

WEBSTER GROVES GREEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: Monday, July 12, 2021
Location: Larson Park
Called to Order: 5:45 p.m.
Adjourned: 6:55 p.m.
Next Meeting Date: August 2nd, 2021, 5:30 p.m.

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT
Annie Russell	X	
Bill Hoss		X
Pam Bliss, City Council Liaison	X	
Ann Omura		X
Ginger Garrett	X	
Laura Jordan	X	
Lynnda Greene	X	
Jerry Pinkner	X	
Carrie Coyne, Chairman	X	
Tessa Wasserman	X	
Yvonne Steingruby, Staff Liaison	X	

Approval of Minutes: The June 7th meeting minutes were approved as written.

Old Business:

A. Douglas Hill Development

Councilwoman Pam Bliss reported on the status of the Douglas Hill Development, the council’s upcoming meetings with SJ Collaborative, and pending public hearings. She is attending a Planning Commission meeting tonight with the developer and city manager in attendance; no public comments will be read until the next meeting. GSAC members will be able to attend the council’s next meeting to learn further details about this project.

B. Trees of Distinction Tree Renewal Program Update

The group discussed Carrie Coyne’s (chair) written proposal, detailing components of the program, to be presented to the council August 17th. Pam Bliss reported that “there is interest” in the plan among council members.

Carrie, who has been researching documentation of Webster’s “Tree Inventory,” reported that what documents exist are currently inaccessible on the web. Yvonne Steingruby, staff liaison, clarified that a cloud-based 2019 tree inventory of the city’s street trees does exist, but is currently accessible to the Public Works department. Pam Bliss explained that the council is in discussion to make city documents more accessible to the public, possibly via some “Cloud” software.

Carrie reiterated that the Trees of Distinction tree renewal program will focus primarily on right-of-way areas, not just street trees, with an emphasis on neighborhoods. Yvonne noted a great need to be in neighborhoods, particularly in the city's southern half (the southeast quadrant), where many streets have no trees at all. "The neighborhoods are where we've lost the most trees," she said, and "The City strives towards tree-lined streets per the Ordinance".

Carrie also suggested that GSAC should connect with another local/regional grower besides Forest ReLeaf, and suggested Forrest Keeling Nursery, in Elsberry, Missouri and Gateway Greening in St. Louis City.

Yvonne reminded the group that the care required to keep 100 young trees watered and supported through their first year of life, is very intense in terms of man-hours, and planning will need to include outreach to volunteers willing to provide that continual care.

C. June Tree Walk event review and discussion of future tree identification walks.

All agreed that last month's "Tree ID Walk" in Southwest Park, led by Mark Halpin, was very successful. Twenty-three attended, most of them hearing of the event by social media, and one or two by an event flyer posted on the public library's Event Board.

The group agreed that we'd like to host more Tree Walks in future, perhaps making them a regular activity throughout the year, to encourage ongoing public awareness.

After some discussion the group decided that the next GSAC public event will be a Native Tree and Plant Walk, led by Scott Woodbury, in September, to be held in Lockwood Park. Tessa Wasserman and Carrie suggested the talk could also show participants how to harvest native plant seeds, and store them for future use. No exact date has been set, but given lessening evening light by then, a Saturday morning event will be considered.

Other ideas discussed working with the public library in various ways, to support GSAC's work in promoting trees. Lynnda Greene suggested that the library staff could select key books about trees (some of which are recent best sellers), and promote them in coordination with GSAC's Tree ID walks and Trees of Distinction planting program.

D. Tree Plaque in memory of Rich Fitzgerald, which Yvonne brought along, will be placed on the Marquee outside the Rec Center.

E. Goat Trial for Shady Creek Nature Sanctuary

Yvonne reported that arrangements with "Goats on the Go" have been finalized, and the herd is expected to visit the Shady Creek Nature Sanctuary late July or early August. Jerry Pinkner suggested that a "goat cam" could be set up to render a live feed of the

goats while they “worked,” to be featured on the city website. Yvonne will check this out.

F. Mayors for Monarchs Pledge.

Jerry, who has studied the “Mayors for Monarchs Pledge” organization for the commission, explained details of the program, particularly requirements the city must fulfill to qualify and participate. Mayor Gerry Welch, he said, is excited about Webster’s participation and will issue an official proclamation soon. She also wants GSAC’s guidance in establishing new butterfly gardens around town, though Jerry noted that the “gardens” the program requires for qualification do not have to be new.

Tessa said that she may be able to get seeds for swamp and common milkweed for community use, and that GSAC could conceivably package these for participating residents. The group agreed that GSAC will help the mayor implement the program once all parties fully understand the program and select specific components to pursue. The deadline for meeting the next Mayors for Monarchs pledge is in December.

G. Landscape Preferred Planting List

After brief discussion, Carrie moved to table further work on this until later in the year.

New Business

A. Upcoming volunteer events

Yvonne reported that a group of cub scouts from Edgar Road School did a great job mulching around Larson Park to prepare for the Burr Oak Baroque community event occurring later in the week.

B. Discussion and planning for the September Native Tree/Plant Walk, to be led by Scott Woodbury. (See above.)

VII. Updates

A. Chairman: Carrie let the GSAC members know about a Plan It Native Conference she will be attending virtually. It is put on by Deep Roots KC every September, and this year Doug Tallamy, author of Bringing Nature Home, is one of the keynote speakers. She suggested the group check it out if they have any interest. <https://deeprootskc.org/>

B. Council: Pam Bliss said to get out and vote on Aug 3rd. Also, for updates, Council moved Ivory Crockett Park up in priority due to the immediate maintenance needs and opportunities. Renovating the trail is coming up soon, and then how the rest of the funds are spent is TBD depending on community engagement. Things like the basketball and tennis courts, and the pavilion are all open to ideas from the community. She mentioned there will be no Council meeting until after the next GSAC meeting. She also updated the group on the council’s meetings with SG

Collaborative concerning the proposed Douglas Hill Development early in the meeting, leaving shortly thereafter.

- C. Staff: Yvonne mentioned ongoing issues with fires being started in park trash cans. She is working towards a new trash removal program in the Parks.

She also noted that the Tree City USA luncheon will be on October 8th, and that we will need to discuss at the next meeting which GSAC members will be in attendance.

Additionally, this year's Make a Difference Day will be held on the third October Saturday. She is planning on another honeysuckle cull that day, as well as several other projects, so as to offer residents a choice of efforts to work on, ideally one at Larson Park.

VIII. Set Up Next Meeting

The next GSAC meeting will be on August 2nd, 5:30 pm, Larson Park

IX. Adjournment: 6:55 p.m.