

CCV Arbor Committee
Minutes 12/15/09
At 4020 Everett Street

The meeting convened at 7:50 pm. Rachel Ritvo, Chair, Jule Crider, Steve Fox and Marty White were present.

Absent: Marcia Keppel, Celeste Park, Jack White and Bonny Cochran.

The minutes from the 11/16/09 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Database: Jule reported that she has turned her planting data in to Jana Coe for entry in the database. Rachel reported that Phil Normandy had agreed with her description of the reports from a database as being in a four box matrix: detailed/aggregate by summary/activity. Phil made a point of reminding her that there can be more than one report per box. Rachel circulated to the committee her first stab at a list of desirable reports titled "What do we want from Database reports?" Phil had not responded to being cc'd on this draft.

The committee wondered if only CPJ can actually print reports. When Steve Jones demonstrated the database at the meeting at Lulu Gonella's early in the year it was clear that anyone familiar with the database could play with data on the town's computer but could not delete or enter new data. The printing of reports was not discussed. It is likely with a proprietary database that only CPJ can print reports and there will be a charge for reports. Action Item: Rachel will check with Jana and or Lulu about printing.

The committee decided to review Rachel's draft with an eye to keeping the reports as limited as possible while gaining the benefit of the already sizeable investment in the database. Regarding the Directory of Trees, the full printout and maps, the committee wondered if it contained the trees that have been removed and the date of removal. The committee has not received a copy of the latest printout and so could not answer this question. Further there was discussion of whether it was valuable to have pruning information. How troublesome would it be to have Tom Laws report his work on existing trees by tree number and have that entered in the database so we would know which trees had been worked on. This information could be useful for charting costs and for monitoring troubled trees.

Looking at Rachel's proposed reports for Assessment of Diversity reports Marty suggested we conceive of these as an Aging Report. Down one side of the chart would be the species and under species the cultivars where appropriate. Columns going across would be age in decade increments based on caliper size with guidance from Phil Normandy in converting caliper size to age for each species (see attachment). How often does the caliper size get updated? Every five years or longer? Going forward, the year of planting could be included in the database. The totals would give us a census for each specie and cultivar and for trees over all by age as well as the total number of trees. This report would give the diversity for the entire stand of ROW trees.

The committee wondered if we needed a breakdown by street or block. Should the blocks have been numbered so that the data could be searched by block? The committee felt that although we think of the Master Plan block by block we could not think of a need for reporting on the trees block by block.

Committee members noted that there isn't any way to maintain a "Deferred Vacancies" list in the database and that we will have to do this separately. It was agreed that the town is nearly fully planted and that replacing take downs is a higher priority than finding new planting sites. On the other hand the committee noted that some homeowners have declined trees where the design is disrupted by their refusal to have a tree. In those cases it would be desirable to be alert and plant the appropriate tree when ownership changes.

The committee agreed that in addition to these two reports (discussed above) it would be helpful to have a detailed report of the work done each year. Finally, a report summarizing the plantings and take downs per year over a three to five year period would be helpful in giving an overview of trends.

County and State ROW: Steve Fox reported that he had contacted Arlene Bruhn of the Battery Lane neighborhood regarding working with the state and county for tree plantings on Summit, Saul and Connecticut Ave. Ms. Bruhn outlined for Steve the process that should have been followed if a resident desired to remove a ROW tree from Connecticut Ave. and the reporting of violations to the State Forester. Rachel shared a list of County approved trees for the ROW that she had obtained from the County web site. No further actions were planned at this time

Contacting Other Town's: Marty reported that she had spoken with Matt Nau of Garrett Park. He says they have fallen behind in maintaining their database. They make semiannual walk-throughs to determine what their needs are. Although they once had a master plan they are not currently following it. Planting decisions are made in favor of "tall trees." They avoid Norway Maple because it is invasive. The committee discussed that an invasive plant species is an exotic species that self-sows or spreads in such a way that it chokes out native plants. Most insects and many birds are specific to native plants and so the fauna is lost when the flora is lost. Matt Nau also mentioned that Garrett Park was noticing that many of its trees that were 50 years old were beginning to die off.

Public Education: The committee determined that Arbor Day for Maryland is in early April. No one on the committee felt that we had a public education project suitable for this Arbor Day. No further public education efforts are in the works prior to the next Town Picnic. Once we have the species and cultivar data from the database we can begin to collect information on the cultivars that could be placed on the CCV web site.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, February 6, 2009 at 10:30 am if it is possible to borrow the Town computer and attempt to test out report formats. However, if this is not feasible, Rachel will call a meeting after clarifying with Lulu and Jana how we go forward to develop a set of reports.

Attachment

Draft proposal of reports from CCV ROW Database (12/19/2009) from Arbor Committee

1. DIRECTORY OF TREES:

The complete printout of the database with the accompanying maps.

Schedule: Print out twice per year when CPJ updates the computer. (Town Manager, Council Person for Trees, Consulting Arborist, Maintenance Arborist, Chair of the Arbor Committee, Alan Beal (What is his title?) 6 copies)

Use: For all members of the ROW tree team to be able to communicate about specific trees for planning, maintenance or removal purposes or to respond to queries from town residents.

Cost: ?

2. AGING REPORT:

A species (and where appropriate sub totaled by cultivar) by age chart.

Species & cultivar	Under 10 yrs. (by cal.)	10-19 yrs. (by cal.)	20-29 yrs. (by cal.)	30-39 yrs. (by cal.)	40-49 yrs. (by cal.)	50-59 yrs. (by cal.)	60-69 yrs. (by cal.)	70-80 yrs. (by cal.)	Totals
Totals									

Questions for Phil:

How many age divisions do we need?

What caliper size is comparable to what age?

How greatly does that vary by species?

Schedule: Could be either once or twice per year. (ROW Tree Team: 6 copies, Council: 5 copies Total: 11-12)

Use: This chart will allow us to answer questions about the diversity of our town ROW trees and about the age. The age question will let us make estimates about the rate of removals. The diversity will let us answer resident concerns that not every block has diversity by demonstrating that the town has adequate diversity overall. If we follow the Master Plan the diversity should not diminish nor is it likely to increase but this chart will allow us to monitor that. If a particular problem is arising with one of our species or cultivars we will be able to see how many trees are vulnerable.

Cost: ?

3. ACTIVITY REPORT:

This report will list by street address and tree number the prunings, take downs, plantings and notes of any tree worked upon in the reporting period.

Schedule: Twice yearly for ROW Tree Team (6 copies)

Use: Allows quick review of what was done where.

Cost: ?

4. ACTIVITY SUMMARY:

This report will total prunings, take downs and plantings by fall and spring for the present year and the past 3 to 5 years.

Schedule: Once or twice per year. Copies for Tree Team and Council , 12 copies

Use: Allows quick review of pace of plantings and takedowns. Will help monitor “no net loss” policy. Will assist in budget planning.

Cost: ?

Random questions?

1. How often do we update caliper measures? May not need to if we can estimate tree age based on current caliper and enter that into the database now. That would save work in the future, both in terms of measuring caliper and data entry.
2. Do we want any cost data in the data base? The committee says yes. One of the purposes of the database is for cost projection, which would include not only tree replacement, but maintenance costs. It would allow us to choose cultivars based on both appropriateness to the overall plan and on maintenance costs in the future.
3. Do we want to record the nursery from which the tree was purchased? Excellent idea. Would help with quality control and cost effectiveness monitoring
4. Do we currently record pruning? Do we want to? Might limit town liability for fallen branches if we can show that the tree was properly pruned and maintained
5. Are we recording year planted? And year removed? Would be helpful going forward for cost projection and identification of “problem” cultivars or problem locations.