

Village of Shorewood Hills
Parks Committee
Meeting Minutes - DRAFT
Tuesday, June 27, 2023 - 5:30pm
Location: Heiden Haus 3100 Harvard Drive

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Carol Barford called the meeting of the Parks Committee to order at 5:30pm.
 - a. **Roll Call:** Present, in addition to Barford, were David Boutwell, Roma Lenehan, Jan Tymorek, Jeremy Rogers, Kathie Brock, Mary Janet Wellensiek-Garden Club liaison. Nancy Heiden was excused. Also in attendance were Village Forester Adam Lohrmann and Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Chrissy Kahl.
 - b. **Note compliance with open meeting law:** Kahl confirmed the meeting had been properly posted.
2. **Public Comment and Communication:** No one wished to speak.
3. **Approve minutes from April 25, 2023 Parks Committee Meeting:** Brock moved, seconded by Tymorek to approve the April 25, 2023 minutes with one correction on Item #8, strike "See attached SWOT analysis notes". Rogers abstained. Motion carried.
4. **Chair's report on workplace climate and civility discussion at the June 2023 Board meeting:** Barford asked the committee send any requests and questions go through Administrator Sharon Eveland, not through staff. Barford encouraged the committee to go to the Georgia Municipal Association Embrace Civility to review.
5. **Monthly Forester's Report:** Lohrmann was present and highlighted some of his report. This included: new seasonal forestry assistant; Urban Tree-street trees; CARPC collaboration for tree inventory; MG&E line burial-routing line to avoid going through the rain garden on Shorewood Boulevard.
6. **Discussion of needed tree treatments and relevant recommendations to the Board:** Lohrmann stated that a recommendation needs to be made to the Village Board regarding tree treatments for the 2024 budget. Discussion included: recommendation should include reasoning, specifics and what's been effective; give the Board options with a specific recommendation; possibility of submitting the Board a letter to advise that a recommendation is being prepared-Barford offered to create this.
7. **Discussion of climbing in the black spruce tree at Four Corners Park:** Rogers moved, Brock seconded to table this item. No vote was taken. The committee will discuss this item at next month's meeting as Heiden was absent.
8. **Discussion of outdoor meeting locations and ADA accessibility:** Future meeting location suggestions were: Post Farm, Heiden Haus, and Four Corners. Barford will discuss with Administrator Eveland to be sure these are ADA accessible.

9. Announcements, questions, and/or consideration items for future agendas (no discussion or action to be taken under this item): Barford will collect a list.

*Tree Treatments

10. Next meeting date: Tuesday, July 25, 2023; Lohrmann will be absent.

11. Adjourn: Rogers moved, seconded by Tymorek to adjourn the meeting at 6:45pm.
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,

Chrissy Kahl
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer

VILLAGE OF SHOREWOOD HILLS
Forestry and Parks

Report for July 2023: Adam Lohrmann, Forester

Overview- Over the past month, Forestry and Parks staff have continued with regular summer tree maintenance, weed management, and landscaping activities, while also preparing for a number of special events including the community Independence Day celebrations, the Olbrich Botanical Gardens Tour of Shorewood Hills, and the upcoming All-City Dive Meet. Special thanks to the Forestry and Parks staff—Vicente Garcete, Kiera Kahl, and Logan Bunton—for all their efforts to keep the Village parks and green spaces looking healthy and attractive for these occasions, despite the challenging drought conditions.

Public Tree Inventory- The Village inventory of all public trees is currently being updated with matching funds provided by the DNR Urban Forestry grant program. Urban Tree Management and staff from the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission continue to collect tree data and anticipate completing the inventory by the end of the summer.

Tree Watering- Forestry and Parks staff are proceeding with regular tree watering efforts for recently planted, still-establishing trees, and trees showing signs of stress. The Forestry and Parks department encourages residents to continue watering their trees as our region is still experiencing below-average rainfall.

Tree Planting- In the coming week, 4-chinkapin oaks and 1-hybrid swamp white/bur oak are scheduled to be planted in various locations throughout the Village.

Tree Mulching- Forestry and Parks staff placed fresh mulch around trees on the elementary school campus and Heiden Haus grounds, the Bowdoin triangle, Sam Roth (East Entryway) Park, Karl Frantz (West Entryway) Park, and elsewhere around the Village.

Tree Pruning & Vegetation Management- 1-32" white pine with broken, hanging limbs was pruned in Four Corners Park. 2-15" to 20" American basswoods and 1-55" silver maple were pruned in the marina/country club woodland. 5-18" honey locusts, 3-6" Freeman maples, and 3-6" New Horizon hybrid elms were pruned on University Avenue/RR corridor.

Forestry and Parks staff are also working to prune back vegetation around fire hydrants, street signs, and along sidewalks and roadways for the purpose of public safety and visibility. Except in cases of imminent hazard, oak trees are excluded from these efforts between April 1st and October 1st to prevent/reduce the spread of oak pathogens.

Tree Removals- 1-27" northern red oak with a large tear-out was removed on Lake Mendota Dr. The tree was determined to pose a hazard as the wound from the torn-out limb exceeded 1/3 of the diameter of the trunk. 1-24" dead standing northern red oak snag was removed by the roadway/west trail entrance in Koval Woods; it was determined to pose a hazard as it had been standing for many years and the wood was entirely decayed and no longer structurally sound. 1-

19" black walnut with significant decay at the base was removed in the marina/country club woodland.

Rain Gardens and Street Medians- Regular weeding and maintenance work in the Village rain gardens and street medians will continue throughout the summer. The Amherst/Bowdoin and Harvard/Heiden Haus rain gardens were featured locations on the Olbrich Botanical Gardens Tour of Shorewood Hills and received complimentary comments from the tour organizers.

Weed Management- Monitoring and removal of invasive weeds in Village parks and green spaces will continue throughout the summer. Species recently targeted for removal include: spreading hedge parsley, pokeweed, burdock, biennial thistle, Canada thistle, knotweed, dame's rocket, reed canary grass, curly dock, etc. The Forestry and Parks department requests the cooperation of residents and can offer guidance on the management of invasive weeds on private properties.

Of Concern- Spongy moth caterpillars were detected in various locations on multiple tree species throughout the Village this summer, and trees with spongy moth egg masses are now being identified and recorded as part of the public tree inventory update. Although no trees in Shorewood Hills have yet to be positively determined to have been significantly defoliated by spongy moth caterpillars, many trees throughout the city of Madison have been more severely impacted. Local and regional foresters are anticipating that significant infestations are likely to occur next year as well. The Forester is in consultation with other tree care professionals to determine the best course of action to mitigate this threat to the Village trees, particularly as it pertains to the oak population.

DRAFT MEMO ABOUT TREE TREATMENTS

Dear Village Trustees,

In 2024, the Village will need to treat many of its street trees and park trees to keep them healthy. There has been an ongoing, multi-year program of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) treatments, to protect the Village's 60-70 high-value ash trees. In addition, many of the Village's iconic oak trees are now mature and quite vulnerable to a suite of stress factors that could lead to higher mortality in the coming years:

- Drought stress in summer and winter
- Longer growing seasons and thus longer life cycles for pests
- Higher average temperatures in the urban environment
- Soil compaction and lack of snowpack to protect roots

Oak trees that experience stress from "normal" urban conditions are now more susceptible to pathogens like oak wilt and boring insects like the 2-lined chestnut borer. The multiple threats to our oak trees underscore the need to combat a shifting set of conditions affecting our urban canopy. The Village will need to act soon – EAB treatments will be required in spring of 2024 according to the EAB treatment schedule. Recent discovery of severe spongy moth outbreaks throughout Wisconsin also poses a significant threat to the Village's community forest and will likely require action in Spring of 2024 as well.

Historically, the Village's EAB management plan relied on the Adopt-an-Ash Program, which comprised donations from residents in the immediate proximity of high-value ash trees. Donations were solicited on a recurring two-to-three-year schedule. This was an inefficient use of staff time and the Adopt-an-Ash Program yielded less and less funds as time went on. The Village Forester and staff do not intend to use the Adopt-an-Ash program to fund treatments going forward.

Currently, the Forester and the Parks Committee are developing management options for preserving the Village's high-value trees. These options will be informed by the cost of different types of tree treatment, the cost of tree removal, the importance of certain iconic trees, and the long-term goal of preserving a robust urban canopy. This planning task will be supported by a new tree inventory and an updated community forestry management plan, both of which are currently underway (funded by a grant from the WI-DNR).

There may be multiple ways to fund near-term tree treatments, and the Forester and Parks Committee are exploring these with the Village Administrator. The Board will be asked to consider ways to fund tree treatments during its fall budget season, because treatments will need to be coordinated with urban tree specialists during early 2024. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have and appreciate your attention to this important matter.

Best regards,

Carol Barford, Parks Committee Chair

DRAFT MEMO ABOUT FORESTRY ASSISTANT

Dear Village Trustees,

The Village Forester is requesting approval to increase the Village's part-time Forestry Assistant position to a full-time position. The Parks Committee fully supports this change. This investment supports the goals of the 2021 Comprehensive Plan and will keep our trees healthy into coming decades.

Our Forestry Department maintains a robust, diverse urban forest including our iconic, mature oak trees. This is a full-time job that comprises monitoring, pruning, treating, removing, and planting trees. In addition, the Forester acts as restoration ecologist in our parks and natural areas, showcasing the native ecosystems which include vegetation, pollinators, birds, and other animals, and removing invasive plants. The Forester is also responsible for landscaping, including medians, rain gardens, bike paths, and the grounds around public buildings, as well as supporting Garden Club triangles. Consultation with residents and coordination with Village public works projects (e.g. MG&E line burial, MMSD sewer project, McKenna boathouse repairs, Lake Mendota Drive bridge, University Avenue reconstruction) also fall on the Forester. Ever since the position was instituted, the Forester has been pressed for time.

The Forester manages seasonal and part-time employees and a relatively small budget for landscaping and ecological restoration contractors. In the past, the year-round patchwork of part-time employees – several from the UW–Madison Forestry Program – was roughly equivalent to one full-time Assistant position. Currently there is one part-time Forestry Assistant, and as a result, the pace of work is not sustainable. The pace will only increase with another round of Emerald Ash Borer treatments and ash tree management, new spongy moth infestations, the high proportion of mature trees in the Village, and increasing physiologic stress (on trees and people!) due to climate change. Retaining high-quality Forestry staff will be easier with the proposed increase to full time.

To help care for our trees, which increase property values and provide ecosystem services, cultural heritage and beauty to all residents, we ask the Board to approve the Forestry Assistant appointment-level increase to full-time.

Best regards,

Carol Barford, Parks Committee Chair