



**City of Springfield Urban Forestry Commission  
Minutes**

3:30 p.m. **January 12, 2022**

**Room 203, Municipal Center West and via Zoom**

The meeting was called to Order at 3:30 p.m.

In attendance were Susan Allen, Randy Belville, Amy McEuen, Scott Marlow, Erskine Route, Jan Von Qualen, Jeff Reim, and Nate Bottom. Absent were Ernestine Lawrence and Scott Rogers.

Guests present were Polly Poskin and Ruth Oliver.

Amy McEuen made a motion to approve the November 5, 2021, Minutes. Randy Belville seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Jeff Reim reported that the Tree Inventory has begun on the northeast of the City. Jan Von Qualen and Jeff reported that the Tree Protection Ordinance is almost ready to go to Corporation Counsel's Office. Jeff has made changes to the ASM as suggested by Zack Wirtz from the Morton Arboretum. Susan Allen prepared, and Jeff submitted the quarterly report.

Randy Belville stated that about 1,000 trees and some beautiful pieces of statutory have been donated by Gail Myers of Davidsan's Japanese Maples. Randy is storing the trees at the New City Greenhouse. The Indian Hills Homeowners Association took 36 trees to plant.

The Japanese Maples will be planted in landscaped groupings and there was a discussion about additional locations for the Japanese Maples. Ideas included reaching out to Oak Ridge Cemetery, the Muni, and CWLP Lake Services, Larry Rockford or Dan Brill.

Jan Von Qualen reported that she received responses from Joe McMenamain, Kristin DiCenso, Mark Mahoney, and Katie Davidson in response to the UFC's Recommendation to decrease the size of the shared-use path in favor of a 10-foot green space. Their comments included a strong emphasis on creating a safe path for pedestrians & cyclists. Mark Mahoney suggested that the alternative of using So. State St. for a bike way would not be new & would not benefit MacArthur businesses or surrounding neighborhood. Katie Davidson suggested splitting the difference with a 7-foot shared-use path and devote the remaining 3 feet to increased green space. Bothe Mahoney and Davidson stressed the potential for economic development and the importance of strategic & user-friendly planning. Alderwoman Kristin Dicenso finds the S. State Street alternative to be too narrow. Alderman Joe McMenamain appreciates the UFC's involvement and encouraged the UFC to make a counter proposal.

Randy Belville has ordered the bare-root trees for the spring tree give-away at the Arbor Day and Earth Day celebrations. He asked if the Mayor will purchase pots for the trees, or if he should use pots he has on hand. Randy plans to pick up the trees by Valentine's Day. He wants them to bud or show some sign of life before the give-away.

Randy requested, again, that the grates strangling the trees on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets be removed.

Susan Allen reported that she and Ernestine Lawrence have spoken to Michelle Robertson, Principal at McClernon, and Dr. Gill, Superintendent, about the Arbor Day event. District 186 is

struggling with the Omicron surge and is unable to make firm plans at present as it is unclear if school will be in person in April. The Art Association has committed to assist students with artwork for the event.

Amy McEuen indicated that Dr. Anne-Marie Hanson, Acting Department Chair of the UIS Dept. of Environmental Studies has invited us to present to her Capstone students from noon to 1 p.m. on January 26 or 31 or February 7 or 9. It was agreed that Amy, Randy, and Jan would attend the January 26 class.

Susan Allen reported that Trees Forever does not have the applications for the carbon credit program, yet.

The UFC has 8 tickets for a table at the Frontiers' Martin Luther King Breakfast on January 17, 2022. Again, because of the Omicron surge, attendance is expected to be low. Commissioners and guests were invited.

Old Business: Jeff Reim said he put out a Request for Proposal for the 2021 tree planting of up to 500 trees, but only received one response. The RFP will be re-issued.

New Business: Jan Von Qualen noted that when Alderwoman DiCenso commented on the UFC's MacArthur Blvd. Project, she suggested that the UFC could be helpful with plans for the 3<sup>rd</sup> St. rail line, which is to be converted to a bike path/linear park. Kristin said that the City has received \$750,000 in funding to begin the plan. Commissioners agreed that Jan should respond to Kristin expressing our interest in being involved. Polly Poskin noted that High Line Park in New York City is a linear park that could be looked at as an example.

Scott Marlowe asked about the possibilities of working with some of the blighted properties to create mini parks. It was noted that the City-owned vacant lots sell for \$850, but that ownership would require a plan for maintenance. Michelle Higginbotham of Enos Park would be a knowledgeable resource.

Public comments. Noted above.

The UFC Report to Council is scheduled for January 18, 2022.

The next meeting will be a hybrid with Zoom and physical attendance options, at 3:30 p.m. on March 9, 2022.

Scott Marlowe made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Randy Belville. The motion passed unanimously.