

**City of Kalamazoo
TREE COMMITTEE
Minutes
January 12, 2021**

Electronic Meeting

Members

Present: Anthony Ladd, Public Works Division Manager, COK
Brian LaBelle, Forester, COK
Patrick McVerry, Deputy Director - Parks & Recreation, COK
Deborah Nichols, Forester, Consumers Energy
Steve Skalski, Asst City Engineer, Water Dept., COK
Brian Vogl, Forester, Consumers Energy

City Staff: Karen Rutherford, Recording Secretary

Guests: Curt Aardema, avb
David Beck, Tetra Tech

A. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Ladd called the Zoom Webinar 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:

- Curt Aardema, avb
- David Beck, Tetra Tech

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (October 28, 2020 and December 1, 2020)

Committee Member McVerry supported by Committee Member LaBelle moved approval of the October 28, 2020 and December 1, 2020 Tree Committee Minutes. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

F. NEW BUSINESS

268 E. Alcott Street - Tree Removal – Tetra Tech

Committee Chair Ladd opened discussion for tree removals at 268 E. Alcott Street by Tetra Tech.

Mr. David Beck, with Tetra Tech, shared drawings of the property with the Committee members and stated they are working on behalf of the Lyondell Environmental Custodial Trust who own the property, which was the formerly Allied Paper site. During the Lyondell Chemical bankruptcy, the property went into an environmental trust managed by a trustee appointed by the Department of Justice. Over the past couple of years, they have been working with the EPA, EGLE, and City representatives on advancing remedial design of the site. They have finalized the remedial design and are looking to move forward to implement the remedial design this year.

Mr. Beck noted the remedial actions includes excavation of impacted material throughout the property with its placement in an upland Consolidation Area which will be capped. Approximately 1.15 acres of the property requires excavation to remove contaminated soil. The soil, vegetation, including the trees whose root systems are growing in the contaminated soil, must be removed to complete the remedial action.

Mr. Beck stated the City acquired the Panelyte site, which is adjacent to the property, from the Michigan Land Bank in 2019. The City of Kalamazoo will take ownership of the Panelyte site after remediation is complete. The remediation includes significant restoration and improvement of the site that benefit the environment and local residents, including the relocation and restoration of a portion of Portage Creek and the removal of impacted material near the creek to expand the flood plain and its flood storage capacity.

Mr. Beck stated they plan to remove the trees in the next month and continue with the remediation in the spring. Tetra Tech subcontracted an arborist who came to the site and identified 166 trees greater than six inches in diameter at breast height (DBH). He provided a list of tree sizes and species to the Committee. As part of the restoration, along Cork Street, they plan to restore the Portage Creek. He noted they will relocate the stream to slow it down. There will be a new flood plain along the river and in that flood plan they plan to plant approximately 600 plantings per acre which includes trees and shrubs. Mr. Beck stated this is equivalent to 150 trees per acre in the eight-acre area for a total of 1,200 trees. The new plantings will happen in year four of the project.

Mr. Beck displayed the list of trees that will be removed. Most of those trees are box elders. He then displayed a list of the trees and shrubs plantings that will take place based on availability. Those trees are flood plain plantings.

Committee Member LaBelle asked if the chemicals in the soil are in the root system of the trees. Mr. Beck stated they are contaminated with the residuals of the paper factory and the trees would go into the consolidated area. A discussion followed.

Committee Member Skalski supported by Committee Member LaBelle, made a motion to approve the removal the trees as described. With a voice vote, the motion

carried unanimously.

G. OLD BUSINESS

400 Rose Street – Phase 2 – Tree Removal – avb

Committee Chair Ladd stated the Committee met in December to discuss in more detail the aspects of the project. This request came to the Committee in December and the Committee had some concerns and wanted to take additional time to discuss all the concerns. The Committee presented to avb suggestions gathered from their discussion. Committee Chair Ladd stated the suggestions included:

- Additional plantings at adjacent site.
- Asking for a guarantee of the health of the trees for five years.
- Providing an alternative list of tree species for planting.

Mr. Curt Aardema, with avb, stated changes were made due to the suggestions made by the Committee. He noted they looked at the site for locations to plant four additional trees. They located an area to the east of the project site on the south side of Cedar Street. They are looking at some areas on the east side of Rose Street. He stated they are open to planting recommendations made by the Committee. They have agreed to accept the five-year warranty of the new plantings. Additionally, they have agreed to replace the callery pear trees with the suggested tree species made by the Committee.

Committee Chair Ladd asked Mr. Aardema to contact the City when they begin the landscaping and Brian LaBelle will meet with him on site to review and mark the planting locations. Mr. Aardema stated they hoped to start construction in April, and it will be about 18 months before they begin the landscaping process.

Committee Member LaBelle supported by Committee Member McVerry, made a motion to allow the tree plantings with the additional four tree plantings to be determined by the City and no callery pear trees are to be planted . With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Bank Street Realignment Project – Tree Species

Committee Chair Ladd stated this is still in the design phase and he does not have an update at this time. They are working through the design phase and should get it out to bid in the spring. They are still committed to picking the appropriate tree species.

H. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

I. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Committee Chair Ladd stated the City successfully completed their tree plantings and hazardous tree removals for 2020 and look forward to repeating this again this year.

J. ADJOURNMENT

Committee Member LaBelle supported by Committee Member Skalski, made a motion to adjourn the Tree Committee meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:44 p.m.

Submitted by: Karen Rutherford Date: 4-6-2021
Recording Secretary

Approved by: [Signature] Date: 4/12/21
Staff Liaison