

**Berkley Tree Board**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, January 22, 2024**

**Present:** S. Young, K. Karlis, L. Fritsch, B. Lathrop, G. Elrod, M. Grassa, H. Tylenda, T. Losey

**Absent:** D. Hennen, M. Leneway, S. Bard

**Additional visitors:** None

**Meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.**

**Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes** –Nov. 23, 2023 meeting Minutes approved.

**Review and Approval of Agenda** –The Agenda was modified to move the Tree Ordinance Update to February

**Public Comments-** none

**2024 Meeting Schedule** – Charlaïne published the Tree Board Meeting Schedule, The Tree Board is scheduled to meet the 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays each month except July, August, and December, and the May meeting is moved to Tuesday, May 28 due to Memorial Day. Unless otherwise notified, the 2024 meeting are again scheduled in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, Public Safety Building

**DPW Update** – was incorporated into 2023 review

**Oakland Conservation District Spring Tree and Shrub Sale** – “The Acorn Spring Edition” was distributed to the Board via email. There are many plants available at very affordable prices. The Board was encouraged to spread the word to family, friends, and neighbors

**2023 Goals and Accomplishments Reviewed** – K. Karlis reviewed the goals and accomplishments of the Tree Board last year for both ongoing and new projects. The Tree Board accomplished a lot in 2023!

- City street tree program:** 20 new trees planted in the Spring and an additional 249 new trees were planted in the Fall. 145 trees were removed and 869 trees were trimmed in the last calendar year
- In support of the Tree Board Goals for more species diversification, the DPW planted 20 different species of street trees – and continued the moratorium on maples
  - The DPW applied for grants from DTE and to the DNR for Oxford Parks – we did not receive these grants this year but are hopeful for future year ( The DNR scoring system priorities communities who did not receive any grant money in the previous year, so our 2022 DTE grant somewhat counted against us in 2023)

**Tree City USA:** City of Berkley received approval in 2023 from Arbor Day Foundation to be designated as a Tree City USA (33 Years)

- Also applied for the Tree City USA Growth Award which is presented to communities that demonstrate higher levels of tree care and community engagement during the calendar year
- The Arbor Day Celebration occurred April 29th. Two trees were planted in the center boulevard of Cass, near 11 Mile Rd.

**City Tree Ordinance:** Dennis H. worked with Lawrence Sobson, DNR urban forester and partnership coordinator, to ensure that the City of Berkley ordinance meets Arbor Day requirements and to incorporate DNR recommendations – to be finalized in 2024

**Tree Board goals and projects for 2024:** Mike L. first provided an update on the Spotted Lanternfly in January – this pest has been detected in Oakland County.

- Robert Miller from the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development provided another update in October. The spotted lanternfly can feed on many plants or trees but prefer tree of heaven and grapes. They travel primarily by laying egg masses on vehicles, outdoor equipment and firewood. As they eat, they release a sticky, sugary substance called honeydew that increases the growth of mold and attracts other pests. Although it will not directly kill most trees, it is a tree stressor.
- Tree of Heaven were spotted in Oxford Park. DPW has plans to remove and will most likely bring an arborist to address the tree(s) before removing

**Communication–** As administrator, Tricia L. actively supported the Tree Board Facebook group to share news throughout the year

- Also used the City communication channels
- Provided residents information on how to care for new street trees via email and it seemed to work well this past year - other than the shifts in planting time by Marine City Nursery
- Developed a Tri-fold pamphlet to communicate Tree Board goals to residents
- The City paid for 500 tri-folds to be printed. A few were given out at Berkley Days. The rest were given to the Chamber of Commerce to add to the welcome package of materials given to new residents.

**Tree Inventory:** DPW is continuing the process to create a GIS compatible Street Tree Inventory ( 463 more trees documented in GIS in 2023 – now 1047 total). Should be able to document quite a few more in 2024 once HRC pushes out their update

**Holiday Parade:** Holiday Parade – participation was better this year (Bob L., Mike L., Lisa F. and her husband Michael, & Kathy K.). Candy was passed out and the lighted tree wagon float was included

**Evaluate Permeable Pavement Test:** In 2022, DPW initiated a permeable pavement test to evaluate if this would be worthwhile to support trees along Coolidge and 12 Mile Road

- This has worked well so far but it is a little pricey. Overall, it looks like it would be a good alternative to tree grates / mulch when we replant trees along Coolidge and 12 Mile Rd.

**Residential Tree Giveaway:** Tricia L did some research on programs in other cities and potential places the board could obtain the trees.

- A subcommittee was formed to discuss how to implement
- The Arbor Day Foundation “Community Canopy” program one program was discussed – it would allow residents to sign up for a tree from a list available, would be delivered, and would be first come first serve
- A minimum order of 100 trees is required for this program – and this issue of funding for this has not been resolved
- Lisa F. spoke with Fai Foen from the Greening of Detroit and this may be another viable source for tree for this program

**Evaluate Gateways / Common Area Tree for Coverage and Consistency**

- S.Bard evaluate tree coverage at four boulevard entrances to the City and compared to the Cass Boulevard between Harvard and Cambridge which he used as a benchmark. He reported that there were approximately 1.5 trees per home in those areas and were comparable to Cass Boulevard
- For consistency, Steve advocated with the City to document criterion to be used in deploying the City’s tree resources so areas of higher usage, (entrances and other common areas) receive higher priority than areas with lower usage. This is still ongoing

**More Community Involvement:**

**Berkley Days:** All members of the Tree Board supported Berkley Days, providing materials, manning the booth, and helping to set up or tear down

- The Tree Board had many good interactions with residents regarding the Urban Tree Canopy and Tree Board goals

- Trees were raffled, but only \$173 collected. 3 trees were donated by Kathy K and Lisa F. was able to get another 11 younger trees at no cost from Greening of Detroit
- M. Leneway initiated a Big Tree Contest
- Although understood to be necessary, all were all were disappointed to see the event shut down early on Saturday and all day on Sunday due to the disturbances on Saturday night

**Created “Slow Roll” Bike Tours:** Using the old tree inventory and Google Maps -Street View, Kathy K. developed three street tree tours encompassing all the neighborhoods to explore the diversity of tree species found in Berkley

- Lisa F., Mike L. and Tricia L verified that these trees were still present or not. Kathy K. made necessary corrections to finalize these maps
- Steve B. and Kathy K. led the initial tours
- The “Slow Roll” bike group plans to use these maps and revisit these trees throughout the year
- The tours were also made available to all Berkley residents on the City’s Tree Board website

**Volunteer Hours:** Kathy K. started a spreadsheet to track volunteer hours that might be used to support dollar matching requirements for grant applications. Documented a total of 340 hours @ \$30.15 per hour - \$10,250

**Reviewed information on the impact of Climate change when selecting city street trees:**

Board reviewed resources provided by Tricia L. Larry Sobson discussed the 10/20/30 rule, i.e. having no more than 10% of one species, 20% of one genus and 30% of one family in the canopy

**Recommendation to DDA for Street Trees:** The Tree Board provided recommendations to guide the DDA for selecting and caring for street trees in the Downtown District. The DDA welcomed the input and were supportive

- Shawn met with DDA Director Mike McGuinness and the DDA agreed to work closely with the DPW regarding care of existing trees / planting and selecting new trees in the District
- DDA is also open to possibly covering some cost for tree planting and maintenance in the District

**2024 Ongoing Topics/Projects**

**City street tree program:** Continue City street tree program and diversifying species throughout the city

- Reevaluate # of trees to be planted/City Budget constraints
- Continue to guide the DDA for selecting and caring for street trees in the Downtown District

**Tree City USA:** Observe Arbor Day Tree Planting and announce Arbor Week for Berkley – date(s) and details TBD but to be near National Arbor Day – Friday April 26, 2024

- Submit annual application in December (Tree City USA announcement is in April)

**Information sharing regarding pests, trees, or invasive tree species:** As needed

**City Tree Ordinance:** Complete process to get proposed changes approved and incorporated into the City Ordinance

**Communication** – Continue to increase awareness, participation, education (benefits of trees, tree care, etc.) of the Tree Board goals and objectives

- Continue communications with Facebook page and City communication channels
- Promote “Where the Sidewalk Ends” Library Program scheduled for February 6 at 6:30 p.m. City to publish the Library program in the Berkley Buzz. Kathy will provide information to Tricia to create a social media posting for the Tree Board website – Kathy will share to other social media groups such as Positively Berkley, Berkley Gardeners, and Next Door. Kathy asked the Board to spread the word and register!

**Continue Community Engagement :**

- Continue efforts to provide a Residential Tree Give Away Program
- Promote Arbor Day awareness – create a display at the Historical Museum with the Tree Board materials supplied to them last year. Potentially create a display at the Library
- Participate in Community Events – events to be discussed at future meetings. Opportunities include Berkley Days (May TBD), Art Bash (June 8), Berkley Street Art Fest (July TBD), Touch a Truck (Sept TBD)

**Other Topics not on the agenda** – no other topics were added to the agenda.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.**

**Next meeting** is scheduled for February 26 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, Public Safety Building