

## Winterville Tree Commission

Thurs., Jul. 13, 2023, 7:00 PM  
in the Pittard Park Pavilion

### Meeting Minutes

**Present:** Tina Mills (Chairperson), Brian Binder (Secretary), Brian Herndon, Dorset Trapnell  
Non-Voting Members: Bob Bonsall (advisory), Ande Burke (advisory), Lea Clark (ex-officio), Susan Russell (ex-officio)

#### Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the Apr. 13, 2023 meeting were approved.

#### Arborist Report

Susan, Tina, & Brian B. did a 'driving tour' of Winterville to scope out areas that might be appropriate for Commemorative Trees, and to identify tree issues that should be dealt with.

There are some trees along Main St. that are in need of pruning. ► Susan will speak to Tom about a course of action.

A resident had reported that two trees behind his property on Harris Ln. (on City property, near the southeast perimeter of the disc golf field) were in bad shape and that he would be willing to remove them. The trees in question are Leyland Cypress; one is in decline and the other very badly infested with poison ivy. ► Susan recommends that the City take care of these (rather than the resident); she has recommendations for replacements.

The cemetery may offer some Commemorative Tree opportunities, but we have to establish who it's owned and operated by, and exactly where planting would be appropriate.

Susan and Tina are going to meet with the Planning & Zoning Commission at their next (Aug 7) meeting. They will talk about the Tree Canopy results, and hopefully move toward establishing a working relationship between the Tree Commission and P&Z.

#### Commemorative Tree Program

Installation of pre-numbered aluminum tags hasn't advanced since our last meeting. ► Brian B. will try to move this forward, and be in touch by email as necessary.

The plaque order for trees planted last winter was dealt with by Brian B. They have been printed and delivered to Tom. To date about half of them have been installed.

Per our discussion at the April meeting, the Commemorative Tree order form has been changed to reflect the new \$200 price. New trees will be restricted to native species.

#### Commemorative Trees on Private Property

We agreed to form a sub-committee to come up with a draft document to address this issue, based on the versions that Susan and Lea provided previously. ► Brian B., Ande, and Susan volunteered to serve. The goal is to have a draft ready for consideration at our next (9/21) meeting.

## Tree Canopy Workshop

At the June 21 workshop, Matt Lee (Green Infrastructure Center) reported our tree canopy cover at 50%, which is slightly lower than what Lea had come up with last year (55%). This is likely due to methodological differences. Participants agreed that going forward, a reasonable goal for Winterville is no net loss of tree canopy. The satellite imagery Matt presented could be used to identify commercial properties that have fallen out of compliance with the Tree Ordinance. There was discussion about developing strategies to encourage these properties to come back into compliance, perhaps in concert with P&Z. However, there was some confusion about whether the canopy requirements in the ordinance apply to existing (pre-ordinance) commercial properties – this needs to be clarified.

Matt has asked that we provide photos for him to use in the final report. We agreed that ► by 7/28/23 everyone should try to take 5 or so pictures and upload them to a folder that Brian B. will establish. This will allow us to provide them to Matt at the final workshop (which will presumably be scheduled for early Aug). [Here's the link to that folder: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1TijDV1xAfALdbbGHwYBQ\\_aq7eUfgMBAAd?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1TijDV1xAfALdbbGHwYBQ_aq7eUfgMBAAd?usp=sharing)]. [Matt's guidelines for the sort of pictures that would be appropriate can be found there as well.]

Susan pointed out that having access to GIS data regarding trees, utilities, waterways, etc. would be an excellent resource for planning and would complement the satellite imagery we now have. The difficulty of accessing tree inventory data, and the difficulty (impossibility?) of getting different inventories into the same database were discussed. ► Mateo (in his position as ACC Community Forestry Coordinator) may be able to help us access the other GIS layers.

## Industrial Development on Spring Valley Rd.

There are no updates, but we want to keep aware of this. Again, Mateo may be a good source of information.

## Joint meeting with the Jefferson City Tree Council

We are still interested in doing this. They haven't met in a while, but Susan will meet with them later this month, and will try to get some tentative dates.

## Tree Sale / Give-Away?

We've discussed organizing a tree sale along the lines of what Jefferson does. We agreed that it would make sense to talk to the ACC Tree Council about collaborating on this. Having the county involved might open the door to discussing stormwater rate reductions.

► Those who know members of the ACC Council should talk to them about this. ► Is this another issue Mateo might help with?

Alternatively, Lea informed us about a funding opportunity for tree give-away programs, being administered by the GFC [the "Georgia ReLeaf" Program: <https://gatreecouncil.org/what-we-do/georgia-releaf.html>]. This is federal money, aimed mostly at disadvantaged communities, which Winterville is not. Nevertheless, we would be eligible if the City could provide a 50% match. Note that the match can include volunteer hours, etc. The application deadline is Aug 31. There will be a webinar on Tues July 25 at 10:00 about applying to the program. ► It would be worth a few of us going to this in order to see if we want to try for this grant. [Registration for the webinar: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5855134046184145495>]

### Web Page

► Brian B. will get with Melissa Metzger about updating our web page. Hopefully one of the pictures submit for the Canopy Report (see above) can replace the current picture of tree - climbers.

### Meeting Schedule

Our meeting schedule was changed to bi-monthly (rather than quarterly) by unanimous vote.

► Meetings will be held in Jan, March, May, July, Sept, and Nov.

### Upcoming Meetings / Events

1) Charter Day – Sat. Aug 12 4:00-6:00 PM. ► Tina & Susan will be there, and others are encouraged to attend. This is a good opportunity to tell folks who we are, and hopefully recruit new members!

2) Friends of the Winterville Firefly Trail work day for ‘the cut.’ Bruce Johnson has invited the Tree Commission to participate, date TBD. There is an FWFFT meeting July 27 that Bob will be at. He encourages other Tree Comm members to attend.

3) Tree-Product Potluck. We agreed to set the date to Sun Oct 22 at 1:00 PM. It was fun last year, but very few non-Tree Comm members attended. This year we can start earlier to get the word out: Gazette, emailing an/or e-viting Commemorative Tree donors, etc.

4) MLK Day 2024 – just a reminder that we should start planning this later this year.

### William Strong Property

Brian H. volunteered to put together a proposal for purchasing / improving the property, along with the adjacent parcel that the City already owns. The property is about 1 acre, and has an assessed value of \$33K. There are SPLOST funds that could be used for the purchase.

► Brian H. will try to have a draft ready for us to discuss at our next (9/21) meeting.

### Commission Chairperson

Tina is planning to run for one of the two City Council seats that are going to be vacant. This is good for the City, but bad for the Tree Commission -- it means that someone else has to serve as our chairperson. ► Members are urged to consider stepping up to fill Tina's substantial shoes.

### Commemorative Tree for Holly

Founding member Holly Campbell deserves to be honored with a tree! ► Lea will try to figure out what species she would like (Holly?).

### Replacement Cost for Commemorative Trees

Tom Doonan suggested that we should establish a schedule of costs in case someone runs over or otherwise damages a Commemorative Tree. No one was sure how to approach this. It seems likely that insurance companies have a way of doing this. Perhaps Susan can advise us?

**Our next regular meeting** is Thurs. Sept 21, 2023 at 7:00 PM, at the Pittard Park Pavilion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.