

**MINUTES**

Park City Municipal Forestry Advisory Board

Thursday, September 7, 2023

10 am

Marsac East Conference Room

**Board Member Attendance**

Present: Becky Gutknecht (Engineering, virtual attendee), Rebecca Ward (Planning), Jarren Chamberlain, Heinrich Deters, Luke Cartin, Lillian Zollinger (Planning), Mike McComb, John Terk (applicant’s architect), Virgil Lunch (Planning, virtual attendee), John Robertson

**Purpose & Product:** To study, investigate, counsel, formulate, develop and/or update, and administer a Community Forestry Plan ("Forestry Plan") for the care, preservation, pruning, planting, replanting, removal or disposition of trees and shrubs in parks, along streets, and in other public places.

**Working & Input**

Old Business:

* 963 Empire Ave.: Gutknecht reviewed the application which involved a previously-approved right-of-way encroachment prior to the 9th and 10th Street stairs project, with previously approved patio areas and landscaping which had to be removed as part of the stairs project. The applicant was gracious and wanted to replace plantings, but Gutknecht stated that with a new water line going in alongside the stairs, a couple of iterations of the plan had to be discussed. Gutknecht reviewed the latest application with the size of shrubs so that no trimming or maintenance would be required by the City. Gutknecht stated the applicants would be asked not to install small stone blocks delineating an appearance of ownership of the area and the applicants would be asked to remove those from the plan. Deters confirmed there was a previous encroachment approved and Gutknecht this would be recorded as a completely new encroachment without irrigation lines. Chamberlain had no objections as long as the applicant was going to maintain the plantings. Zollinger reviewed the proposed plantings with the Board and confirmed most were Firewise and on the approved list from Planning. Deters made a motion to approve the plan with landscaping stones removed, Cartin seconded. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

New Business:

* 64 Red Cloud Trl: The Board reviewed the arborist report forwarded to the board. Lund reviewed the application for significant removal of vegetation without replacement, as most of the trees were dead or dying. Deters confirmed there was setback and WUI compliance. The applicant’s representative stated there were many dead and dying trees on the property and neighboring property and would be doing one-for-one replacements per HOA requirements. McComb reviewed the replacement numbers in the application and verified the types of trees to be replaced. The architect reviewed the property with the excavator the day prior and stated that the intent was to preserve as many trees as possible, they kept the footprint as tight as possible, but there were a lot of dead and diseased trees. Chamberlain motioned to approved the plan, Deters seconded. The Board unanimously approved the motion.
* 1304 Park Ave: Ward reviewed the application for removal of trees of concern around a home with a collapsed roof, stating that the two trees were completely in the right of way and would require removal in order for demolition crews to reach the foundation of the home. Ward stated that the plan was to replace the two Box Elders (erroneously listed as Cottonwoods on the application) with Aspens. Deters confirmed that the Board could approve dangerous trees. Cartin confirmed, and confirmed that the Box Elders were part of the Maple family, and Aspens were a better replacement. Ward confirmed that all plantings would be in the right-of-way. Gutknecht reviewed the lower Park Ave update project, Main Street waterline, as well as the City’s intent to maintain a 10-foot snow storage easement throughout town where possible. In the current location, that distance would not be possible, given the space available. The Board discussed the 10-foot easement and applicability to existing conditions, Gutknecht stated that the 10-feet would be applied when conditions changed, such as when a new plat was recorded or a new tree was proposed for planting. Zollinger confirmed that Engineering’s preference would be that plantings such as in the current case, they be off to the sides of structures, instead of within the easement. Ward and Gutknecht stated that these trees had been up for review for several years, since the home encroaches in the right-of-way and that Planning and Engineering were not allowing trees or permanent obstructions within the snow storage areas in Old Town. Gutknecht recognized that future projects would potentially impact any new plantings. Ward confirmed that the applicant had to submit their permit by October, but that they would not be doing plantings for a year or longer. Ward stated that the trees were part of the historic site and character of the home. Cartin reviewed the tension between internal guidance, historic preservation, encroachment, and wondered about continuing the item until the October meeting. Ward stated that the trees would definitely be destroyed or damaged during construction, and replacement of significant vegetation removal could be a condition of approval, in accordance with the encroachment agreement required due to the historic structure physically encroaching, with new plat recordings as well. Ward stated that the new trees may have to come out as part of the Park Avenue right-of-way expansion. In response to Deters question, Chamberlain confirmed that these two trees definitely come out, but as long as the trees were well off the sidewalk, three feet or so, plowing would be fine. Gutknecht inquired whether plowing could damage any of the trees, and Chamberlain stated in the negative, that due to residents’ concerns they didn’t use the easement and instead plowed into the road, that it was probably better that way. Deters stated it was a constant give and take process with resident concerns. Cartin wanted to confirm the species, whether Box Elder, Elm, or whatever, and stated the application needed to be amended, and wanted to confirm the process between Planning, Engineering, and the lower Park Avenue project piece. Chamberlain added that going in 10 feet would be great but there are some trees in the area that require sidewalk plows to come out in the street. Gutknecht stated that there were some preliminary cross-sections about the possible future street design but would need additional information and could pass it along to the group. Cartin restated his desire for an updated accurate application. Deters confirmed that a delay by the Board would not impact the applicant’s process. Zollinger suggested a delayed planting for two years or following the lower Park Avenue project. Deters responded either that, or by the applicant taking a chance on the standard encroachment agreement that may require future removal of the new plantings. Ward stated that the applicants would require an encroachment agreement as part of the building permit, but that because the trees were in the public right of way that the conditions of approval would be eventual replacement. Ward inquired whether the proposed Rocky Mountain Maples and Aspens would be the desired replacements in the public right of way. Deters stated that maples grow just like aspens, so would not necessarily be the best and restated that the question was regarding the species of trees. Cartin restated the question, highlighting a power line that goes through the property and that would require approval as well by the power company. Gutknecht inquired whether removal could be approved, conditional with a delayed submittal for location, for approval later. Ward stated that the historic board could review why a delayed replanting might make sense and an encroachment agreement would include Engineering discretion on placement, and timing, but that replacement would necessarily require planting in the right of way. The Board generally concurred with this plan, as well as potential future placements of new plantings away from the sidewalk. Ward stated the encroachment agreement would always be in place. Deters moved for approval, subject to Engineering discretion. Cartin confirmed the species being removed as Elders and Box Elders and did not include Cottonwoods. Zollinger seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

Ongoing:

* Forestry Plan RFP Discussion: The Board discussed the process for an RSOQ/RFP to finalize the City’s Forestry Plan.
* Municipal Code Update: McComb confirmed there were no updates to this proposed code update, but that the plan was to include this for Council approval with the RFP.
* Board Member Updates/Roundtable: Deters stated that the CWRA was tabled pending approval by Council, based on some objections raised regarding suppression capabilities. He stated that October 5th, there was a group going before Council to suggest retaining pile burning as a tool for mitigation and request clear direction. Deters stated that there was a fair amount of wildfire mitigation, Rossie Hill, above Marsac near Sandridge and Prospect, and a big project with Deer Valley. Ward inquired whether Deer Valley coordinated with Mayflower on mitigation projects. Deters stated that Extell Corp and Wasatch County Fire Warden had been invited. Chamberlain stated that Parks was trying to get ahead with pruning and planting, and that one of the trees requiring removal was the Poplar at City Hall, which had a little life. Chamberlain stated that the arborist recommended removal as it would allow the small tree to the side to flourish. This was the second time an arborist had looked at the tree and there was a lot of decay. McComb inquired as to the timeframe, expressing concern for the agenda and public notice. Deters and Cartin opined that the tree was posing a hazard. Chamberlain stated that smaller trees could replace it, but that the smaller tree should be allowed to flourish. Deters suggested Chamberlain act on an emergency basis due to the hazard the tree poses, and that defensible space reviews suggest replantings. The Board concurred with Deters’ suggestion.
* City Building Defensible Space: McComb restated the ‘lead-by-example’ intent of reviewing 2015 defensible space updates, as well as updating facility emergency information for all City buildings. Ward inquired whether a Dark Sky audit might be feasible as part of the assessment team.
* Board Member Updates (Continued): Ward inquired whether all significant vegetation removal requests should continue to be sent to an amended Forestry group. McComb stated that the process was working, that the committee could continue to screen Firewise, Waterwide, Dark Skies, and other compliant items. Deters concurred and said that the process was working, that it was efficient, and once the plan was in place, the process would be even smoother. Cartin stated that he would be going to a regional partnership event with a biochar kiln at Batchelor intended to burn slash piles and clearning and would report back, including green waste options. Cartin stated that the County was looking for a similar project that could handle green waste efficiently, and was looking for Republic Services to handle about 3,000 accounts on a trial basis. He stated this would be a good regional project, including the ski areas. Robertson confirmed from Cartin that the County would take any green waste, including grass clippings. Cartin stated that the project was under residential waste collection and was interesting and would be as easy as wheeling trash to the curb. McComb stated that the exceptional summer weather in terms of excess moisture resulted in concerns for fine fuels growth, but tghen a delayed monsoon brought 250% excess moisture, keeping the state out of drought. He stated that an El Nino system was likely setting up, bringing warmer than average temperatures and ‘normal’ precipitation. Cartin confirmed no continued fire risk, but wanted to thank Bryce Boyer for setting up the County Wildfire Team.

The Board adjourned at 0956 hours.