

**City of Kalamazoo
TREE COMMITTEE
Minutes
April 6, 2021**

Electronic Meeting

Members

Present: Erik Injerd, Forester, Consumers Energy
Anthony Ladd, Assistant Director, Public Works, COK
Brian LaBelle, Forester, COK
Patrick McVerry, Deputy Director - Parks & Recreation, COK
Deborah Nichols, Forester, Consumers Energy
Gail Walter, Environmental Concerns Committee (ECC)

City Staff: Karen Rutherford, Recording Secretary

Guests: Fritz Brown - Treystar
Laura Kloosterman - TowerPinkster
Nicole Semmler – Intersect-Studio

A. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Ladd called the electronic meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Committee Chair Ladd completed roll call and determined the aforementioned members were present.

C. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Committee Chair Ladd introduced guest:

- Fritz Brown - Treystar
- Laura Kloosterman - TowerPinkster
- Nicole Semmler – Intersect-Studio

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By unanimous consent the Committee adopted its meeting agenda as presented.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (January 12, 2021)

Committee Member McVerry supported by Committee Member Nichols moved approval of the January 12, 2021 Committee Minutes. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

F. NEW BUSINESS

New Edison School – Tree Removal - TowerPinkster

Committee Chair Ladd opened discussion for tree removals at the new Edison School.

Ms. Laura Kloosterman, with TowerPinkster, shared drawings of the property of Edison School on Lake Street along with pictures of the trees they are requesting be removed. She stated the school has purchased the properties on the block. The plan includes uniting all the previous divided block, to create one cohesive site. This will improve the overall aesthetic and environmental nature of the block. Fifteen new shade trees and 20 new ornamental trees are proposed for the new site plan. In addition, numerous shrubs and groundcovers will be added.

They are requesting three trees be removed in the right-of-way (ROW). The two trees on Jackson conflict at the bus drop exit. One tree is a 7" crabapple of average health and the other tree is a 30" linden, relatively healthy but has harsh cut outs in the middle due to the powerline that runs directly through the canopy overhead. The third tree is a 22" honey locust located on Russell Street. It is of average condition and size but conflicts with alignment of the exit/entrance to the maintenance, loading, and fire zone on Garden Street.

Committee Chair Ladd noted there are a lot of trees on this block. He noted the two trees on the north side impacting the bus exit, is not feasible to move the bus exit to the east or west. He stated they are trying to do minimal impact to the site project.

Committee Member Walter asked to see a proposed tree species list of the new plantings. Committee Chair Ladd stated we can get her that list. Ms. Kloosterman stated there were no plans to plant trees in the ROW. She noted the school had concerns about maintenance of some species.

Committee Member LaBelle stated they are removing three City trees and are not replacing any in the ROW. He is concerned the City is losing three trees. Ms. Kloosterman stated there could be an area in the ROW on the north side of the property and a few gaps to the west where trees could be planted. She stated she would need to discuss this with the school but noted they did not want trees in the ROW for maintenance reasons.

Committee Member Walter stated she would like to see plans to replant trees in the ROW. Committee Member Nichols agreed.

Committee Chair Ladd asked Ms. Kloosterman to discuss replacement tree plantings with the school. He noted the City is willing to meet on site and discuss tree species for the site. He stated we will table the decision for now and put it on the agenda for the next Tree Committee meeting.

303 Balch Ave – Tree Plantings – Intersect-Studio

Committee Chair Ladd opened discussion for tree plantings at 303 Balch Ave.

Ms. Nicole Semmler, with Intersect-Studio, stated this site is an existing site on Balch and S. Park St. The City asked them to plant trees in the ROW for beautification and to meet some landscaping requirements for the site. She stated they are wanting to plant some trees in the ROW along Balch to meet those needs. She noted there is an overhead line along Balch. Currently there are no trees along this site.

Committee Chair Ladd stated they have plenty of space to plant trees and the trees they plan to plant are smaller trees that would fit in this area.

Committee Member Walter asked if they would reconsider not planting the amur maple. It's an invasive tree that is on many of the DNR Do Not Plant lists. Ms. Semmler stated they would replace the amur maple with a crabapple or dogwood.

Ms. Semmler stated these trees will be planted 25 feet apart.

Committee Member LaBelle supported by Committee Member Nichols, made a motion to approve the planting of the trees. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Haymarket Plaza – Tree Removal – Treystar

Committee Chair Ladd opened discussion for tree removals at the Haymarket Plaza on N. Edwards St.

Mr. Fritz Brown, with Treystar, stated they are working on the Haymarket Plaza off N. Edwards Street. He stated they own most of the buildings along Michigan Avenue that goes past the Haymarket Building to the Monroe Building. The CD-12 Project is being built to the north of the Main Street E Building. CD-12 built a hundred-million-dollar project behind theirs. He stated they decided to create a public outdoor venue. The venue includes a nice alleyway that opens up into a courtyard. It has projection mapping displayed on the side of the Haymarket building. He displayed pictures and renderings of the proposed future site. The alley will have music, food and beverage, plantings, and greenery. Signage will be put up to direct the public to this site. The primary entrance is off N. Edwards Street.

There are two trees on N. Edwards Street he is asking to be removed because of their condition and they will block the vision of the proposed sign. There used to be a power line that ran through the trees and due to past pruning around the power lines, the trees are unattractive. The second tree has lost limbs and looks sparse. A discussion followed.

Committee Member Nichols stated limbs need raised on the tree nearest the alley. It would be difficult to walk under the tree in its current condition. She is not sure how it would affect the health of the tree if you were to raise the limb.

Committee Member LaBelle stated the trees are not in good condition, but he is not in favor of removing trees for signage.

Mr. Brown stated they are willing to replace the trees in another area. Committee Member LaBelle said he is in favor of this and noted both the trees are in medium to poor condition.

Committee Chair Ladd suggested we remove the trees and asked the City Forester to find four areas in the downtown area to plant replacement trees.

Committee Member Ladd supported by Committee Member LaBelle, made a motion to approve the removal the trees and find four more locations downtown to plant replacement trees. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Parkview Avenue Project – City of Kalamazoo

Committee Chair Ladd opened discussion for tree removals for the City of Kalamazoo Parkview Avenue Project which is a road repaving and watermain project. He stated the limits of the project is from Oakland Drive to Tamsin. For pedestrian and non-motorist, the only safe place to cross Parkview is at Oakland and Greenleaf. There is a lot of recreational areas, a school, grocery store, and other places people will want to go to. There is no sidewalk along the north side of Parkview for a large length of the project. The most central place for people to cross Parkview is at Broadway Ave. but there is no sidewalk on the north side of Parkview for people to walk along safely.

Committee Chair Ladd stated they are looking at creating a crossing at Barnard that has a sidewalk that runs on the south side of Parkview from Oakland to Greenleaf and a sidewalk that runs into the Oakwood neighborhood on Barnard. They proposed the installation of a pedestrian median island in the middle lane of Parkview for pedestrian safety. He stated they also proposed putting in a sidewalk along the north side of Parkview with a privacy fence, behind the guardrail, and connect the new sidewalk to the existing sidewalk at Broadway and Parkview. This crossing was in a number of neighborhood plans, Imagine Kalamazoo, and the Master Plan. This will require them to remove eighteen ROW trees.

Committee Chairman Ladd stated the grade drops off significantly, in order to create a safe level walkway, it requires them to build the earth up and add a privacy fence for the properties that run along that section of Parkview. They also intend to put in new guardrail. A retaining wall will be added support the new privacy fence.

Committee Member Walter stated Parkview has gotten busier, it is difficult to cross, and she feels it is a good idea to put in the pedestrian medium island and the sidewalk. She asked the committee to consider not removing tree No. 2, a sugar maple tree. She asked if

they could work around it since it sets back further. She stated it is the most valuable tree aesthetically and provides cover to the home owners.

Committee Chairman Ladd stated they have had conversations with the homeowners to let them know what they are doing. He stated the City is willing to plant trees on their property. He stated he could not give Committee Member Walter a definite answer as to whether they could save that tree. It depends on if they can maintain the root system. He noted the trees they replant will be funded from the construction project funds.

Committee Member Nichols supported by Committee Member Injerd, made a motion to approve the removal the trees with the consideration of trying to save the sugar maple tree and protect the roots system of that tree. If they are not able save the maple tree the Committee approves removal of that tree as well. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

G. OLD BUSINESS

Bank Street Realignment Project – Tree Species

Committee Chair Ladd stated the pre-construction meeting has been scheduled and he will make sure there is adequate plantings on the north side of the site plan of the Farmers Market. Committee Member Walter asked to see the list of tree species they plan to plant. Committee Chair Ladd stated he would get the list to her.

H. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

I. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Committee Member Nichols asked if they could get something on the agenda indicating when an approved motion has been completed. Committee Chair Ladd stated this is a good idea and we can put an Action Item on the Agenda for the Committee to see what has been accomplished. He noted that whenever an item has been approved, it is placed in Outlook a year out. At that time, they will check to see the approved item has been completed. He stated he realized some approved items are taken care of sooner than others and having these items documented is a good idea.

Committee Chair Ladd stated they are due for another working meeting to improve some of these processes and to look at the Tree Ordinance once again.

J. ADJOURNMENT

Committee Member Ladd supported by Committee Member LaBelle, made a motion to adjourn the Tree Committee meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:29 p.m.

Submitted by: Karen Ruthford Date: 5-7-2021
Recording Secretary

Approved by: [Signature] Date: 5/7/21
Staff Liaison