.
- Pointed out that the committee was an extension of city staff and should work as a team with staff in an advisory capacity.
- Reminded the committee that their position as committee members was made possible by city staff appointment.

- Believed progress had been made by the committee and suggested that they move forward in a positive approach to achieve more results by working within the structure of city government.
- Commented on advantages of not being bound by the Sunshine Laws.

Ms. Freeman asked about the status of the Maria Sanchez mulching issue.

Mr. Knight reported that the Maria Sanchez Lake area was not a designated park. The city's current level of service would have to be re-evaluated to provide more attention to the area.

Ms. Freeman asked how to go about getting the area designated as a Park.

Mr. Knight explained that it would have to be approved through the budget review process. He said that it had not passed on last attempt. He advised that there was \$10,000 designated for the area; however, there had been no agreement on how the money would be used. He said that some residents had requested the money be used for a bulkhead.

Mr. Halback commented that the committee should be doing their homework and start attending the budget review meetings. He stated that this would be the way for them to be heard on the issues.

Mr. Halback suggested that the committee discuss the Arbor Day activities. He said he had been informed that the permit from the Department of Transportation would not be issued in time to plant on San Marco as previously planned.

Ms. Burrell said that she had given the application to Mr. Knight months ago.

Mr. Knight responded that he had not been sure whether there was going to be a planting because the committee could not agree on the Tree City USA application.

Mr. Halback suggested the following:

- The tree chosen for planting should have been an Oak not a Crepe Myrtle.
- The San Marco beautification project should include trees that provided a canopy.
- Long term goal for San Marco should include alternating Live Oaks and Sable Palms to restore the historic beauty.
- Asked Ms. Burrell to notify him of the next San Marco Merchants and/or Neighborhood Association meeting so he could attend and assist in the planning of aforementioned goal.

Ms. Dupont said she would try to coordinate the meeting and notify him of the date.

Mr. Halback suggested an alternative location for the Arbor Day planting at the Visitors Center and Francis Field. He commended the city for successfully moving 100 trees from the old parking area and successfully replanting them.

Mr. Halback revealed the landscaping plans for the new Visitor Center and Francis Field. He said there would be trees planted along the perimeter of the field with fencing and hedges. He added that he believed the location would be a better choice.

Mr. Lippi said they had previously been concerned about the compaction of the soil in the area.

The consensus of the committee was to change the location of the Arbor Day planting and follow Mr. Halback's recommendations.

Discussion turned to the tree survey issue.

Mr. Halback commented that the survey would be difficult because of the right of way determination. He cautioned that once a tree has been listed on the city's inventory list they might be liable for care of the tree.

Mr. Dunn informed the Board that there were some simple tools available for conducting a survey that even small cities could use. He offered to help train people to use the instruments.

Mr. Halback suggested the committee determine how in-depth a survey they wanted, and he recommended discussion at the next meeting.

Questions requiring answers were:

- What was the purpose of the survey?
- How would it help the city?
- Did the entire city need to be surveyed or just certain corridors?
- How important was the GPS location?
- Would the survey be a risk assessment?
- What was the anticipated cost?
- What approach would be taken to obtain funding?

Mr. Dunn reminded the committee that the grant funding cycle for the Department of Forestry started in January. He noted that workshops would begin, and he suggested that someone from the city attend. He

concluded that a step-by-step guide would provide instruction on the application process.

Issues for discussion at the next meeting were as follows:

- Advancing the idea of a street tree survey
- Long term street tree planting
- Department of Forestry Grant

Mr. Lippi reported that he sent an e-mail to the STAC members and the City Commission with comments on his vision of the tree survey. He requested to speak to the City Commission on November 27th to answer questions about the survey and the anticipated costs.

Ms. Henderson submitted a copy of the Public Works & Parks Division budget and maintenance schedule.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

Ms. Freeman moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ms. Burrell and approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:20 P.M.