

CITY OF BILOXI

TREE COMMITTEE MEETING

Time / Location: Community Development Conference Room
3:30 – 4:30 pm

MINUTES

JUNE 12, 2023

- I. The meeting was called to Order at 3:35 p.m.

Members present: Tracy Wyman (ex officio member Chair); Shirley Robinson (2); Susan Peterson (4); Wendy Lally (5)

City Council or Staff present: Zack Harris, City Arborist
- II. Public Comment: No members of the public were present.
- III. June 2023 minutes were read and approved.
- IV. City Arborist Comments.
 - A. CA shared information regarding reliable tree movers, specialists in relocating large heritage trees. He will be promoting this as a viable alternative to tree removals, particularly our largest live oaks.
 - B. CA reported on the Reef Gas Station project, which has again moved through the DRC process after receiving a stop work order to address unpermitted removals. All items have been addressed and the project will move forward through the process. The CA made the following recommendations regarding this project:
 - A tree assessment and impact survey be completed by an ISA / TRAQ certified arborist in order to ensure the survivability of the 6 live oaks proposed to remain south of the detention pond.
 - Address issues with the tree protection plan (fencing, etc.) to comply with the LDO.
 - Required a mitigation plan be submitted which includes caliper, height post planting, species, and spacing from existing trees and proposed structures.
 - Required the lower elevation height of tree canopies remain as is, and questioned tree pruning that may be unnecessary to allow for emergency vehicles.
 - Follow-up on these in the July meeting will be provided.
 - C. CA is working to refine LDO language to require a certified arborist or forester to conduct tree surveys, and to determine a pathway to assess a tree's economic value when applicants are applying for its removal.
 - D. CA explained the Community Court process. The Director of Community Development or CA must issue a letter to an alleged offender, who has 14 days to respond to the letter's request before the case is scheduled to be heard before the Community Court.
- E. Ongoing Business
 - A. Action Tracking:
 - Outdoor Storage was cited for the unpermitted removal of 7 live oaks. Follow-up to occur regarding outcome at the July meeting.
 - A private property owner at 823 Cara Lee Circle was cited for the removal of a 20-22" live oak. Follow-up to occur regarding outcome at the July meeting.
 - Add: Poppo Ferry Plaza w/ Fuel; landscape plan must outline proposed plantings.

B. Site Visits & Recommendations

- No site visits or recommendations were made this period.
- Outcome of Anderson recommendations from last period: The proposed removals were approved by the Planning Commission, and the developer plans to plant the mitigation trees on-site (perhaps even more than required).

C. Committee Reports

- PR / Communications – Tracy will prepare an article *“The Communities Role in Public Meetings: Your Opportunity to be Heard”*.
- Majestic Tree Program –
 - The CA is still working to get the first two designated majestic trees on the City Council Agenda. These include *The Healer* on Seal Avenue, and the *Danny Guice Tree* at City Hall. He has written a draft of the resolution, which must be approved before this will move forward.
 - Susan is working on getting several trees designated: 1 at the Old Brick House; 5 or more at the Seafood & Maritime Museum; 2 at the Main Street Office; 2 at the White House Hotel; 2 at the Biloxi Visitor Center; and 1 at the new Keesler Gate.
 - As a reminder, our goal is to have 25 majestic trees designated in 2023.
- City Beautification Program – No report.
- Permits: Past permits (August – May) still need to be added to our tracking spreadsheet.
- DRC Report: Shirley has been attending DRC meetings when she can.

VI. Outstanding Issues

There has been no progress in getting the draft report to the Director of Community Development. Tracy will get the draft to the committee. We have been advised by the CA to move forward with a simplified report so that we can begin to give regular and more complete reports in the future.

VII. Current Business

- A. Ward 3 and Ward 7 Vacancies. We are still waiting to get contact information for the new Tree Committee representatives.
- B. Larry Tucei, tree historian plans to attend and present his work to the Committee at the July meeting.

VIII. Meeting Adjourned: 4:30 p.m.