

**MINUTES
TREE BOARD
October 20, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER

Lisa Paige called the in-person/virtual hybrid meeting to order at 6:03 pm on October 20, 2022, in Room 1 at Town Hall.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present for roll call:

Members Present: Lisa Paige, Chair
 Dan Bullock, Member
 Jo Anne Teeple, Member
 Kari Bevevino, Member
 Sky Quarto, Member

Town Staff Present: Carl Meinecke, Town of Carbondale Staff Liaison
 Jared Barnes, Planning Director
 Kae McDonald, Boards and Commissions Clerk

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion Passed: Dan ***moved*** to approve the September 15, 2022 meeting minutes with a correction on page 1. Sky ***seconded*** the motion, and it was ***unanimously approved***.

PERSONS PRESENT NOT ON THE AGENDA

Jared Barnes, the new Town of Carbondale Planning Director, introduced himself and noted that he has been on the job for about two months. He added that he wanted to visit each board and commission to see how the planning department can help them achieve their goals. He explained that he has been working with Carl to see how the Unified Development Code can work better for tree protection and possibly introduce mandatory reviews in some cases once the Comprehensive Plan Update is approved.

Jo Anne asked what Jared's perspective was regarding code enforcement as it relates to trees.

Jared replied that he is working towards a better understanding of the process and where things have fallen through the cracks, but it is the planning department's job to bring forward specific requirements. He noted that if code requirements are mandatory, there isn't a lot of wriggle room but the code does provide some relief in certain cases where hardship is demonstrated.

Lisa noted that one of the challenges the Tree Board faces is that the community presents as a tree-rich community, but historically the natural landscape didn't support a lot of trees. She noted that it is a balance to present a sustainable landscape while at the same time creating an appealing environment for visitors and community members.

Dan explained that the Tree Board was established to advise the Board of Trustees on all things relating to trees. He pointed out that the Tree Board should be included in any decisions that involve planting and/or maintaining trees on Town property regardless of which department or commission is proposing said plans. He noted that the situation is better now because Public Works has taken more interest and has expanded the arborist's budget and you can see a significant difference in tree maintenance. Dan related that there has been limited enforcement when it comes to protecting trees on job sites even though the tree protection standards are including with every building permit but acknowledged that because there are vast differences in where the Town right-of-way begins and ends across the various developments that comprise the community there is always a question of whether a tree is located on Town property.

Jared responded that if the Board of Trustees have approved the rules and regulations, the Town is responsible for compliance.

Jo Anne commented that even though the Tree Board asked that the trees near the American National Bank next to City Market be provided a buffer from the roadway, they haven't thrived, and she recently observed that they have now all been cut down. She asked how long the trees are required to be there and still be taken care of.

Dan pointed out that the banks have asked for a clear sight line into the interior for safety reasons.

Carl agreed to investigate the issue.

Marty acknowledged that you can't repair problems that have occurred in the past but pointed out the importance of starting out on the right foot which is why he invited Jared to the meeting. He explained that although the board has previously felt slighted that decisions have been made about trees without consultation, there is the opportunity to work collaboratively moving forward.

Dan commented that he would like to see the Tree Ordinance memorialized in the Unified Development Code.

Sky pointed out that in many cases variances have been used to get out following code requirements.

Jared agreed that historically variances have been used in that way but noted that current practice generally limits variances to unique cases where hardship is demonstrated. He added that the Unified Development Code has an alternative compliance process that provides for landscaping relief.

Dan noted that in some areas of town the right-of-way has limited space for additional trees while in other areas there is no right-of-way suitable for trees. He explained that there have been a few conversations centered on encouraging property owners where there is no appropriate right-of-way to plant trees in their yard with some financial relief from the Town.

Jared appreciated everyone's comments and committed to seek the Tree Board's input on landscape-related code to ensure that it is right-sized for the community.

CANADIAN TREE PROTECTION

Jo Anne explained that she recently returned from Montreal where she observed a very interesting way to protect trees in public space (see photo below). She noted that they are not tying the tree off but did point out that it looks a bit like playground equipment.

Dan wondered if it could also function for construction tree protection.

Jo Anne thought it would be best to still use orange fencing. She added that other benefits to the large contraption is that it makes a statement that a young tree is there, it allows the tree to move with the wind without being strapped down and it prohibits people from parking their bikes against the tree, while the downside is the size.

Lisa thought it added a sculptural element.

Carl explained that tree protection is a balance between keeping the tree safe from damage while still allowing parks maintenance to occur efficiently.



MEMORIALIZING ANNE CHAPMAN, FOUNDING TREE BOARD MEMBER

Jo Anne noted that Anne Chapman, a founding Tree Board member and one of her mentors, passed away on October 9th. She stated that she is working on getting some background on Anne but would like to propose planting a tree in her honor. She noted that Anne was very sensitive to the surrounding environment and her favorite animal were foxes, so she suggested planting a Foxtail Pine.

FUTURE TREE PLANTING SITE LOCATIONS

Carl explained that he recently spoke with a community member who encouraged planting more trees throughout town. He explained that in 2010, the state completed a tree inventory and while they had identified a few new sites, there aren't many remaining suitable locations.

Jo Anne commented that she thought more about last month's topic about naming a town tree – she didn't think it was a good idea because it might encourage monocropping. She wasn't sure what the best strategy was but would like to promote diversity. She noted that based upon the number growing in Carbondale her vote would be for Siberian Elms.

Carl noted that he would like to update the inventory and is anticipating seeking grant money this winter to have a third party complete the process. He added that if the inventory takes place, he will ask that they look for prospective locations for new tree plantings as well.

Jo Anne thought that a great location from Anne Chapman's memorial tree might be at the Hattie Thompson House because a spruce tree had to be removed during recent construction and foxes are noted to frequent that area.

Carl agreed to talk with the Parks and Recreation Director regarding planting a new tree in that location (The Thompson House is a Town of Carbondale Park).

Jo Anne thought it might be a good location for a demonstration garden, as well.

Carl thought they needed community buy-in for that.

Dan wondered how best to identify where the Town right-of-way is located. He also reminded board members that any new tree plantings must be located where they can be watered regularly.

CARL'S TREE REPORT

Carl listed activities he has been working on including:

- Received a commitment from City Market and the developer of Main Street Marketplace to replace 18 trees that failed to thrive; the planting will take place in the spring.
- He just completed the Tree Risk Assessment course.
 - Jo Anne suggested using a 3rd party assessment to eliminate culpability
 - Carl explained that there were several levels of assessment, and he is limited in the types of risk assessments he can undertake.
- The trees next to the 4th Street Plaza Park had to be removed for a variety of reasons. They will be replaced once there is a consensus on what will happen at that space.
- The tree next to the Smithy will be pruned in November. The Siberian Elm next to the animal hospital will also be raised up/pruned and some small/medium trees under powerlines will be removed next week.

Carl asked if board members have any opinions about putting spruce trees in the downtown concrete planters. He explained that he tries to keep them alive after they have been removed for the summer seasonal planting, but it is challenging and then it is challenging to find places to plant them when they grow too large to be in the planters.

Jo Anne didn't think spruce were appropriate and suggested trying red twig dogwoods instead.

Lisa commented that the planters play a role in the beautification of the Town and wondered if there were other stakeholders that needed to be consulted.

Jo Anne explained that it was Chris Chacos that started the program, and the planters are maintained by volunteers.

Dan commented that the trees along Main Street need to be taken care of and reiterated his suggestion of a collaborative grant writing effort to improve that location.

Marty suggested checking whether the Colorado Municipal League might offer grants for that purpose.

Jo Anne wondered if perennials should be used in the planters.

Carl appreciated the comments and noted that there might be room for various ideas.

Lisa thought this might be good timing to make a change. She suggested that the next step should be to identify other stakeholders to get their input.

ADJOURNMENT

The October 20, 2022, regular meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled on November 17, 2022 at 6:00 pm in Room 1 at Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Kae McDonald
Town of Carbondale
Boards and Commissions Clerk