

Ferguson Township Tree Commission (FTTC)

Date February 13, 2017

Meeting Agenda

Time 5:30pm

Call to Order

January 16th Meeting Minutes

The FTTC shall review and approve the minutes from the January meeting.

Centennial Oak

The arborist has done an evaluation of the centennial oak at 104 farmstead lane as requested. The property owner has been invited to attend this meeting. The FTTC should discuss their recommendation on how to move forward.

Outreach and Education

Diana Griffith will be present at this meeting to discuss outlets for information for the FTTC. This would include oak wilt education, along with other various items.

Arbor Day 2017

The arborist has been in contact with Doug Ford from Snetsinger Butterfly Gardens/PSU Master Gardeners. The arborist will report on this and the FTTC can discuss further recommendations for the event.

Ferguson Township Tree Plan

The FTTC shall discuss the current draft of the township tree plan and make final edits as needed. This plan should be finalized this year.

Arborist report:

The Arborist will review work activities and plan reviews since the last meeting.

Communications to Commission Members

This is an opportunity for FTTC members to report on any contact by residents regarding FTTC matters.

Future agenda items

2017 C13 Street Tree Planting, Arbor Day 2017,

Other

Next meeting date and time is March 20th at 5:30pm

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP TREE COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
Monday, January 16, 2017
5:30 pm

I. ATTENDANCE

The Tree Commission held its regular meeting on Monday, January 16, 2017 at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

Commission: Marc McDill, Chairman
Howard Fescemyer, Vice Chairman
Mike Jacobson
Darlene Chivers
Jerry Learn

Staff: Lance King, Arborist
David Modricker, Director of Public Works

Others in attendance included: Robert & Tina Hibbert.

II. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. McDill called the Monday, January 16, 2017 Ferguson Township Tree Commission meeting to order at 5:37 pm.

III. INTRODUCTION OF JERRY LEARN

The Ferguson Township Tree Commission (FTTC) welcomed new member Jerry Learn to the commission.

IV. ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

Ms. Chivers nominated Marc McDill to remain the chair of the FTTC with a vote of all in favor. Mr. McDill nominated Howard Fescemyer to be vice chair with Ms. Chivers seconding the vote with a vote of all in favor.

V. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 17 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. McDill made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2016 Meeting. Mr. Jacobson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. CENTENNIAL OAK

Mr. King introduced Robert and Tina Hibbert who own the property located at 104 Farmstead Lane. The Hibberts contacted the Township after a large oak tree on their property started losing limbs. The tree is located on private property. The fallen limbs have caused damage to the fence near the tree. The Hibberts would like to know if the Township is interested in the tree and are concerned that if they remove the tree the residents of Ferguson would be outraged. Mr. Modricker reviewed the deed for the property of the Hibberts and read a statement on the deed indicating the property owner is responsible to care for the tree and make reasonable efforts to preserve it. After much discussion, Mr. McDill suggested that Mr. King assess the condition of the tree. The Township will not cut down the tree since it is on private property. Mr. Hibbert granted Mr. King permission to access the tree on his property. The FTTC said that they would keep in communication with the homeowners as each step is taken in regards to the oak tree.

VII. 2017 MEETING SCHEDULE

The FTTC approved the following list of meeting dates for the 2017 calendar year:

February 13th 5:30 pm
March 20th 5:30 pm
April 17th 5:30 pm
May 15th 5:30 pm
June 19th 5:30 pm
July 17th 5:00 pm (driving tour)
August 21st 5:30 pm
Sept. 18th 5:30 pm
October 16th 6:30 (public hearing)
Nov. 13th 5:30 pm

VIII. 2016-C14 STREET TREE PRUNING

Mr. King updated the FTTC on the pruning contract that was awarded to Dincher and Dincher. He noted that Dincher and Dincher made short work of the pruning that needed to be done. The budget was \$25,000, and they bid \$15,784. Mr. McDill asked what happens to the money that is not spent in the budget for the tree pruning. Mr. Modricker told the FTTC that it goes back into the general fund.

IX. BLUE COURSE DRIVE MEDIAN

Mr. King gave the FTTC recommendations for tree planting along Blue Course Drive. He proposed 5 species of trees including Hackberry, Kentucky Coffee, Purple Robe Black Locust, Hardy Rubber and London Plane. The soil is more alkaline than acidic in the median on Blue Course Drive. There are about 60 trees that need to be planted and the species that are recommended would be evenly divided. The FTTC approved these species.

X. ARBOR DAY 2017

Mr. King wants to start gathering ideas for Arbor Day 2017. Mr. King showed the FTTC the art work Wonderland Charter school made for the different groups that helped with arbor day in 2016. Mr. Fescemyer made a few suggestions for arbor day including having a celebration since Ferguson Township is now considered a Tree City USA, and planting trees in open areas such as Tudek Park or at the corner of Science Park Rd and Circleville Rd. Mr. King proposed having a maintenance day at Tudek Park in the Butterfly gardens. Lance will discuss the matter with master gardeners and other individuals to coordinate events for arbor day.

XI. FERGUSON TOWNSHIP TREE PLAN

No action.

XII. TREE PRESERVATION DURING DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Chivers would like to see more tree preservation on future land developments. Currently there is a committee rewriting the subdivision and land development ordinance (SALDO). Mr. McDill has been attending the meetings for the SALDO and has asked if other tree commission members

would be willing to attend. Mr. King said that he would be attending these meetings and would bring up this topic of tree preservation. Mr. Modricker suggested that the tree commission attend a planning commission meeting to bring up their concerns.

XIII. ARBORIST REPORT

Mr. King updated the FTTC on the street tree removals from 2016. All the removals have occurred with the exception of the two large trees along Beaver Avenue. Mr. King will be removing these trees very soon with the assistance of the road crew. Mr. King will be getting prices to grind approximately 66 stumps. 47 stumps will be pulled out by the road crew using a backhoe. The planting contract for the spring of 2017 will go out to bid in the next week. Any tree plantings in Thistlewood subdivision are dependent upon signed agreements from the property owners. A contract for oak wilt mitigation including tree treatment related to the second case of oak wilt discovered in Park Hills in 2016 will be out to bid shortly. The FTTC would like continued efforts made to make the public, as well as arborists, aware of the rules regarding trimming oak trees. Mr. King said he would be in communication with Diana Griffith (community coordinator) regarding oak wilt education. Mr. King will be attending the regional tree summit meeting on February 8th. Mr. King told the FTTC that Ferguson Township owns a piece of property located behind the Waffle Shop at the intersection of West College and Blue Course. Residents complained about the height of the grass on this property. Ferguson Township plans to reforest a small section of that piece of land and will plant a row of trees along one property line to create a natural fence. Mr. King will be working with the Township Engineer for plantings in several parks over the coming year. Mr. King met with the Township Manager, Mark Kunkle, regarding the property the Township owns on Pine Grove Mountain. Ferguson Township may approach DCNR to see if they have any interest in a land exchange or ideas for what can be done with this land. Mr. King updated the FTTC regarding the tree budget for 2017.

XIV. ADJORNMENT

With no further business, the January 16, 2017 Tree Commission regular meeting was adjourned at 8:27 pm.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

David Modricker, Director of Public Works
For the Tree Commission



TOWNSHIP OF FERGUSON

3147 Research Drive • State College, Pennsylvania 16801
Telephone: 814-238-4651 • Fax: 814-238-3454
www.twp.ferguson.pa.us

Arborist Opinion for "Centennial Oak" 104 Farmstead Lane

I inspected the tree located at 104 Farmstead Lane per the request of the property owner and Ferguson Township Tree Commission today January 27, 2017. Below are my findings.

The tree is in the side lot of the property with open space surrounding all sides. To the front of the tree is the street and sidewalk, to each side is a private residence, and to the rear is open space.

The DBH of the tree is 64", the diameter of the tree at the surface of the ground is 88". The tree has multiple dead limbs, a large cavity at the base on the uphill side, and conks at the base on the street side signaling root/butt rot.

The tree was drilled at DBH using a resistograph to measure the volume of sound wood in 4 separate locations. 3 locations show the majority of the wood as sound, the 4th shows the majority of the wood as soft or decayed. The tree could only be drilled to a depth of 19" due to the length of the resistograph bit.

It does not appear as though the tree is currently hazardous. The bowl still has a significant amount of sound wood, the crown is well balanced with little lean, and there are no major targets within range unless the entire tree fails.

The tree is however in decline, and will eventually succumb to natural causes such as root rot.

If the ultimate goal is preservation of the tree for as long as possible the large deadwood in the crown should be removed, and cabling and/or ground to limb supports installed to help secure the large horizontal limbs.

It is my recommendation that the tree remain the property and responsibility of the property owner, and that the owner be encouraged to preserve the tree to the best of their abilities.

Respectfully,

Lance King, Township Arborist

ISA Certified Arborist Municipal Specialist PD-2097AM



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February 13, 2017

To the residents of Park Hills, Park Forest, and Homestead Farms on behalf of the Ferguson Township Tree Commission:

We are writing to make you aware of the Township's initiatives to help reduce the effect of **oak wilt disease** on your oak trees.

How the Township is reducing the risk

It is now illegal to trim oak trees in Ferguson Township between **April 1 and October 31** without a free permit. The Township put this limitation into place to reduce the risk and the spread of oak wilt disease, which could decimate oak trees in your neighborhood unless it is controlled. Oak trees pruned between April 1 and October 31 are more likely to become infected with oak wilt and die. Infected trees can then spread the disease to other trees around them. Two incidents of oak wilt-infected trees occurred in 2016 on Cherry Ridge Road in Park Forest Village. The infected trees were removed and oak trees within a 200 foot radius of the dead trees were treated with fungicide. The cost to the township for addressing these incidents was \$26,067.

Causes, symptoms and prevention of oak wilt disease

Oak wilt is a fungal disease transmitted by sap and bark-feeding beetles. These beetles are especially attracted to trees with open cuts, or wounds, from which sap bleeds. Fungal spores on or in the beetles are deposited in the sap while the beetles feed. The fungus grows out of the sap and into the tree, where it quickly spreads throughout the tree and into the roots. Symptoms of fungal infection generally consist of leaf discoloration (browning), leaf wilt, and the brown leaves falling off altogether. Infected trees can then spread the oak wilt fungus to neighboring trees through connections between tree roots. Prevention is essential because there is no permanent cure; once infected, a tree will die.

Preventing oak wilt disease

Fortunately, there are very effective ways to minimize the chances of your oak trees getting oak wilt:

- **Never prune oak trees from April 1 through October 31 — when beetles are active.**
- **Never allow individuals who work on your trees to climb them using boots with spikes or spurs that inflict sap-bleeding wounds in the tree.**

Ferguson Township Ordinances and Resolutions addressing oak wilt disease

Ordinance 1023 stipulates fines for anyone (resident, contractor, etc.) pruning oak trees without a permit during April 1 through October 31 or climbing oak trees with boot spurs or spikes at any time of the year except for the purpose of removing the entire tree.

Sometimes there is no way to prevent oak trees from being wounded, particularly when storms break off live branches. These naturally occurring wounds could attract sap beetles and result in an oak wilt fungal infection. Therefore, **Resolution 2016-32** includes helping private property owners shoulder the cost of abating an oak wilt infection on their property. Abatement includes removal of the infected tree, proper disposal (chipped then burned or composted) of the wood, treatment of all oak trees within a 100- to 150-foot radius of the infected tree, and possibly trenching around the infected tree to break root grafts through which the fungus can spread. Wood from an infected tree should never be moved to unaffected areas, even for firewood, so as to prevent beetles in the wood from dispersing the fungus into a new patch of trees.

Residents with oak trees on their properties are advised to be aware of the signs of oak wilt described above, especially leaves at the top of a tree turning brown and falling off altogether.

Please report any tree related concerns to any member of the Township Tree Commission. You'll find their contact information at the Ferguson Township website: <http://www.twp.ferguson.pa.us/Tree-Commission/> or to me.

You can also call me at (814) 238-4651 or lking@twp.ferguson.pa.us

Thank you for cooperating to help maintain the health of our urban forest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lance King', written over a horizontal line.

Lance King
Ferguson Township Arborist
ISA Certified Arborist Municipal Specialist PD-2097AM