

## Springfield Urban Forestry Commission

September 9, 2020, 05:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Council Chambers, Municipal Center West

300 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St., Springfield, Illinois

Call to Order

Attendance Ernestine Lawrence, Susan Allen, Rianne Hawkins, Amy McEuen, Jan VQ, Jeff Reim, Nate Bottom, Absent Randy Belville & John Davis (CWLP)

Ask for public attendees to identify themselves

Susan Rempfer, Polly Poskin, Mike Brunk

Motion by Amy McEuen to approve 8-20-2020 Minutes; seconded by Ernestine Lawrence. Minutes were unanimously approved.

The guest Matt McLaughlin, the City's Building and Zoning Administrator did not appear for the discussion of zoning requirements for street trees and green space. Public Works Director Nate Bottom suggested we call zoning to report violations if we see them. Director Bottom indicated he would email the relevant portions of the City Code.

Director Bottom stated the **downtown beautification project** is on hold. He recited a list of the plants intended to be planted and agreed to send the list electronically. Springfield City Arborist Jeff Reim indicated there are 77 spots where trees are missing. Mr. Reim indicated that the boxes are 5' x 5' or a bit larger. The boxes are cemented over & would have to be dugout. Mr. Reim indicated the trees formerly planted by Lincoln Square Apts. were medium sized. There would need to be a revenue stream to plant downtown.

Next, the Committee moved on to talk about proposed changes to Bylaws: Para. 19., Minutes, currently appears to require audio or stenographic recording of all

meetings. Chair Jan Von Qualen made a motion to remove the reference to stenographically or electronically recorded. The motion was seconded by Amy McEuen and passed unanimously

Next, the Committee moved to update on Fall Tree Planting Program and including downtown landscaping. Director Bottom said there may not be a fall planting due to budget shortfalls.

Mike Brunk suggested that some communities have had luck partnering with Rotary Clubs, perhaps a fall fund raiser and spring planter. Commissioners were asked if they had any contact in at any of the areas Rotary clubs and Commissioners were encouraged to search their networks to find a contact.

Next, Commissioner Susan Allen gave an update on the Application for Morton Arboretum Urban & Community Forestry Grant.

Ms. Allen reported that the application must be filed electronically by 5 p.m. on Sept. 25, 2020. There are about 100 interested parties and 20 grants. Mr. Brunk stated that the grants are spread among different parts of the State. Everyone agreed that Spfld Urban Forestry Commission should request \$20,000 for a tree survey grant. According to Ms. Allen's contact, it costs about \$4/tree for an inventory. Mr. Reim indicated there are approximately 35,000 City public trees. Ms. Allen explained that City matching funds could be used for tree planting, City employee time working on tree work based on inventory findings. \$20,000 is insufficient to do a complete tree census. Dr. McEuen suggested a stratified sample would give us a snapshot City-wide of the tree population. Director Bottom suggested doing the northeast quadrant, which would include Wards 2, 3, 4, & 5. Mr. Brunk suggested that doing it by quadrants would facilitate a maintenance rotation. Mr. Reim said he tried to start a maintenance rotation, but it would take 6 – 7 years to complete. Mr. Brunk pointed out that it took Urbana 13 years its first time around. Mr. Reim stated that he will look into what area would fit into \$20,000 inventory.

Ms. Allen pointed out that one of the requirements for the grant is that the City adopt at least one of the findings from the inventory in an action plan as part of the Forestry Management Plan. Another requirement is that the City adopt a tree ordinance by 2022.

Before the application is filed, Director Bottom and Mayor Langfelder should have seven days for their review. Ms. Allen has drafted a cover letter to be signed by the Mayor.

Old Business: Mr. Reim will provide each Commissioner received a printed copy of the Bylaws, Tree Plan, and Arboricultural Specifications Manual; Memorial Tree Program

Motion to recommend that the City adopt a Memorial Tree Program by Susan Allen, seconded by Rianne Hawkins. The motion passed unanimously.

Next, the Commission moved on to discuss how a Memorial Tree Program could be set up. It was suggested there could be a map of the memorial trees. The donation would be sufficient to purchase & plant the tree. The choice of trees would be up to the City Arborist.

The Commission moved on to a discussion about how of a 501(c) entity to accept the memorial gifts. It was mentioned that Springfield Green could be reinstated. It was noted that Sustainable Springfield is an active 501(c) that could partner with UFC. The City Tree Care Account in the ASM would be for City fines.

Next, it was reported that the budget sub-committee of, Ms. Lawrence, Mr. Belleville, and Chair Von Qualen have not met but will be meeting by conference call.

No action has been taken on the UFC webpage. Mr. Reim said he would talk to Julia about it. Director Bottom pointed out that other City Commissions do not have a webpage.

The next meeting was set for 2 p.m. on Nov. 4th, 2020. It will be conducted by zoom.

Adjournment Motion by Amy McEuen, seconded by Rianne Hawkins passed unanimously.