A Regular Meeting of the City of Peoria’s Urban Forestry Advisory Board convened at 12:08 p.m. on Tuesday, October 3, 2017, at the Lester D. Bergsten Operations & Maintenance Facility located at 3505 N. Dries Lane, Conference Room 113, Peoria, Illinois.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed the following Urban Forestry Advisory Board Members in attendance:

Members Present: Chairman Sie Maroon, Board Member Jason Haupt, Board Member Ella Maxwell, Board Member Amy McLaren, and Board Member Michael Price – 5.

Members Absent: Board Member Joseph Keck, Board Member Richard Swigart, and Board Member Michael Wilkins - 3.

Others in attendance included Innovation Team Project Manager Peter Kobak, PeoriaCorps Crew Supervisor Darren Graves, and Administrative Secretary Ruth Blancaflor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Thursday, October 26, 2017, 4:30 p.m. Groundbreaking & Naming – 1st District Stormwater Farm at Reed and Elm Streets. Made possible by grants from USDA and Fresh Coast Capital. Peoria Gifts in the Moment (GITM) is also a partner. Will be a work farm which will be providing green infrastructure training, and a storm water tree farm with raised garden beds for community vegetable gardening. Includes art and cultural features.
- Purdue University Program coming to Illinois. Will include more rain garden programs. Two full days or five evening classes, for 12 hours total training. Commissioner Haupt will request adding Peoria to their schedule. Report back expected after the Memorandum of Agreement is received back from Purdue.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one came forward to address the Board.

MINUTES

No action was taken by the Board.

ITEM NO. 1 PRESENTATION on Making Street Trees Work for You, by Beth Corrigan, Morton Arboretum Community Trees Program Specialist.

Mr. Maroon introduced Beth Corrigan, Morton Arboretum Community Trees Program Specialist. In preparation for her presentation to Peoria, Ms. Corrigan stated she checked the city’s website especially regarding the Peoria Urban Forestry Advisory Board (PUFAB). She said it reflected a
good tree program was in place in Peoria; however, she said if information was added to the Visitor pages it could help build resident engagement.

Ms. Corrigan gave a presentation on Community Trees Programs, a pdf of which has been posted to the city’s web site on the PUFAB page, with the attached link. She said an urban forestry outreach needed to be holistic. She said every tree was a community asset.

Ms. Corrigan discussed the use of GIS overlays to provide target areas for tree installations, because it was shown that pockets where there are no trees had higher crime and higher trips to the ER for asthma and other breathing problems.

In discussing Green Infrastructure benefits from trees, Ms. Corrigan said “Trees Forever” from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, was a great resource which reflected trees in riparian buffers.

Ms. Corrigan discussed the following benefits of community trees:
- The Sociological Benefits that trees give back. Studies showed that trees closer to roadways slowed drivers down; kids and parents play better in parks with trees; and students focused better and had higher scores in schools where the grounds contained trees that they could look at.
- Environmental Impacts, such as how shade trees cool “heat island” areas in a city; leaf surfaces pull out air pollution and clean the air; and trees shade homes in the summer and protect homes from cold winter winds; also that lots of pollinators love trees.
- Economic benefits: Rental properties are more successful in areas with trees around their buildings; in commercial areas, people shop longer and spend more in areas with trees; people frequent these streets more often than bare streets.
  o Dollars Matter – any time the benefits of trees are tied into their dollar impact you will get further in convincing citizens of the value of trees. LIOR assumptions can be weighed into research models for compensatory value of what our trees are bringing to our community.
  o Publicize! The more we share the value of trees, the better community involvement we will have. Use the “National Tree Benefit Calculator” by plugging in the zip code and other information, and it gives the dollar value of everything that a tree gives back in one year.

Proactive Management – Develop and Use a Management Plan:
- To fund it:
  o Solicit grants; if we get an announcement of a grant opportunity, help share it with everybody so they get more people to apply; may be for any public entity.
  o Be creative in fundraising. Cities have used craft beer tasting with ticket sales revenue going toward the tree planting program; “Arbor-Meisters,” have tree-themed beers; “Oak-toberfest;” Geneva, IL has a “wine, cheese & trees” festival, and the money goes toward their tree fund.
  o Public/Private Partnerships – to come out on a workday and help plant trees, and maybe help fund a few of the trees; Eagle Scouts; Future Farmers of America, 4-H Clubs.
  o “S’more Trees” tree kits in the baggy – charge a few dollars and the funds go to tree program.

Ms. Corrigan shared a spreadsheet of Re-occurring Grant Programs that she put together over time, though she said some of the links in the spreadsheet may no longer work.
Ms. Corrigan discussed how to raise awareness through the recognition of our large trees:
- On Arbor Day
- The Big Tree Registry: Each state has its own program; sign up to be a Tree Champion
- Poster Contests/Essay Contests: find the biggest kind of trees and give an award for the best poster or essay locating/descrying it

Ms. Corrigan further discussed ideas to gain community support:
- Really publicize the event, when new trees are being planted
- Partner with neighborhood groups, and church groups, because people usually live close to them
- Reach out to economically-strapped neighborhoods which are underserved and under-resourced
- Use functions like Coffee with the Mayor to educate citizens
- Create information sheets to help sell residents on the Plan
- Create a Tree Facts page on the website, i.e., “The Truth About Trees”

In discussing ecosystem regeneration, Ms. Corrigan said invasive species should be removed so that other trees could thrive. She stated that oak trees were in decline in the United States. She said a handful of diseases and pests were causing some oaks to die out. She discussed the importance of monitoring oak canopies and that it should be reported to an extension service (Fred Miller in our area) to have someone come out determine what may be affecting a diseased oak.

Ms. Corrigan stated another item of help in a Tree Management Plan was to post a recommended tree species list to the city’s website. She said it should educate our residents on better species to plant and what not to plant—invasive species, such as the callery pear. She said the Illinois Forestry Association was a good resource for the information, as well as District Foresters, who were registered with IDNR.

- The Value of Trees should be on the city’s web site
- Arbnet.org is useful for parks, schools, cemeteries or other properties who may have 25 different species, for the minimum, and want to become accredited as an Arboretum. (The Village of Oak Park is an arboretum.)

Regarding the Tree Inventory, Ms. Corrigan offered the following advice and ideas:
- Finish the inventory and keep it updated; it should control our pruning cycle and planting locations. It needs to be refreshed in 5 to 10 year cycles, for inspections throughout the entire city. She said tree inspections on emergency routes helped keep them clear.
- Get rid of trees that aren’t growing well; the Emerald Ash Borer loves stressed trees; save the really good, specimen trees. When replacing trees, keep in mind the need for diversity of age and species; choose the same form of tree but not the same species of tree.
- Collect the data for the inventory; what we need is a little bit of what would be really good to have but not more than we need, because then the data gets too unwieldy. Use data systems that will connect.
- Know locations by species and conditions of the tree, it helps us to know the types of trees we have, and the pockets where we can plant other species and manage diseases.
- Overlay the GIS with our floodplain map to determine what trees to plant there, such as elm and bald cypress, which thrive in wet areas.
Ms. Corrigan pointed out that, currently, there were areas of Ohio and Massachusetts where maple trees have been decimated by beetles. She said they had come in to the states in shipping containers.

**Resources**

Ms. Corrigan provided several informational pamphlets for the Board Members. She cited [www.itreestools.org](http://www.itreestools.org) as a good resource. She encouraged piggybacking on other communities' work and the pooling of information among our peers. She said a “tree trifecta” consisted of an Inventory, Management Plan, and Ordinances to be followed. She said she had templates for tree management plans and ordinances that she could share with the Board. She suggested, after a tree ordinance was adopted, city bid specifications should be revised to reflect that. She said the ordinance planning stages should involve representatives from other city departments, the park district, philanthropists, garden groups and also those who may oppose its adoption. All of the suggestions should be weighed, she said, in arriving at the final ordinance. Public and private property tree maintenance should be covered in the ordinance, she said, and code enforcement inspectors should receive training on tree care information. She discussed the importance of setting goals for equipment, training, and personnel needs.

Ms. Corrigan gave her email address at bcorrigan@mortonarb.org and she distributed two master packets of *The Morton Arboretum, The Champion of Trees*: one to Board Member Keck and one to the PUFAB secretary, for the permanent file.

In discussion with Board Member McLaren about how the economically-stressed Peoria community could gain some of these benefits, Ms. Corrigan explained making trees a priority required community engagement and it had to be a city-wide effort. She said it involved continually raising awareness that each and every tree counts.

The Board thanked Ms. Corrigan for her excellent presentation and the information she provided.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**Next Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled Urban Forestry Advisory Board meeting will be held on **Tuesday, November 7, 2017 at noon**.

**Adjournment**

There being no further discussion, the Board meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

Chairman, Sie P. Maroon

/mmb