

MINUTES
TREE COMMITTEE
May 11, 2022

The Town of Bel Air Tree Committee meeting took place on May 11, 2022, at 4:36 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mike Simini, Chair
Wayne Merkel, Vice Chair
Marion McCarron

IN ATTENDANCE:

Rowan Glidden, Senior Planner
Jane Sudbrink, Recording Secretary

ABSENT:

Graham Becker
Frank Lopez
Kevin Bianca, Liaison

I. Administrative Matters

A. Review of the March 9, 2022, Minutes

Mr. Simini called the meeting to order at 4:36 p.m. Mr. Merkel said he had no comments on the minutes, nor did Ms. McCarron. Mr. Merkel motioned to approve the minutes, and Ms. McCarron seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

II. Old Business

A. Tree City USA 2021

Mr. Glidden said the town has been awarded, but no package has been received. Mr. Merkel expressed concern because usually the package arrives in March so that it can be distributed on or before Arbor Day. Mr. Glidden said he would follow up with Anne Gilbert.

B. PLANT Award 2021

The package arrived as evidenced in the handout send to board members.

C. Arbor Day Activity Debrief

Mr. Simini said the tree giveaway was another major success with good weather. He thanked everyone again for bagging the trees ahead of time. He said there were long lines of people waiting to get trees, and more people came by after all the trees had been distributed. He suggested getting up to 400 trees for next year and enlisting the help of master gardeners. The members agreed to research purchasing reasonably priced bags for next year. Mr. Glidden said that the lines were the longest he has

seen in the three years that he has been involved. Three town commissioners were there, including: Kevin Bianca, Erin Hughes, and Mary Chance.

Mr. Simini said that there were many requests for the pawpaw tree, and he would consider ordering a larger amount for next year. Mr. Glidden asked if it would be possible to contact the nursery to order more pawpaw trees ahead of time. Mr. Merkel said that the nursery puts out a list of available trees and the amounts to the forest services in early October. The forestry board determines what trees will be ordered. He said that it is important for this committee to get their order in early to the forest service. Mr. Glidden said that he could contact Dan Lewis, head of the forest service for Harford County, in September to get the order in early.

Mr. Merkel expressed uncertainty over the shortleaf pine for the Arbor Day activity. He said it is more common in southern regions and does not add value to the residential lot due to its growth pattern. All agreed to do the activity again next year.

D. 26 N. Hickory Ave Sycamore

Mr. Glidden said that the contract went through for the new owners of the property. Mr. Glidden advised the new owners to be proactive regarding the removal of this tree and to not wait too long. Committee members discussed the various utility lines that run through this tree. Mr. Glidden also discussed the recent Board of Appeals meeting where the new owners attempted to get two variances, one for building height, and one for offsite parking at the parking garage. The 1.5 ft difference in height was approved, but the offsite parking was not. The owner proposes to construct an apartment building with 101 units that will extend from the Har-co Credit Union to the garden at the corner of Hickory and Pennsylvania Aves. Such a structure will require 166 parking spaces. The new owner believes this is a good investment because the Bel Air Academy apartments and townhouses were rented out very quickly. Mr. Glidden also discussed how the parking garage is a shared facility maintained by both the town and the county.

III. New Business

There was no new business to discuss.

IV. Adjournment

Ms. McCarron motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Merkel seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.