

## Minutes of the Highland Tree Commission

February 8, 2011

Korte Recreation Center

**Members Present:** Kathryn Comish, Jeannie Korte, Darrell Newman, Bill Peck, Barbara Stallard, Mark Rosen, Patricia Steiner

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bill Peck at 4:00 pm. The meeting date was rescheduled from Feb. 1 to Feb. 8 due to bad weather.

**Guest:** Casey Petermeyer, interning with the City, observed the meeting.

### **New Business:**

Peripheral Route Design and Plantings - Mark had detailed drawings of the City's peripheral route laid out on the meeting room table, so the TC members took up this agenda item first. TC members were asked by the City Manager to recommend a design and plantings for along the new peripheral route. Members got an idea of the scale of this project from viewing the drawings. Design suggestions included planting groupings of trees and/or shrubs at intervals along the route. There should be several groupings of the same plants for continuity. Trees/shrubs should be low maintenance and should be different varieties. Planting different varieties together adds visual interest and eliminates the possibility of all of the plants dying at the same time due to a disease or insect infestation as sometimes occurs. Ginko, Bald Cypress, Oak and Viburnum were among those recommended. Flowering trees could be planted near residential areas where their beauty could be more readily appreciated. Avoid, however, planting fruiting trees near the bicycle path or sidewalks due to the mess they make when fruits drop. The peripheral route plantings will be discussed further at future meetings.

### **Old Business:**

Arboretum Planting Design – The detailed berm design Barb did last fall is in Ryan Hummert's possession. It was felt to be unnecessary to discuss further new designs until this one is implemented. Time and budgetary constraints are also a factor. Bill asked if Mark could provide a copy of the design for him to submit with the Green America grant application later in the spring. Mark will send one to Bill.

Kiosk Planting Recommendation – Weather conditions precluded a close inspection of the area around the new kiosk at the arboretum, but Barb was able to get a general idea of the area from the parking lot. She recommended planting Prairie Dropseed, a native, low growing grass. The only maintenance it would require is an annual mowing.

Future News Leader Articles – Members fielded several ideas for articles in the paper and after some discussion decided to do a series on "My Favorite Tree." Each member is to choose their favorite tree and write an article describing it and why. A photo of the tree and TC member would be included with the article. This series will serve the dual purpose of informing the public about outstanding trees in our area and increasing awareness of the TC and its members. A timeline for the series will be established at the next meeting. Barb stated that she will have material for additional future articles after attending the Gateway Green Industry Conference later this month.

Arbor Day Student Poem Guidelines – Sheila Gruender, who is preparing the guidelines, was unable to attend the meeting due to work conflicts. She will e-mail her suggestions to TC members in the near future.

Arbor Day Senior Invite – Pat Steiner plans to visit each senior living center in town and invite the residents to attend our Arbor Day Celebration. Barb will prepare a flyer for Pat to display at each place. Pat will conduct the visits in late March or early April.

### **New Business (continued):**

Arbor Day Celebration Planning – Our Arbor Day Celebration will be held on Thursday, April 28. Preliminary plans include extending a special invitation to students from school and senior citizens. The public will be invited via an article in the newspaper. Students would assist in a tree planting demonstration and/or berm plantings. A poetry contest will be held at the school in conjunction with Arbor Day. The winners will be asked to read their poems at the celebration. Snacks will be provided and informative materials distributed. TC members discussed placing a memorial bench at the arboretum and asked about cost. Mark estimated the cost to be about \$680 for a 6' bench and \$850 for an 8' bench. Mark will check our budget and we will discuss this further at the next meeting.

New Cemetery Entrance Plans – Two landscaping companies are working together on plans for the new entrance to the City cemetery. TC member Josh Hetley has agreed to serve as consultant.

Arbor Day Items for Library Display – Bill asked members to be on the lookout for any new materials he might use in the annual Arbor Day display for the library.

Tree Board University On-Line Training – Bill shared information on a website where TC members could sign up for free, on-line training. Dick Aten provided the information to Bill. The website is [www.treeboardu.org](http://www.treeboardu.org). Bill plans to sign up for a class.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm. The next meeting will be March 1, 2011 at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jeannie Korte