

# Town of Odessa

## *Minutes of the TREE COMMISSION MEETING*

*Tuesday November 8, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.*

*Old Academy Building*

*315 Main Street, Odessa, DE 19730*

*In Person*

### **Call to Order**

Chairman Melaine Minear called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

### **Roll Call**

Commission members Melaine Minear, Jeff Pyle and Quentin Schlieder were present.

### **Consideration of Minutes from the October 11, 2022 Meeting**

Jeff Pyle moved to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2022 meeting. Quentin Schlieder seconded the motion which was adopted unanimously by voice vote.

### **Old Business**

#### **Corrected Tree Commission Directory**

Quentin Schlieder distributed a copy of the corrected Tree Commission Directory which also now includes term of each Commissioner.

#### **2010 Community Forestry Master Plan**

Melaine Minear reported that she and Quentin Schlieder visited Town Hall on Tuesday October 25, 2022 to review binders but could not locate the master plan referenced in Resolution No. 2012-1. Melaine Minear met with Kesha Braunskill, Program Coordinator for the Delaware Urban and Community Forestry Program on November 2, 2022 and requested that she check to see if the Delaware Forestry Service had a copy in their files. Ms. Braunskill advised that Kyle Hoyd who was active with the Odessa Tree Commission in 2010 had checked his files and could not find a copy.

Chairman Minear reported that Kesha. Braunskill was accompanied by Urban Forester Taeryn Davidson during her visit to Odessa on November 2, 2022. She gave them a tour of the Municipal Park, the Osbourne property and the Historic Odessa Foundation property including the Marian Coffin Garden. They had never seen these areas before but expressed interest in returning.

Ms. Braunskill advised that Odessa has lost 40.2 acres or 15.08% of its tree canopy including the Osbourne Street/Adel development since 2014. Jeff Pyle wondered what happened to the lost canopy since this represents a significant loss.

#### **Tree Inventory**

The tree inventory maps are available in the binders maintained at the Town offices, including an annotated color coded map showing which trees required pruning or removal. However, the spread sheet which was thought to exist was not found. Chairman Minear confirmed that the

Delaware Forest Service also could not locate these documents in their files. A schedule to update/create an inventory will be included in the master plan as noted on page one of the draft plan.

**Written Master Plan for Care, Preservation, Pruning, Planting, Replacing & Removal –** Quentin Schlieder distributed copies of the draft outline of a plan for 2022-2024 and asked that comments be forwarded to him by December 1, 2022. An article on master plans and the process from Penn State University was forwarded to members of the Commission by email on Sunday November 7, 2022. Jeff Pyle expressed his opinion that the suggested draft plan looked “doable.” Copies of the draft plan will be delivered to Michael Callaghan and Neeka Grove. Additionally, Quentin Schlieder will email copies of the plan to all Commissioners with a request for any comments or suggestions be sent to him by December 1, 2022. Much of the December Tree Commission meeting will be devoted to completing the plan with the goal of having a final document for submission to Mayor Smith early in 2023.

### **Fundraising Suggestions**

The Commission briefly reviewed fundraising suggestions on page 4 in the draft master plan. Additional suggestions are welcome.

### **Delaware Urban & Community Forestry Grants**

Kesha Braunskill, Delaware Urban and Community Forestry Program Coordinator will be invited to a Tree Commission meeting early in 2023. In the interim, Melaine Minear met with Ms. Braunskill and Urban Forester Taeryn Davidson to review a number of issues on November 2, 2022, as previously noted. The Chairman of the Planning Board also has requested that they make a presentation about the Town’s Tree Canopy. Chairman Minear proposed a joint meeting of the Odessa Tree Commission and Planning Board when the date for Ms. Braunskill’s visit is confirmed.

### **2023 Project – Municipal Park**

It appears that the 2023 grant cycle will not include funding for tree management, i.e. pruning. It will provide opportunities for tree inventory and tree planting projects. Ms. Braunskill also advised that some funding may be available for invasive species management. An alternative planting project needs to be identified. Suggestions are encouraged and will be reviewed at the Tree Commission’s December 13, 2022 meeting.

Chairman Minear reported that she had met with Amanda Russell who is an active volunteer with the Municipal Park. She is experienced and very good at coordinating events, and a spring cleanup of a section of the municipal Park where invasive plant like English ivy and Japanese Honeysuckle are damaging trees might be a project she might assist in coordinating. Jeff Pyle also noted that he works with Eagle Scouts at the Historic Odessa Foundation, and he might be able to assist in recruiting a scout to undertake a project.

### **Selecting Prospective Arborists/Bidders**

Quentin Schlieder distributed a draft list of arborists. Any additions should be sent to Quentin Schlieder by December 1, 2022. Jeff Pyle suggested that Bradley's Tree Care Company from the Newark DE area be considered since they have done work at the Historic Odessa Foundation

properties. In the event a tree planting grant is sought, a list of landscape contractors capable of performing the work also will be needed. Please send these suggestions to Quentin Schlieder also by December 1, 2022.

### **Tree Banking**

Quentin Schlieder distributed copies of the Newark Delaware Ordinance which was recommended by Kesha Braunskill. The Commission briefly discussed how to proceed to draft an ordinance for Odessa. It was suggested that Chairman Minear meet with Carol Coleman, Chairman of the Odessa Planning Commission, and highlight the sections of the ordinance which would be applicable to future development in Odessa. Chairman Minear added that there are sections of the New Castle County Land Use Ordinance which also would be beneficial and they will consider these as well. An email from Neeka Grove detailing the process and timeline for submitting an ordinance for review and approval was distributed. The Chairman expressed her appreciation to Neeka Grove for providing this information.

Chairman Minear also will review the current landscape requirements for proposed developments, which are referenced in the Town of Odessa Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

### **Tribute Tree Program**

Quentin Schlieder distributed the draft brochure for the proposed Tribute Tree Program. He requested that comments be sent to him by December 1, 2022 so that the final brochure can be approved at the December 13, 2022 Odessa Tree Commission meeting.

### **Community Outreach and Education**

The Committee briefly reviewed the following community outreach and education initiatives which could be undertaken by the Tree Commission:

- **Pruning Workshop**– Carol Sheats has suggested that she could recruit participants for this class which could be held this autumn or winter.
- **Odessa Tree Commission Pamphlet** – Quentin Schlieder distributed a draft copy of the brochure and requested that Commissioners send comments to Quentin Schlieder by December 1, 2022. A draft of a “Frequently Asked Questions” brochure was also prepared and distributed for review. Corrections should be sent to Quentin Schlieder by December 1, 2022.
- **Facebook Page** – Quentin Schlieder referenced page 5 of the draft master plan and noted that a moderator for the page is needed. He thought the page should be a public and not restricted. A name is needed for the page. He suggested that one name which came to mind was “Odessa, Delaware Tree Commission Log.” Other suggestions are welcome.
- **Arbor Day Celebration** – Quentin Schlieder noted that Arbor Day is traditionally celebrated on the fourth Friday in April. However, he noted that a Friday event would probably greatly reduce attendance and participation. He noted that in his experience, Sunday afternoons work best for most schedules since Saturdays are devoted to work around the home and garden, youth sports, etc. He suggested scheduling the 2023 Arbor Day event on Sunday April 30, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. and planting a tree in front of the State Police Barracks at the corner of Main Street and DuPont Highway North to replace the dead tree which was recently removed, since it is a very prominent location at the

entrance to the Odessa Historic District. He suggested that the tree be dedicated to a significant individual or event. It was noted that past Arbor Day events were coordinated with the Women's Club of Odessa. Jeff Pyle agreed on Sunday being a good day, but he suggested moving the event time until after church since Saint Paul's United Methodist Church is located nearby and an audience would be available. It was the consensus that this was a great idea.

- **Tree City USA** – Melaine Minear discussed the application process and qualifications with Kesha Braunskill, The application is in process. The Town of Odessa was a Tree City USA Community in 2008 per the certificate on display in Town Hall.
- **Email Blasts** – Melaine Minear will ask Mayor Smith how to proceed. The lantern fly posters are good initial candidates.
- **Other Suggestions** – Some additional suggestions included a photo contest and an Arbor Day Exhibit at Corbit-Calloway Library. Other suggestions are encouraged.

### **New Business**

#### **Spotted Lantern Fly**

Quentin Schlieder distributed three draft posters, one for each of the life stages of the Spotted Lantern Fly. Chairman Minear noted that she had reviewed the poster featuring the adult stage of the insect with Mayor Smith who agreed it could be posted without further review. The Commissioners were encouraged to review the drafts for the egg and instar stages and send corrections and comments to Quentin Schlieder by December 1, 2022 so that the final posters can be considered at the December 13, 2022 Tree Commission meeting. These posters include a QR code so that the public can easily access up to date information from the Delaware Agricultural Extension Service. Each poster will be posted separately at the appropriate time to effect timely controls of this invasive insect. Quentin Schlieder also distributed two articles from Penn State University titled "Deciding If and When to Treat for Spotted Lantern fly on Ornamentals" and "What to Do About Spotted Lantern Fly on Ornamental Trees and Plants in Residential and Public Landscapes."

#### **Next Meeting Date and Time**

Chairman Minear announced that the next meeting of the Odessa Tree Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, December 13, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Academy Building.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chairman Minear entertained a motion to adjourn the Meeting. Jeff Pyle moved to adjourn the November 8, 2022 meeting of the Odessa Tree Commission at 7:55 p.m. Quentin Schlieder seconded the motion which was adopted unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Quentin Schlieder  
Secretary