

Winterville Tree Commission
Friday, December 28, 2018
Meeting Minutes
Averil and Bob Bonsall's Residence

Present: Holly Campbell, Bob Bonsall, Averil Bonsall, Roger Cauthen, Seth Hawkins

Firefly Trail update (Roger)

- There is a 25 foot right-of-way along the Firefly Trail. Most of the Winterville section is already on the right-of-way.
- Trees – not a lot of latitude as to what we can do with the trees within the right-of-way.
- Beyond the right-of-way – We can manage the trees – removing and replanting to increase the tree canopy – if using public property and with permission on private property.
- Currently, the best trees are flagged; best specimens should be saved.
- The scrawny water oaks and overcrowded trees should be removed, and better trees should be planted in their place.
- Clearing of undergrowth and thinning of trees in the cut at the north end of Georgia Avenue will inevitably remove some screening for houses in the area. The screening could be restored by selective replanting of trees and understory shrubs.
- Winterville has no budget for new trees. Could we request SPLOST funds or Firefly Organization funds?
- The thought is to use 1 gallon trees, plant on natural slope areas, and keep them maintained.
- Preservation of trees around the cut could provide a charming gateway to the downtown area.
- Grubbing up trees affects soil conditions, damages root systems, and causes shocking visual effects. Inevitably the construction of the trail will cause some root damage.
- At the Five Points intersection, the Trail follows the contour of the new road very closely; some of the adjacent property along Main Street has not been developed, but is privately owned.
- The Athens Road area needs to be cleared of undergrowth (privet etc.) to ensure that visibility is good enough for safe crossings. Much of the undergrowth is on private property.
- Demolition will start in early Spring; Trail construction will start in early Summer.
- Public awareness:
 - Should we hold a meeting for the Winterville community about the trail development?
 - Request a special edition of the Gazette?
 - Place signage to explain what is going on?

Feb 20 – Winterville Arbor Day

We should plan for:

1. An Arbor Day tree planting – Perhaps use one of the Commemorative trees for this. (Maybe send out a notice for each tree planting – shovels, photo-op)
2. A read-a-book and an outdoor activity at the Elementary School

MLK Tree Planting – January 21st, 2019 – “Making the Shade” program

- Send out **email reminders** to the community about a week before the event (Averil)
- **Tools** – have been requested and approved by Stacy of Keep Athens Beautiful, but this is not listed on their website yet. Seth will pick up the tools.
- **Friday, Jan 18th**, Seth will bring a skid-steer.
- **Mulch** – must be special play-ground quality, (i.e. double screened, double ground hardwood) Seth will call NUF to see if they can provide this as a donation, otherwise the school will order it.
- **Time of planting** – Monday, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. Volunteers will have an initial ACC introduction, so will probably not be on site until 10:00 am.
- Seth will **schedule an 811** visit today (and this will be valid for one month).
- **Friday** –
 - Seth will arrive at 8 am to loosen soil and dig/augur holes for planting. Trees and mulch piles will be placed beside each hole.
 - Seth will text us with any requests he has for our help on that day, but we will be there.
 - Trees will arrive from Hartwell at about 9:00 am. They will be wired balls, and will require bolt-cutters for the wire, and box-cutters for the burlap, both of which Seth will bring. Extra box-cutters would be useful.
- **Monday** –
 - Tree Commission will be on site at 7:30 am
 - The school PTO will provide coffee and snacks. (The cost of this cannot go towards the grant match; equipment does)
- In case of rain –
 - If it rains on Friday/Saturday – do everything on Monday
 - If on Sunday/Monday – flag holes and plan planting at a weekend.
 - Keep checking email for MLK Day details and changes due to weather.
 - The school has signed a liability waiver

Arbor Day

- Seth revisited Arbor Day to suggest that we could use this day as a kick-off for school projects.
- Lowes will be donating watering supplies through the school.

Next WTC meetings:

The meeting times were changed to Thursdays, at 5:00 pm. Location – Bonsall residence

- **Thursday, January 24, 5:00 pm** – Re-evaluating direction for 2019
- **Thursday, February 21, 5:00 pm**

Other:

- **January 2 – WTC – Annual presentation to City** (approx. 15 minutes).
 - This is a change from the original January 7 date.
 - We listed all the WTC events of 2018.
 - Holly will put these into order, and present it to the Winterville City Council, hopefully leaving time for some Q & A.
 - A copy of this will be attached to the December 2018 minutes.
 - Averil, Bob, and Roger will be there. Seth would like to, but already has a commitment.
- **Approval of November minutes** - The November meeting minutes and its attachments were unanimously approved.
- **GAA Tree Climbing competition** – March 23 & 24 – Winterville
- **Future plans** –
 - Revisit the Tree Ordinance – ask for amendments, and deletion of the “draft” status
 - Continue with the Tree Ordinance Summary – maybe design a brochure
 - Continue to pull in Winterville residents
 - Recruit more members for the Tree Commission