

MINUTES

The City of Beaufort
PARK AND TREE ADVISORY COMMISSION
Thursday, May 22, 2014 at 3:00 p.m.
City Hall Conference Room, First Floor
1911 Boundary Street
Beaufort, South Carolina 29902

In accordance with South Carolina Code of laws, 1976, Section 30-480(d), as amended, local media were duly notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting.

Members present

Barb Farrior, Chair
Jim Arnett, Vice Chair
William Waskiewicz
Michael Brock
Brian Coffman

Staff absent

Gail Westerfield, recorder

Staff present

Eliza Hill, Planning Department

Chairman Farrior called the meeting to order at 3:03 PM.

Staff presented brief overview of handouts re: ordinance amendment establishing the Commission, schedule of yearly meeting dates, ordinance updating of regulations for City parks and the Spanish Moss Trail, listing of City parks and recreation areas, Greenway plan map and map of existing and proposed open space. Ms. Hill stated Councils request for a strategy for parks and open spaces with emphasis on acquisition/de-acquisition and trail linkages. PTAC is to review and become familiar with these properties for future recommendations to Council.

Ms. Farrior stated in efforts to become familiar with the parks and open spaces, the Commission will need to know if any of the properties have deed restrictions. Mr. Coffman suggested also looking at the benefits to the community of each space and possibly applying a rating/point system to each based on criteria such as ease of access and amount of use. Mr. Brock agreed stating vicinity and proximity are the main criteria to consider.

Mr. Coffman requested staff provide a listing of the possible top 10 City properties for the Commission to consider for de-acquisition. Discussion of site review of properties followed.

Mr. Arnett suggested parks be visited individually as it is possibly too difficult for Commission to review together due to work scheduling.

Mr. Coffman stated Commission members should develop criteria for the rating system and also consider the goals of the Commission for 2014.

Reforestation Fund Update

Ms. Hill informed the Commission of the status of establishing the Reforestation Fund and the suggestion by Libby Anderson (based on citizen comment at last Council workshop) of imposing a \$200 cap for tree removals on new residential construction. Three examples were provided by staff (Abby, Battery Shores and Islands of Beaufort); average fee amount: \$155. Mr. Brock stated a \$200 cap for new residential was too small. Mr. Coffman discussed differences between contractor built and homeowner building own home. He stated home construction by property owner is rare and besides only a few trees would be removed versus construction of a 5000 SF home. In the latter case, the homeowner most likely can afford the \$15 fee per tree removed. Lowering the fee could result in less sensitive site design to preserve trees and therefore more trees being removed.

Discussion regarding requirement for a certified arborist report prior to site plan approval followed. Commission agreed this should be a requirement and directed staff to incorporate language into guidelines that require a certified arborists report for all grand trees that follows ANSI A300 guidelines for a Level 2 Basic Assessment.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Arnett made a motion, second by Mr. Brock to adjourn.
The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.