



## PARKS & TREES COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – June 29, 2017

**NOTE TO THE FILE:** The May meeting was cancelled due to local elections and the use of the Kendall Park Clubhouse as a voting precinct.

**Members Present:** Maureen Renault, Bob Williams, Diana Wenman, Jane Miller, Barb Willens and Thelma Rutledge. Unable to attend: Mary Sue Truesdale

**Guests:** Annette Sullivan and Samantha Bihl

**Staff:** Liz Gilland, Urban Forester

### **NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING: September 5, 2017 at 4:30pm / meet at Kendall Lake Clubhouse**

The meeting was held at Camp Lystra at Lake Wateree and opened at 5:00 p.m. by Liz. The minutes from the April 2017 meeting were reviewed and one correction was made. Jane motioned to accept the minutes as corrected, Diana seconded and all approved.

### **CITY UPDATE:**

*Arborist Intern* – We hired Samantha Bihl (Bill), a student at Central Carolina College in Sumter to fill this opportunity and she is working out well. For now, only working 2 days per week due to financial constraints but will go to full-time status in July.

*Tennis Complex* – Construction is underway. Many trees needed to be cleared along the edges of the property but many will be planted back once the project is complete.

*Cedarbrook Apts* – Construction is complete and landscaping is underway.

*Kendall Lake* – Aquatic weed treatment went well during May. There will be another treatment of the weeds in late summer.

*Chesnut Hills subdivision* – Sidewalk replacement where live oak trees buckled the concrete is not yet completed due to financial constraints. Liz and Sam have been watering the 20 crepe myrtles planted there and the trees are doing great. Liz plans on procuring bids to remove at least another 12 – 15 live oaks in the subdivision as part of an on-going effort to alleviate future infrastructure damage and conflict with sanitation and emergency vehicles.

*Construction projects* - A variety of building projects are being proposed and City staff are in the process of reviewing site plans for *Camden Elementary School, Hampton Inn and The Retreat at Historic Camden*. There are a handful of significant trees that will be removed at CES on Laurens Street but approximately 40 new trees will be planted on campus. The Hampton Inn site on Wall Street was clear-cut with about 76 significant trees removed. Approximately 50 trees will be planted on that site. For The Retreat on lower Broad Street, approximately 40 significant trees will be cut and that many planted back on the site.



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*Park Irrigation* – Irrigation systems have been installed by Sassafras Landscapes at City Arena Park and the northeast quadrant of Monument Sq Park. We hope to install irrigation at City Hall Park and Edgewood Park next fiscal year when funds are available.

*Other* – Two willow oak trees have been planted in City Hall Park, two willow oaks planted in the Public Works parking lot and three American hollies were planted in the northeast quadrant of Monument Sq Park. Liz and Sam are watering these as well. We are expecting to plant one American Beech, 3 American lindens and 3 American hophornbeams around town next month.

*Powder Magazine Park* - City Council recently passed a resolution to swap property to obtain the lot next to the historic Powder Magazine on Market Street. This lot is across the street from the proposed new site of the Kershaw County Farmers Market. It has been requested by the City Manager to draw up a proposal to make this a park of some type.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

*Citizen Park Survey* – Multiple field trips were conducted during April and May to distribute the parks surveys around the city after we did so in the Edgewood community (154). Neighborhoods visited include: Sunnyhill (200), the historic district (560), Boykin (225), Kirkover Hills (225) and City Arena (250 - lower half of the city). Tony Burns and Alan Team of the Parks Dept distributed surveys to Kirkwood (130), Burndale (60) and the Mill Village (90). Approximately 1,950 were distributed throughout these areas – this equates to about 40% of the individual households within the city limits. Liz thanked everyone for their ‘footwork’ in helping to distribute the surveys throughout the city. Approximately 80 man-hours were invested in this effort over the course of 8 different days of distribution ((5 people) x (2hrs) = 10 man-hrs x (8 days) = 80 hrs). In addition, the survey was distributed electronically via Survey Monkey, which has yielded 146 responses. The cost for distribution was \$897 (1,950 envelopes distributed x (0.46 postage) plus a two-month subscription to Survey Monkey (\$29 x 2 months = \$58).

Liz and Sam are in the process of tallying and compiling all 570 survey responses (a response rate of 29%) and Liz hopes to present initial findings to City Council in July. A strategic plan will be developed afterwards to include all of the parks. Maureen suggested that a formal letter be written to the City Police Dept. noting the comments regarding park safety and unsavory activities occurring both day and night in some of the parks.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

*Leader’s Legacy Bench Recognition* – There was a newly approved bench nomination for Rev. Bruce Hancock who recently retired from First Baptist Church. The nominator’s have requested that the bench go in either Rectory Square Park or at the Archives grounds. Everyone was ok with approving either location. Liz shared that the bench dedication ceremony for Jim McGuirt was scheduled for Friday, June 30<sup>th</sup> at 9am in Hampton Park. The next scheduled ceremony is Friday, July 14<sup>th</sup> in Rectory Sq. for Jimmy and Davis Green.

*Commission vacancies:* Liz informed the group that both Thelma and Bob were re-appointed to the Commission for another 3-year term. We still need to find a third person to fill Mary Sue’s slot. Annette said that she is not



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ready to commit to the group at this time but would like to keep in touch and help out any time. Everyone agreed that would be great.

*Arbor Day 2017:* Liz asked if anyone had any ideas on who to honor this year. She has someone in mind but wants to check with staff first before moving forward.

*OTHER:* Annette mentioned that the benches at Kendall Lake are looking worn and weathered and wanted to know if it were possible to get a new bench installed. Liz said that there was a spare metal bench that could possibly be installed in the coming weeks. Annette also mentioned that in Washington state some cities plant blueberry bushes and fruit trees in public parks for folks to enjoy.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:50pm.

Respectfully submitted by Liz Gilland, Camden Urban Forester

Approved