

Town of Bel Air Government
MINUTES
TREE COMMITTEE
January 12, 2022

The Town of Bel Air Tree Committee meeting took place via the *GoToMeeting* virtual platform on January 12, 2022, at 4:37 pm.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mike Simini, Chair
Wayne Merkel, Vice Chair
Frank Lopez
Marion McCarron

IN ATTENDANCE:

Rowan Glidden, Senior Planner
Jane Sudbrink, Recording Secretary

ABSENT:

Graham Becker
Kevin Bianca, Town Commissioner

Mr. Simini opened the meeting at 4:37 pm.

I. Administrative Matters

A. Review of the November 10, 2021, Minutes

Mr. Simini asked for corrections to two parts of the minutes. On page 4, fourth paragraph, under Street Tree Matrix, change “maraschino cherry trees” to “Yoshino cherry trees.” Also on page 4, second paragraph, under Street Tree Matrix, regarding linden trees, it should be corrected to, “...the littleleaf and then the American linden...” The word “silver” should be deleted. Ms. McCarron made a motion to adopt the minutes as corrected, and Mr. Simini seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

B. Election of Officers

The committee is required to hold an election of officers each new calendar year. Ms. McCarron suggested maintaining the status quo, i.e., Mr. Simini would continue as chair. All members were in favor. In his newly re-elected position as chair, Mr. Simini asked for nominations for vice chair. Mr. Lopez nominated Mr. Merkel to continue as vice chair. Mr. Merkel accepted, Mr. Simini made a motion for him to continue as vice chair, and Ms. McCarron seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

II. Old Business

A. Street Tree Matrix

Mr. Glidden said he was now ready to publish the matrix unless there were any final objections. He said there were five trees in each group, including the Yoshino cherry tree. The committee had no

objections. Mr. Merkel asked that the finalized list be emailed out to the group, and Mr. Glidden agreed to email it.

B. Street Tree Requests

Mr. Glidden said that there were street tree requests this fall throughout the town, and these trees were planted, including five Zelcova trees on Main St. through a grant from the Bel Air Downtown Alliance, and the replacement of a dead tree on Lee St. Mr. Glidden expects more tree requests this spring. Mr. Lopez asked for Mr. Glidden to research how many trees have been planted through this program. Mr. Glidden said he will find out this number, though he noted that there is not much room left in town to plant more trees, and very few requests have not been accommodated (those usually due to utility line issues). Mr. Merkel asked whether a 2019 email request from the Bel Air Elementary School PTA to plant trees along Gordon St. at the rear of the school had been done. Mr. Glidden will look into that though he recalled that this request may not have been fulfilled because the potential tree area was on Harford County public school land.

III. New Business

A. Tree City USA 2021

Mr. Glidden said the application was submitted in early December. He has not received an official status notice yet, but when he logged onto the website, it said that the submission was approved.

B. PLANT Award 2021

Mr. Glidden said that the town has applied for the plant award. He has not heard back yet but will follow up with the forest service. For 2020, the town received an award letter but a portion of the plaque denoting the year is missing. Mr. Merkel suggested contacting Anne Gilbert at the forest service.

C. Measurements and Miscellaneous

Mr. Merkel has continued measuring trees for the champion tree list. This past December 1, he measured a yellow poplar at the front of 806 Benjamin Rd. and a silver maple on the street; neither are of champion tree size. Mr. Merkel also measured a Willow Oak behind Emmanuel Episcopal Church at the corner of North Main St. and Broadway. The Willow Oak measured 16.25 ft. in circumference, had a height of 92 ft., and had a crown spread of 91 ft. These measurements are bigger than the Willow Oaks on the list, thus this is now the town champion Willow Oak. He will send this information to Mr. Glidden. Mr. Lopez had mentioned in a previous meeting potentially large Sugar Maple trees on Williams St. Mr. Merkel followed up and found that all these trees have been removed, except for one on the east side south of Catherine St., which is not of significant size.

Mr. Merkel had reviewed the spread sheet that Mr. Glidden distributed at the last meeting. Mr. Merkel noted the differences in addresses at the Bel Air United Methodist Church—some trees are at the 21 Linwood Ave. church address, and some are listed at 221 Linwood Ave., the house located on the hill above the church. Mr. Merkel noted that the church owns 221 Linwood Ave. Mr. Glidden clarified that though there are two different addresses and one owner, the tree information should be based on location not owner or mailing address. He also clarified for Mr. Merkel that the address for the Majors Choice Oak is Majors Oak Park in the 500 block, but it does not have a street address assigned to it. Mr.

Glidden also agreed to change the address for the trees at Rockfield Manor from 705 E. Churchville Rd. to 501 E. Churchville Rd.

Mr. Simini relayed a question from James Sherring, head of the Harford County Forestry Board, who wanted to know if any more trees in town needed to be measured. Mr. Merkel said measurements were all done.

Mr. Merkel asked if Mr. Bianca would remain as the commissioner on the committee. Mr. Glidden confirmed that Mr. Bianca would remain. Mr. Glidden also noted that, at least for the next month, tree committee meetings would continue virtually.

IV. Adjournment

Mr. Merkel made a motion to adjourn. Ms. McCarron seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm.