



Louisville Metro Tree Advisory Commission May 22, 2012 Iroquois Amphitheater Meeting Notes

I. Welcome and Announcements: Katy Schneider and Henry Heuser, Jr.

Katy Schneider and Henry Heuser, Jr., Commission Co-chairs, welcomed Louisville Metro Tree Advisory Commission (hereinafter, "Commission") members and guests.

The next Commission meeting, June 5th at noon in the Centennial Room of the Main Library, was announced. The meeting presentation will be by Dr. Brian Stone, Associate Professor, School of City and Regional Planning, Georgia Institute of Technology, and author of *The City and the Coming Climate: Climate Change in the Places We Live*. Members were also encouraged to attend the Urban Design Studio's Sustainable City Series (<http://uds.louisville.edu/>) session that evening, "Trees, Cities, and Climate Change: How Louisville Can Cool Itself Down," where Dr. Stone will be speaking.

II. Finance Report: Allen Steinbock

Allen Steinbock, Commission Secretary/Treasurer informed the group that efforts were underway to establish a 501(c)(3) for accepting donations for Louisville's tree canopy work. The first donation has been received. Steinbock will send the group a list of suggested names for the 501(c)(3) and ask for additional input.

III. Presentation: Project Management – Dan Jones, 21st Century Parks

Dan Jones, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of 21st Century Parks (<http://21cparks.org/>), spoke to the Commission about project management, highlighting key elements that have contributed to the ongoing success of the Parklands of Floyd's Fork (<http://theparklands.org/>), the organization's current project. Ideas presented by Dr. Jones included considering trees as infrastructure, which equates to long-term investments and maintenance considerations as well as consideration in the land use planning process; that public-private partnerships need clear strategies, as well as clear roles, responsibilities, and authority to make decisions; and to invest up front in good design – a master plan. On this last point Dr. Jones elaborated that the first step is to create a strong plan for the process of creating the master plan that the project will follow. This would include talking to other cities that have been successful, considering long-term project funding and maintenance from the beginning, and considering the hiring of a professional to put the plan together. The benefits of a professional, third-party in this process includes the ability to compile public input and consider all interests, but not allow individuals to bog down the process.

Lastly, Dr. Jones advised the Commission to take action on a special project to get an early success and to keep the ball rolling.

IV. Presentation: Mobile Tree App – Ankur Gopal, Interapt

Ted Smith, Director of Louisville Metro’s Department of Economic Growth and Innovation, introduced Ankur Gopal, CEO of Interapt (<http://www.interapthq.com/>). Mr. Gopal gave the Commission an overview of the mobile application (hereinafter, “app”) that Dr. Smith had asked Interapt to develop as an innovative tool to engage the community in tree stewardship. This app will be a project of the Commission.

The app, dubbed “Adopt-a-Tree” has several functionalities, including harnessing the power of “crowd-sourcing” to build a community tree inventory. While such an inventory would not likely meet the more scientific rigors of the inventory the Commission would use as a baseline of tree canopy extent in Louisville or to track progress over time, it would serve as a resource for individuals, groups, school classes, etc. that would like to learn more about Louisville’s trees. App users would contribute to this inventory by using the GPS functionality on their phone (iPhone or Droid) to identify a tree’s location and then enter data about that tree, including uploading pictures. There would be different levels of users, including administrators that could edit or delete inaccurate information. Another function of the app is to allow users to “wish for a tree.” This would let the user enter the location that they would like a tree to be planted. Along with this, users can identify trees that are in need of maintenance or removal, although this would not be the equivalent of reporting such issues directly to Metro Government.

The group had an in-depth Q&A session with Mr. Gopal and made a number of suggestions for the app’s use and future versions’ capabilities. These included setting tree survey boundaries for use by neighborhood groups or classes conducting tree inventories in their area and providing users a tree identification guide. The next step is to beta test the app, which is being arranged in conjunction with the Cherokee Triangle Neighborhood Association’s tree inventory efforts currently underway. Mr. Gopal told the group that full-scale rollout of the app could happen with a 5-12 day lead time. He also suggested that an accompanying marketing plan would lead to greater use and success of the Commission’s app objectives.

V. Presentation: Emerald Ash Borer Threat – Peter Barber, Urban Forestry Partnership Coordinator, Kentucky Division of Forestry

Peter Barber, the Urban Forestry Partnership Coordinator with the Kentucky Division of Forestry (<http://forestry.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx>), presented the group with information about Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), an imminent threat to all ash trees in Jefferson County and the region as a whole. EAB spread through the eastern US from Detroit, Michigan and was confirmed in Jefferson County in 2009. EAB largely spreads through the movement of firewood; however, efforts to control its spread by regulating that activity have failed to slow the pest. Jefferson County is in a quarantine area that prohibits the movement of certain goods out of our area. Kentucky State Parks have made efforts to reduce firewood movement by making local firewood available for purchase at its campsites.

There is not much happening specific to Kentucky regarding this threat; however, there are national resources that are applicable wherever EAB is found. The website www.emeraldashborer.info is a particularly useful resource and serves as a clearinghouse for the latest research, for educational materials for the public and policy-makers, and for response plans

from other jurisdictions. Mr. Barber also pointed to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (<http://ohiodnr.com/tabid/22087/Default.aspx>) for an example as they have been working on the issue longer than Kentucky.

In response to the question of what other communities are doing, Mr. Barber pointed out that many local governments to the north have different policies regarding the care of street trees. Many of those cities took on ownership and responsibility for the care of those trees many years ago. This is in contrast to most city ordinances in Kentucky that place the duty for street tree maintenance on the adjacent property owner. Mr. Barber and Commission member Todd Eberle, Mayor of the City of Prospect, informed the group of Prospect's efforts to identify and inoculate ash trees in their jurisdiction. Furthermore, the city's Forestry Board has not included ash tree species on their list of trees approved for planting in the city. The Cherokee Triangle Neighborhood Association has also undertaken some treatment efforts. Commission member Monica Orr informed the group that the neighborhood association had identified 80 ash trees in public right-of-ways and were able to inoculate 27 at a cost of \$3,600. The inoculation treats current infestations and prevents future ones for 2-3 years before reapplication is needed.

Mr. Barber urged the Commission to prepare a response plan for Louisville's ash trees and the issues that will arise as EAB takes its toll. This includes a point of contact and communications plan for getting the word out within the community. The "Adopt-a-Tree" app presented earlier in the meeting may be one resource in this effort. Also discussed was the establishment of a phone line for public inquiries.