

Tree Conservation Commission Business Meeting Minutes

City of Atlanta, City Hall
Arborist Division, Suite 3800
November 13, 2019, 5pm

Commissioners present: Susanne Blam, Sarah Boles, Lawrence Richardson, Chet Tisdale, Elizabeth Ward

Staff present: Kathy Evans, TCC staff

Visitors: deLille Anthony, Theresa Cromeans, Bill Torpy

1. **Minutes.** Review business meeting minutes. Minutes approved by all present.
2. **Membership.** VOTE: All present voted to support appointment of Dina Franch for vacant position for “member of environmental organization.” (also voting affirmatively via email: Bruce Morton, Nabil Hammam, Marvin Lampkin, and Jack Cebe)
3. **Arborist Division update.**
 - Thorwald Leen now working as field arborist. Arborist Division has redistributed zip codes so each field arborist has less total territory to cover.
4. **Brief Project updates.**
 - **Tree Canopy analysis for 2018.** Imagery collected in Sept/Oct 2018 analysis ongoing.
 - **Water bill** paper inserts and online newsletters included notice that tree removal requires a permit (September, October, and pending for December). No cost. Commission recommends identifying other options for outreach to new homeowners (such as tax bill or government offices).
 - **Urban Forest Calendar 2020.** Available mid-December.
 - **Arbor Day 2020- Friday, February 21.** Council proclamation will be made and Tree Commission will explore lunch-and-learn format for presentation at City Hall on Arbor Day (possible topics: parks, watershed, green infrastructure).
5. **Urban Ecology Framework**
 - Updates from Susanne Blam who attended Technical Advisory Committee presentation 11/6/19 and Lawrence Richardson and Sarah Boles who attended public meeting 11/7/19.
 - Presentation was made by new sub-consultants, Urban Forestry Works.
 - Commissioners disappointed in lack of progress.
 - Concerned that outline presented did not include explicit protections for existing trees.
 - Concerned about lack of integration of recommendations from the public and Commission, which include establishing an ordinance to facilitate:
 - designing development around trees
 - requiring early review of development plans for sites with significant trees
 - coordinating tree protection efforts in all departments and processes within the City (urban design, variances, buffer encroachments, zoning, etc.).
 - Concerned about ongoing tree loss while the process continues.
 - VOTE: All present voted to support sending a letter to follow up the Tree Conservation Commission’s offer to meet with consultants/ordinance writing team to discuss recommendations for improving the ordinance. (Also voting affirmatively via email: Bruce Morton, Nabil Hammam, Marvin Lampkin, and Jack Cebe). Members would like to discuss TCC experiences with appeals and observations of how current ordinance is effective and how it needs improvement. S. Blam will draft letter.

6. **Hearing Policies and Procedures.** Remember to cite basis in ordinance for decisions, to extent possible; specify any documentation required for evaluating financial hardship; and state details of any replanting requirements (e.g. 2.5” caliper v. 15 gals; specific number v. as space allows, per arborist).
7. **Appeals.** Time provided for Commissioners to review appeal materials individually.
8. **Old Business.**
 - TCC Work Session – will be scheduled for January or February.
 - Don’t forget to submit questions to Law Department about the ordinance or any requests for clarification.
9. **New Business.**
 - **One hearing** this month: This evening, Wednesday, November 13, 6:30p.
 - **Next month’s** hearing and Business Meeting is early for holidays: **December 11, 6:30p.**