Minutes of the Centerville City Tree Board meeting held Wednesday, January 30, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Centerville City Hall Administrative Conference Room, 250 North Main Street, Centerville, Utah.

MEMBERS PRESENT
Jennifer Beckstrand
Joy Chambers, Chair
Brooke Holman
Gary Smith
Gary Woodward
Scott Zeidler

MEMBERS ABSENT
Anne Linton

STAFF PRESENT
Bruce Cox, Parks and Recreation Director
Bill Ince, City Council Liaison
Mackenzie Wood, City Recorder
Connie Larson, Recording Secretary

NEW BOARD MEMBER
Jennifer Beckstrand was introduced as a new member of the Tree Board. She has lived in Centerville for 25 years and is a writer.

MINUTES REVIEW AND APPROVAL
Minutes of the December 6, 2018 meeting were reviewed. Scott Zeidler made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Gary Woodward seconded the motion, which was passed by unanimous vote (6-0).

DISCUSS STREET TREE ORDINANCE INFORMATION TO BE CONSIDERED FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL. WHAT WILL BE ALLOWED WHERE?

A. Review Previous Tree Ordinances and Other Cities’ Ordinance.
Chair Joy Chambers said emails were sent to the Board members explaining the tree ordinances of other cities. Gary Smith distributed a list of Tree Ordinances from other communities in Utah that he compiled. He could not find any information on trees that were supposedly once included in Centerville’s Ordinance.

Bruce Cox, Parks and Recreation Director, read a bulletin on how to write a municipal tree ordinance. Mackenzie Wood, City Recorder, explained the current Centerville Tree Ordinance states that trees cannot be planted without a permit in the park strip, but it doesn’t state who is in charge of enforcing this Ordinance. Scott Zeidler explained that
as evolving laws and ordinances make transitions, they are modified to meet the needs of the City. There will need to be a discussion if a Forester position will need to be created to inspect the trees and to enforce the Tree Ordinance. Bill Ince, City Council Liaison, explained if a tree has been in place for a long period of time in a park strip, it would be grandfathered into compliance.

B. Discuss Sidewalk Inventory

Scott Zeidler explained an appropriate width of a park strip to fit a tree must be determined. He attended the Utah Green Conference recently, and he asked his colleagues what would be the minimum width to create an area between the curb and sidewalk to grow trees. Springville has a six-foot minimum width, but new developments are required to do eight-foot park strips. Sandy has eight-foot minimum park strips, and Riverton has an eight-foot minimum requirement. Bluffdale doesn’t have an ordinance, but they are considering a ten-foot minimum park strip. Unless an ordinance is made on prohibiting trees in parking strips, the problems of trees in park strips will never end. He recommends considering no less than a five-foot strip, and no trees should be allowed on park strips.

Brooke Holman said communities want walkable communities that include trees and sidewalks, which Centerville is not. Ms. Holman expressed concern that most residential parking strips in Centerville are not bigger than four feet; she also expressed concern that changing the ordinance to limit trees in parking strips smaller than five or eight feet is basically saying no trees allowed in parking strips and she doesn’t feel comfortable with that recommendation. Chair Chambers agreed with this opinion.

Bill Ince, City Council Liaison, explained the problem is a cost and density factor. Many projects are coming to the City Council with no sidewalks. There are older streets that do not have sidewalks, but there has been discussion of making the sidewalks on Main Street wider and set back further. He asked how far from inside the sidewalk could a tree be planted that it would not cause a problem. Councilman Ince’s opinion is that sidewalks are unnecessary. Councilman Ince stated that one of the purposes of the Tree Board is to receive citizen’s complaints.

Gary Smith said eight feet away from the sidewalk would be ideal. Mr. Smith replied his opinion is that trees should not be planted in park strips. He believes an ordinance should be made to address trees in parking strips, and specifically trees in parking strips under five feet should not be planted. The biggest issue is trees that have been in place for over 100 years. The City will have to be proactive on a regular inventory of sidewalks, because mitigating known risks is important. Safety of a raised sidewalk, and trees planted in park strips that cause blind spot issues for drivers are a concern. Bill Ince, City Council Liaison, said a newsletter will be mailed when the Tree Ordinance is completed informing residents of the new changes. Trees are the homeowners responsibility, but the power company will trim trees if they are in the power lines. Jennifer Beckstrand suggest the consideration that the default question be how can we save trees instead of just getting rid of them.
C. Discuss New Tree Listings for Park Strips

The Board discussed the list of trees that Gary Smith’s provided, specifically trees that should never be allowed within 25 feet of a park strip. Trees that cannot handle the salt from the snowplows in the winter, or that are too large. Another issue is trees that grow tall and become a problem with power lines. Board members will review the list of trees and be prepared to discuss what trees should not be allowed at the next meeting.

D. Discuss Suggestions for the Tree Ordinance

Board members will review the standards from other communities that were distributed, as well as the current Tree Ordinance for Centerville, and be prepared to discuss it at the next meeting. They will also be prepared to discuss what guidelines should be revised. Code enforcement is done by the Planning Department, and the Code is on the internet for public view.

STREET TREE REGULATORY CODIFIERS AND STERLING CODE OF TREES

Scott Zeidler reported the Sterling Codifiers and Sterling Code of Trees is a list of tree standards that is on the internet that Tree Board members were encouraged to review before the next meeting. Mr. Zeidler discussed porous concrete and amended soils that can be placed in park strips. On January 31st, Utah State University is hosting a luncheon on Tree Risks if Board members would like to attend. Each year recognition awards are given to Tree Cities, which Centerville has received several years in a row.

OTHER

Bruce Cox, Parks and Recreation Director, reported Arbor Day is in April, and an Eagle Scout will be planting one dozen trees at the Community Park as part of the Arbor Day celebration. The new expanded area at the Community Park needs trees planted, and there is a small budget for a few trees. If a specific project is planned, perhaps more public awareness could be done to raise money to purchase more trees. The Arbor Day Foundation and Lion’s Club also have given grants in the past for trees. There is a Community Foundation that people can donate to for City projects that is tax deductible.

NEXT MEETING

The next Tree Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 20th at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall.

ADJOURN

At 9:10 p.m., Gary Woodward made a motion to adjourn. Brooke Holman seconded the motion, which was passed by unanimous vote (6-0).
Centerville City Tree Board
Minutes of meeting
January 30, 2019

1. Mackenzie Wood, City Recorder

2. Connie Larson, Recording Secretary

2/20/2019
Date Approved
Narrower, but better

A growing number of cities, and the state, are adopting policies changing the way streets are designed. Often the Complete Streets policies mean narrower lanes to slow traffic, plus walking and biking lanes, landscaping and more limited on-street parking.
Handout from Tree Board mtg, 2/20/19