



CITY OF MOUNT VERNON

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Tree Advisory Board (TAB)
MEETING MINUTES
November 04, 2021, 4pm

A REGULAR MEETING

of the Tree Advisory Board was held on Thursday, November 04, 2021 at 4:07pm via Zoom.

Attendance

Voting members: Eveline Feldmann, Chair

Marlene H. Wertheim, Vice Chair

Vincent DeVito

Henry May

Marlon Molina

Others:

Jennifer Mastrogiorgio

Janee Bedford

Tanesia Walters

Elias S. Gootzeit

A video record of the virtual meeting is being made by the Administrative Clerk to the Commissioner of DPW, Jennifer Mastrogiorgio, that will be posted online; written notes, by the Legislative Assistant to the City Council, Elias S. Gootzeit, to be reviewed by the TAB Chair and distributed to members for comments.

AGENDA

Approval of minutes of October 21, 2021: Minutes were passed unanimously. Marlene moved to approve them; Henry seconded. It was noted that the last meeting was hard to condense which explains the verbatim reporting. For the future the more abbreviated new template form will be followed.

Technology updates and workflow tasks

- Jen was thanked for posting the minutes on the City website. She was asked to include them also on the City calendar. There are 3 items that get posted – the next meeting announcement, the next agenda and the past minutes.
- Marlon stated that he got the okay for live streaming of the TAB meetings on the City Facebook page, as is standard procedure for other boards and commissions. He will have to be assigned as zoom “co-host” initially to link the live stream and then pass the “co-host” to Eveline, who will then be able to screen-share any documents.
- The question was raised as to where tree-related complaints will go. For now, they probably will continue to be handled as they are – via DPW, the City Clerk and CONNECT, with relevant tree matters referred to the TAB. Once the TAB meets with the DPW, Planning and Building Depts.’ Commissioners, a consistent protocol can be established.

Arbor Day Foundation submissions

According to Marlon, there has been no news. He left an inquiry via email.

On-going discussion about presentations to the Commissioners of DPW, Planning and Bldg. Depts.

- The Chair asked board members to review these 3 sheets – summary of the Tree Ordinance sections, listed responsibilities of the TAB, explanation of the Tree Fund – that will be submitted to the Commissioners to give them some preparation in advance of the meeting with the TAB. Marlon will facilitate his comments via email.
- We reflected on the purpose of this meeting. The Chair views it as an informal logistical learning session to clarify how the TAB and the 3 depts. can work together.
- What form should the meeting take? It can't be an internal meeting if there is a quorum; it would have to be open to the public. It can be part of a regular TAB meeting in which the Chair can call an executive session if something shouldn't be shared outside of those present. It can be a special (public) work session with guests.
- Questions to facilitate the exchange with the Commissioners for the TAB to review and discuss.
- Understanding the role of the TAB as an integral part of the Tree Ordinance. It is unclear as to when and how the TAB becomes engaged with an application. The Ordinance doesn't spell out the procedures. As this is discussed further, it may point to the need for amendments to the Ordinance. Are all applications to be reviewed by the TAB? To be considered a complete application, must it be so reviewed? Applications will now have to expand to include an additional sheet with a landscape plan and tree questions. Would that information be the determinant as to which application is directed to the TAB? If so, who would make that determination? The land use boards' check lists will have to reflect the addition of this new information.

New Business

An addition to our agenda will be Tree Updates

Announcements

- Vinny and Jen announced that the DPW is in the process of developing a Storm Preventative Maintenance Program that will relate to trees. Commissioner Bush offered to talk about it with the TAB at our next meeting.
- Length of TAB meetings: It was agreed that we would not go beyond an hour and a half for our Regular Meetings. However, the preference is to complete our business within an hour.
- Next meeting will be Thursday, November 18, at 4 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting concluded at 5:50 p.m.



Eveline Feldmann, Chair

12/02/2021

Date of Approval