



# Tree Board

Noblesville, Indiana

August 17, 2020 Meeting Minutes

In attendance were Jennifer Roberts, Kelsey Sears, Vince Baker, TJ Houghtalen, Jack Martin, Matt Light, and Emily Gaylord. Meeting called to order by Vince at 5:09pm.



\*Vince began the meeting with an introduction to the topic that Matt Light is covering this evening. He listed the problems coming up with street trees, including:

- Sidewalk damage from roots
- In old town especially, curb damage from roots
- Sump pump line issues
- Irrigation line issues
- Inlet damage from trees too close to inlets
- Possible fire hydrant damage or firefighters not being able to hook up to fire hydrants quickly
- Street lamps not being useful because of trees too close
- Stop signs blocked from trees too close
- Trees too close to corners blocking vision
- Builders or landscapers not planting the right species
- Blocking speed limit and information signs

\*Vince then introduced Matt Light to give us a presentation over the current project outline draft created for the future of street trees. Matt's goal of being here today is to get the board's feedback and take notes for potential changes to the draft. The hope is to have an updated draft for our next meeting in October. Matt gave the board copies of the outline and stated some important points to note and understand. Some of these points included:

- This outline is a product of the collaboration of a team of people who are very relevant to street trees.
- This team of people who have been working on this project thought it would be most appropriate to implement a pilot program and talk to a couple of neighborhoods that may be willing volunteer communities. Vince thought it would be best to try to find one newer community and one more established in this pilot program. We would use these pilot neighborhoods to test out our plan and then make tweaks to it after learning from that experience.
- The plan reflects distinctions between the plan for street trees in the downtown area and the plan for the suburban neighborhood street trees.
- The outline categorizes trees in 3 tiers (see Outline draft).
- The city would remove tier 1 trees (Vince thought this would be approximately half of the street trees) and not replace those trees in the right of way. In their place, the city would give

homeowners a couple of different options in order to maintain the goal of no net loss of trees in the city. Option 1 is to give them a tree to plant in their yard *or* option 2 is that they would opt out of receiving that tree and instead it would be planted at a park or common area in the city.

- Jack inquired how quickly this would happen. Vince said that it may take 20-30 years. Matt encouraged us that this would be an important note they would communicate to the public.
- Vince said that one of the first priorities would be no more planting street trees in new subdivisions.
- Jack voiced that he believes it would be beneficial to wait to start removing street trees until ordinance is passed, thus making it a seamless transition.
- Jack also brought up an apartment complex near him that has no trees except street trees. So, circumstances like this (multi-family homes) may need their own group of requirements. Maybe requiring more common spaces.
- This brought up the discussion that maybe there needs to be 4 zones to look at: new construction (priority), single family, multi family, and downtown. Matt acknowledged that they will talk with planning about the possibility of needing to consider multi-family zones.
- Matt & the board discussed that the trade off with this new ordinance would be less cost for the city, less risk, but on the other hand we are depending on homeowners to take care of the trees. So, the city will be sure to communicate proper care of trees to the public.
- The board all agrees that it is a good idea to move forward with this plan. It makes sense with the overarching goals and no net loss of trees.
- Jennifer wondered if we could use some of the money we're saving to help be sure new trees are being established so that we have good trees that last us. Vince said that the problem would simply be man power.

### ***Old Business***

1. Tree Steward Program – We will look into hopefully arranging this in 2021. It will not be happening this year.
2. Arbor Day Event for 2020 –
  - a. Noblesville Main Street has chosen August 22<sup>nd</sup> as an amended Earth Day. They offered us the opportunity to set up a booth that Saturday, but this will not work for majority of the board.
  - b. This is tabled and we hope to try to figure out how to do an Arbor Day booth/celebration in October.
3. Updates from Vince Baker – Urban Forester – The Street Department has been dealing with major storm damage this year. They have dubbed their clean-up efforts “Project Lorax,” as they have been getting fallen and damaged trees.
  - a. Section 1, 2, and 3 stumps all completed.
  - b. Currently working with concrete guys on getting trees removed to try to fix trip hazards.
  - c. There have been a lot of dead trees – mostly Maples.

### ***New Business***

- d. See notes from the presentation and discussion with Matt Light that opened up the meeting.

**Open Floor**

- Vince handed out Mayor Sign Locations to the board and asked all to select our top 2 choices and email him so we can decide where we want our 2 Tree City USA signs.
- Vince is looking deeper into an issue with trees at the muffler business on Cherry Street to see if these are city trees. The company topped the trees in front of their building.

**Adjourn** - Next Meeting is October 5<sup>th</sup> at 4:45pm at the Street Department.

- Motion to adjourn by Jack at 6:12pm.
- Seconded by Kelsey.

These minutes have been prepared by Kelsey Sears and they reflect the notes which were taken during the meeting by Kelsey Sears. Any omissions or errors will be corrected upon notification.

Approved by:

Sandy Lynch

Sandy Lynch, President

Kelsey Sears

Kelsey Sears, Secretary

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Jack Martin, Treasurer

[Signature]

TJ Houghtalen, Member

Nick Snyder

Nick Snyder, Member

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Jennifer Roberts, Member

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Vince Baker, Urban Forester

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