

**DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**
Monday, August 14, 2017
Minutes of Meeting

Vice Mayor Reiner called the meeting of the Community Development Committee to order at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Committee members present: Vice Mayor Reiner, Ms. Alutto, Ms. Amorose Groomes.

Staff members present: Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Readler, Ms. Husak, Mr. Krawetzki, Mr. Hiatt, Mr. Martin and Ms. Richison.

Consent Agenda

- Approval of March 13, 2017 Community Development Committee Minutes

Vice Mayor Reiner moved approval of the minutes of the March 13, 2017 meeting.

Ms. Amorose Groomes seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Mayor Reiner stated that because one of the applicants is present, the Beautify Your Neighborhood (BYN) grants would be moved to the front of the agenda.

Review of 2017 Applications for Beautify Your Neighborhood Grants

Ms. Husak stated that the approved 2017 budget for BYN grants is \$32,000. In the spring, six grant applications were received, which totaled \$24,175. Council approved those grants in March 2017. Following those grant awards, a small amount of money remained in the BYN Grant Fund. Two additional grant applications were received for the fall BYN grant projects. Because those applications were for relatively small amounts, they are being considered for this grant cycle, as well.

Shannon Village

The request is for \$2,435 to clean up the entry features. The proposed project would enhance the entrances of Shannon Village at the corners of Gullway Bay Drive and Valley Down Road along Tara Hill Drive. Residents have worked during the spring months to clear portions of these areas, and the Association has been working with staff on the selection of appropriate plant materials for the entrances. Staff has no issues with the proposal and believes the proposed project will enhance the entry area, street and the neighborhood.

Staff recommends approval.

Ms. Alutto moved to approve the grant request for recommendation to Council.

Ms. Amorose Groomes seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Ms. Alutto, yes; Vice Mayor Reiner, yes; Ms. Amorose Groomes, yes.

Villas at Glenealy

Ms. Husak stated that the homeowners association (HOA) request is for \$3,500. The intent of this project is the redesign and replanting of the Glenealy entryway to reflect a low-maintenance, "prairie" theme at the intersection of Avery Road and Innovation Drive. Staff has worked with the applicant and has no issue with the proposal, which will address maintenance and add character to

the entryway. The request is smaller than the maximum amount of funding for which the HOA is eligible. Staff recommends approval.

She noted that Gerald English, a representative of the HOA, is present and can respond to questions. Mr. English's son is a landscape architect, who has worked on many projects within this City.

Gerald English, 6207 Donagan Way, stated that the HOA has been working with the Planning division on this project for some period of time. Originally, theirs was an Epcon community, and the developer installed fast growing entryway plantings. Over the years, that entrance feature has outgrown itself and is now too large. The new project will reduce its size by width and length and will install plants that are consistent with a prairie theme.

Vice Mayor Reiner thanked Mr. English, his son and all the residents who have made efforts to beautify their communities.

Mr. English complimented City staff, with whom they have enjoyed working.

Ms. Alutto moved to approve the grant request for recommendation to Council.

Ms. Amorose Groomes seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Vice Mayor Reiner, yes; Ms. Amorose Groomes, yes; Ms. Alutto, yes.

Ms. Husak stated that these grant recommendations, if approved by Council, will expend all but \$1,800 of the 2017 BYN Grant Funds. The next deadline will be the second Friday in January of 2018, assuming that Council will approve funds for 2018 BYN grants in the operating budget. In 2017, that total amount was \$32,000.

Vice Mayor Reiner noted that, for a minor amount of funds, many great improvements to the neighborhoods have been realized. This is partially due to the grant structure, which encourages neighborhood interest and participation.

Tree Replacement/Preservation Policy

Ms. Husak stated that for this discussion, the Committee has been provided the same materials as were provided to Council in June when this policy was referred to the Committee. Present for this discussion are the following staff: Shawn Krawetzki, Landscape Architect, Parks; and Zoning Inspectors Michael Hiatt and Brian Martin. The intent is that the Committee determines the direction of this discussion. As was noted at the June Council meeting discussion, staff prefers to know Council's preferred direction for this policy before proceeding further. There are many ways in which to address this issue. A couple of discussion points are outlined to frame the discussion.

Vice Mayor Reiner stated that staff has provided a copy of the proposed policy. Because Council members have read that proposal, perhaps it would be helpful to obtain Council members' feedback on that draft policy.

Ms. Amorose Groomes agreed.

Ms. Alutto stated that at the previous discussion, a side-by-side comparison of the old versus the new/proposed was provided.

Ms. Husak responded that the comparison is in the table that was provided within these materials.

Mr. Reiner stated that under *I. Intent*, he would suggest adding a last line, such as, "Applicants are encouraged to follow conservation design principles to preserve the trees and add to the creativity of the future development." Although initially, there is satisfaction with the layout of the development, in many cases, the applicant later requests a tree waiver. Instead, land planners or landscape architects also need to look at the tree canopy and group the houses away from the tree canopies and preserve them. It is economically less expensive for developers to do conservation design. He would like to encourage that. If there is a dense forest within the project, the homes should be clustered away from them.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that the intent of Dublin's tree waiver policy is to place such a high value on trees that it becomes desirable and beneficial to everyone to preserve them. The tree waiver policy also provides an avenue for dealing with situations in which that is not possible.

Mr. Reiner stated that the grid system of layout in a housing development is the most expensive system. He recalled having a conversation with developers in 1998-99 that being creative with the land will save money in the end.

Ms. Amorose Groomes reiterated that the intent of the policy is to promote the preservation of the existing wood. The tree waiver policy provides relief when it is not possible to preserve.

Ms. Husak suggested that the more tree preservation a developer does, the more eligible he would become for a waiver for the remainder of the project.

Ms. Alutto agreed, but added that this has to occur at the beginning of the process in the design phase and not at the end.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that is the issue with the process. She suggested that the process at the outset should be that the tree waiver policy is really a preservation tool, and secondly, it is a waiver when preservation is not possible.

Ms. Husak stated that they do tend to see waivers requested at the final stage when the layout is already vetted versus at the outset.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that Planning staff should give the tree waiver policy to the developer early in the process and state that if they would like access to this waiver tool, then the criteria for preservation must be met.

Mr. Reiner asked Ms. Husak to explain the intent to the rest of the Planning staff who are not present for the meeting tonight.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated regarding the *Eligibility* section that she was hesitant about such prescriptive language of 100 trees or 1,000 trees per acre; trees are almost never dispersed uniformly. One of the factors she appreciated about the Autumn Rose application was the preservation of the whole was so much more meaningful than if the developer would have preserved that same number of trees but spread it out across the property.

Ms. Husak agreed and stated that the developer benefited from the trees being clustered in that manner, as opposed to Riviera that had trees scattered throughout the site.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that you see that played out in the community over and over when people plan in isolation. When you can retain a tree in a community, in its context, that is far more beneficial. She doesn't necessarily support the 100 trees or the 1,000 trees -- she would prefer more clustering of naturalized high treed areas rather than assigning a number to it. Mr. Reiner and Ms. Alutto agreed.

Ms. Alutto stated that it is apparent -- from an aesthetics perspective -- what was done when one sees a large tree on a piece of property with nothing else around it.

Ms. Husak stated that 24 inches in caliper is currently the landmark tree designation, but perhaps certain species can be identified at a higher value.

Ms. Amorose Groomes suggested that, in terms of minimum requirements, instead of 100 or 1,000, the policy should speak to the importance of saving naturalized areas versus tree quantity.

Ms. Alutto clarified that the landmark designation trees are reviewed anyway, but then one should look more closely and determine whether or not it is a stand-alone tree or should it be in its natural setting with other things around it.

Mr. Reiner stated that the developers do not likely read the tree preservation policy. Instead, they just plot the land. He suggested that the Planning staff provide this policy to them up front and encourage a creative approach to placement of buildings with sensitivity to trees.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that this should be incorporated into the revised intent statement.

Ms. Husak stated that staff sometimes struggles with the timing aspect. With Autumn Rose, staff was aware of the issue early on. Having this considered earlier in the process and part of the layout will benefit staff as well as this moves forward through the process.

Mr. Reiner reiterated that early input of information with conservation design will help developers, too, as this is not how they typically run their business. This allows for them to be more creative in their design.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated in regard to the second point under *Eligibility*, she supports the prioritization of trees because they are not all created equal. She does not yet know if 50% is the appropriate number, and it will require experience with a few applications using this tool to find out. She suggested that staff could test this by running a few examples from previous applications.

Mr. Krawetzki stated that having the tree survey done early in the development process will help to inform them on what areas should be protected and how many trees they may have to remove for a proposed development.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she supports number three in the criteria -- not removing a tree without a tree removal permit. This reflects the value and respect Dublin has for its trees.

Mr. Reiner inquired about the language in Section 3 of *Waiver Submittal Requirements*, where it states a Certified Arborist shall be used to complete the tree survey. Perhaps it should be expanded to include a Horticulturalist or registered Landscape Architect.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she does not agree. Mr. Reiner as a Landscape Architect is very knowledgeable; but in her opinion, by and large, landscape architects are not known for their vast knowledge of tree genus, species, and cultivars.

Mr. Reiner stated that years ago, when the City initiated the landscape ordinances, developers began engaging landscape architects and the City began benefitting from their creativity.

Ms. Amorose Groomes responded that if Mr. Reiner wants Landscape Architects on this list, they can be added to the list.

Ms. Husak stated that staff does ask that certified arborists survey heavily wooded sites, but it is not codified. Staff would prefer this be a requirement.

Ms. Amorose Groomes noted that Certified Arborists are hard to find and it would help costs to expand the pool.

Ms. Husak stated that there some certified arborists on staff.

Ms. Alutto suggested that the policy can include these three options and offer flexibility depending on the situation.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that in the *Development Plan* section, she likes the fact that utilities are listed and how they can impact trees. She suggested having language added that would allow for topography changes.

Mr. Reiner stated that if the tree line isn't disturbed and developers work around the trees, there should be less stress on the storm water system. By preserving the trees, the site is preserved and, hopefully, the topsoil with it.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she is not sure how that solution can be codified. In large scale development, they limit the height on stacking soil and it cannot be removed from the site. The City could require all stored soils to be no more than six foot high on site and prohibit harvesting the topsoil. These are more development restrictions, however, and not really related to the tree waiver policy.

Regarding the *Waiver Request Letter*, Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she would like a bullet point added requesting the applicant demonstrate how they have met the intent of tree preservation.

She noted that that percentages are difficult to determine when assessing health ratings of a tree. For example, it depends on which 10% of the tree is dead. She suggested keeping numbers consistent throughout the policy.

Ms. Amorose Groomes questioned including pear trees on the priority three list for street trees, acknowledging that there are some species of pear trees that make beautiful street trees. She stated she had read an article recently about the splicing of DNA for ash trees to make them Emerald Ash Borer resistant. She stated that the pear is the only questionable tree listed in this section.

Mr. Reiner agreed, adding that there are nice hybridized introductions.

Mr. Reiner initiated discussion regarding the 24 inches in caliper for landmark trees and whether or not that is too large.

Ms. Husak stated that a landmark tree is defined in the zoning code as 24 inches in caliper or larger. This could be looked at separately.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that the American Nursery Standards state that caliper defines age of the tree. Since the City is looking for historic rather than just large trees, perhaps adding language defining a situation where any tree deemed to have been in its present location for a period of time would be preferable than just inches.

Ms. Amorose Groomes noted she would like to clean up the language and make it more consistent -- such as the use of diameter, DBH, etc. The addition of a definitions page would also be helpful.

In response to Ms. Husak, Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that the term "family" was used before, genus is typically the same thing as family. Family refers to more common names. She suggested using with Latin names because there is less likelihood for confusion. Similarly, when priority three is discussed, it would be preferable to use the Latin name.

Mr. Reiner inquired whether staff requires safety measures around trees during construction. Ms. Husak stated there is a tree preservation ordinance, but it lacks preservation requirements. Mr. Krawetzki stated that there is also no incentive for preservation in the ordinance.

Ms. Husak stated that staff would like to bring forward a tree waiver policy for adoption. The next step would be to review the tree preservation ordinance.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that it would be more similar to LEED certification, meaning it is the landscape equivalent to green building.

Ms. Alutto stated it speaks to the bottom line for the developer and they are more inclined to follow something that is related to dollars and cents.

Ms. Husak stated that staff also hopes to address the replacement fee. It is currently cheaper to replace trees than pay the fee.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that the replacement fee should be at least \$125.

Ms. Husak stated that when the fee schedule comes before Council, that fee will be included and can be best addressed at that time.

Ms. Amorose Groomes requested staff begin monitoring the market rate for trees being planted around the city.

Mr. Reiner stated it is likely at least between \$120-130 per caliper inch.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated, regarding *Replacement Requirements*, that she has a big concern regarding diversity within a development. Emerald Parkway looks like a “garage sale,” as it appears there is no coordination. Diversity has to occur not on a micro scale, but on a macro scale.

Mr. Reiner agreed. If an entire street is planed with the same tree, it unifies the architecture. Ms. Amorose Groomes reiterated that she supports diversity, but on a macro scale and not micro.

Ms. Alutto stated that this section should be broader and based on the surrounding area.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that a look to nature is the best indicator of what belongs.

Ms. Salay stated that when their neighborhood was built, each lot received an ash tree, and then the Emerald Ash Borer came along. Perhaps there is a happy medium to establish a cadence of trees, but not necessarily the same tree.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she supports that only 10% can be of a genus.

Mr. Reiner stated that the Ash Tree is the toughest American tree in terms of survival/thriving. Developers will take the cheapest and shortest route, and that is how the Emerald Ash Borer impacted citywide tree plantings.

Regarding tree size at planting, Mr. Reiner recommended that a priority one shall be replaced with a 1.5-inch caliper tree. He stated in the nursery industry this would be a potted tree. He believes it should be a two-inch minimum.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that a 1.5-inch caliper crabapple would be okay because it could withstand the winds, etc., but a 1.5 inch walnut tree will need to be staked for years. She suggested that only ornamental trees could be a minimum of 1.5-inch, but the hardwoods would need to be a minimum of two inches in caliper.

Mr. Reiner stated that it needs to be a percentile security issue or the developer will take the cheapest option.

Ms. Amorose Groomes suggested precluding container trees altogether.

Mr. Reiner expressed interest in this concept.

Mr. Krawetzki stated the suggestions should be acceptable.

Mr. Reiner asked about priority two trees.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that all trees should be balled and burlapped and as for size, a 1.5-inch ornamental tree is fine, but a canopy or shade tree should be a minimum of two inches in caliper. She also stated she appreciated the evergreen measurements and that all container trees should be precluded.

Mr. Reiner stated that the Avery-Muirfield Drive landscape was meant to screen the backs of the homes, but now it has aged and is in need of replacement. He suggested creating earth berms with trees that wouldn't need to be replaced and could provide a buffer.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she wants to begin exploring CIP funding for landscape enhancements along the City's existing roadway network.

Ms. Husak stated that staff has already been in contact with some of the Muirfield Drive property owners regarding the landscaping.

Ms. Husak thanked the Committee for their feedback. Staff will bring back the draft policy to the Committee with the suggestions incorporated.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

Clerk of Council