

Winterville Tree Commission

Thurs., March 21, 2024, 7:00 PM
at the Pittard Park Pavilion

Meeting Minutes

Present: Tina Mills (Co-Chair), Brian Herndon (Co-Chair), Brian Binder (Secretary), Mateo Fennell, Caroline Riggins
Non-Voting Members: Andē Burke (advisory), Lea Clark (ex-officio)

Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the Nov. 9, 2023 meeting were approved.

The minutes for the Jan. 11, 2024 meeting were approved, with minor corrections.

New Member

Welcome to our newest member, Caroline Riggins. Caroline was appointed to the Tree Commission at the Feb. 13, 2024 City Council Meeting. We look forward to working together!

Arborist Report

Susan couldn't attend the meeting. Tina reported that Susan had helped advise ongoing work on the native plant garden in the 'cut,' and had attempted to get our Tree City of the World application in, but was foiled by technical difficulties.

P & Z Forms including Tree Canopy Plan requirement

The forms have now been changed to include Tree Ordinance requirements!

Tree Give-Away Project Final Report

We ended up distributing 101 trees (Red Maple, Nuttall Oak, Dogwood, and Holly) to 25 people in the City – a great success!

The final report is due April 15. ► Brian B. will prepare this.

Landmark & Champion Tree Update

Landmark trees are defined in our Tree Ordinance. One may be designated by the Tree Commission (at the request of the tree owner) "as a community landmark due to its species, size, configuration, historical significance or other notable characteristic."

In contrast, Champion Trees are designated at the county level, and are based on a tree size formula.

Lea & Mateo measured the large Water Oak at Greg and Joan Derda's place on Peach Tree. It measured 171" circumference / 99' crown spread / 80' height, for a score of 276. This may well be the county champion (the previous Water Oak champ is no longer standing).

There was general agreement that this tree should be designated as a Winterville Landmark Tree (our first!).

Lea pointed out that landmark status doesn't give a tree on developed, private property any special protection. But it does help raise awareness and give the property owner a reason to care for and preserve the tree.

Tree City USA / Tree City of the World

Lea explained that TC-USA sets a minimum standard for tree engagement, while the TC-USA Growth Award sets a somewhat higher standard, and TC of the World a higher standard still. Nevertheless, Winterville easily meets all these standards. We have already been awarded TC-USA for this year. Unfortunately, there were technical difficulties that prevented Susan from completing our application for TC of the World. Lea assured us that we can get back on that horse next year.

Fall Tree Sale

We agreed that we'll go ahead with this, figuring orders would be due in Aug, for delivery in October. Three-gallon trees like we had for the Give-Away would be good.

► We'll need to plan at our next meeting, and be sure to get this into the next issue of the Gazette.

Replacement Cost for Commemorative Trees

As a reminder, Tom suggested that we establish costs before someone runs into or otherwise damages a tree. ► We're still hoping Susan can come up with something.

Arbor Day Celebration

Winterville's Arbor Day is Feb. 20 (both the Mayor's and Tina's birthday!). This year, the celebration was at the Winterville Elementary School. The Mayor read a proclamation (required for TC-USA), and he and the Principal planted a Dogwood.

Commemorative Tree Program

We had 16 trees ordered this year. Tina and Susan purchased a selection of local species from Heartland Farms, including Beech, Black Gum, Red Maple, Winged Elm, Overcup Oak, and Swamp White Oak. Tom picked them up and ended up planting them. Included were an Overcup Oak for Holly and another for Bob & Averil, the three founding members of the Winterville Tree Commission. ► Tina will happily accept contributions toward these two trees.

The two Chinese Pistache that were planted on the Shover's property next to the FFT were replaced with two Red Maples, which was the species they had originally requested.

Public space for more Commemorative Trees is getting very scarce. There was some discussion about possible new locations, none very promising.

The policy regarding Commemorative Trees on private was never finalized. ► Brian B. will get the subcommittee back together to move this forward. [That subcommittee is: Brian B., Andē, and Susan.]

Web & Facebook Pages

Not discussed.

Commemorative Tree Work Day

It was agreed that weeding and mulching Commemorative Trees prior to the Marigold Festival was a good idea. There was also general support for linking this to the Marigold Market, and getting kids involved. Mateo has a source for mulch.

► We set **Sat. April 27** as the date, probably in the early afternoon after the market closes. We'll need to plan the details over email in the coming weeks.

Co-Chair Model for the Commission

Tina's hands are very full right now, so she and Brian H. proposed that they would share Tree Commission work as co-Chairs. There was general agreement that this was worth trying. Depending on how it works, we can revisit as necessary.

► Tina and Brian H. will act as Tree Commission co-Chairs.

Marigold Festival

The festival is on May 11 this year. Lea will have a GFC table, which she says we are welcome to share.

► We will help Lea staff that table [and presumably have some Tree Comm-related materials].

Gazette Article

The deadline for the next issue is Fri., 3/22. ► Andē agreed to deal with this.

Our next regular meeting is

Thurs. May 9, 2024 at 7:00 PM, at the Pittard Park Pavilion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.