

City of Ladue- Beautification, Open Space and Tree Advisory Committee

October 12, 2023

Ladue Police Department Conference room and via Zoom Meetings

Members present

Laure Hullverson, Pat Steiner, Elliot Dole, Beverly Tucker-Knight

Others present

Director of Public Works Anne Lamitola; Public Works Specialist Ashley Quinn, and Code Enforcement Officer Jerry Skubic, Councilman John Howell and Mayor Nancy Spewak

Adoption of agenda and minutes

Laure called for a motion to approve the October 12th agenda and the minutes from the September 14th meeting. Beverly made a motion to approve, Pat seconded the motion. All voted aye.

Public Comment

Members of the public present were Laura Neuman Howe (834 Louwen), David Woltz (9 Upper Barnes), Dr. Diane Merritt (3 Buckhammon), Jonathan and Melissa Losos (247 S. Price), Tracy Popillo (Attorney for Mr. & Mrs. Losos) and Joseph Orlet (5 Buckhammon).

Mr. Losos shared information on the bamboo on his property which has been in place for the past 20 years. He provided a history on the landscaping and that they chose bamboo because it is very good at absorbing water, that was an issue on their lot, and it provides privacy screening of the property. The cost to mitigate portion of the bamboo was over \$150,000, caused major disruption to their extensive landscaping so that trenches could be dug, required tree removals, fencing removals to get a barrier installed, and only addressed a portion of the property line. It took 2-5 people nearly 4 months to complete this work along 1/3 of the southern property line. Installing barriers for the bamboo also blocks the water from infiltrating which can cause an erosion issue. They feel that the ordinance is requiring solutions that are costly to residents with bamboo. The costs simply do not outweigh the benefits that they provide. They ask that the committee reconsider the ordinance or at least suspend it until a more thorough consideration can be given to the implications of the ordinance and to other possible options.

Councilman John Howell commented that he visited the Losos's property to view the bamboo situation and believes that this is a very difficult situation to try to resolve.

Mr. Orlet stated that they spent \$120,000 on landscaping the new construction of their home at 5 Buckhammon and had to go back to their landscape architect to adjust the plans because things that were planned in certain areas would not grow because of the bamboo. Their plans had to be revised to accommodate the bamboo encroachment and there were areas where only grass would grow because of the bamboo. They also installed a wall to address the creek issues and there is bamboo present in the creek, growing through the rip rap.

Dr. Merrit stated that she has been dealing with the bamboo encroaching on to her property for a number of years and reached out to the City many times about it. It wasn't until the ordinance was passed that any action was taken by the owners of the bamboo to mitigate it on her property.

Mr. Woltz shared his experience with bamboo and it is encroaching from the neighboring property on to his property. He spent months eradicating the bamboo on his own property, it damaged a retaining wall that had to be replaced, it killed trees that had to be removed. He fully supports the ordinance requiring it to be mitigated on the originating property.

Additional discussion ensued regarding the ordinance and how it could be modified to provide some additional flexibility for management of properties with bamboo.

Tree removal permits

None

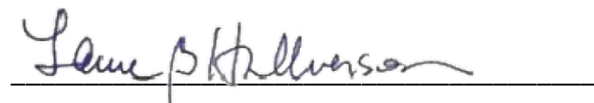
Other Matters Deemed Appropriate

The Honeysuckle Hack is scheduled for Saturday, November 4th. Ashley will send the email blast of the flyer around and post online.

The Living Legacy program was discussed related to Deer Creek Preserve, along with possibilities for other naming opportunities. Staff is also working on a plan for how to manage the funds and donations for the management of trees after their initial planting. The plan has 47 trees called out as part of the initial planting phase, with focus along the trail. The areas near the entrance still have trees that would need to be funded. Elliot Dole volunteered to review the policy and application and will report back to the Committee with any suggestions.

The next meeting is scheduled for 11/9/2023 at 7:30 am.

Pat made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Elliot. All voted aye in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 am.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Laure Hullverson", written over a horizontal line.

Laure Hullverson, Chairperson