**Minutes**

Bexley Tree and Public Gardens Commission

Wednesday, September 18, 2024 – 4:00 to 6:00 PM

Bexley City Hall Council Chambers, Bexley, OH 43209

1. **Convening the Meeting:**
2. **Call to Order/Call the Roll – Susan Quintenz, Chair**

**Roll Call:**

Voting Members Present: Sheila Straub, Susan Quintenz, Celeste Williams, Mary McMunn, Jim Wilson,

Alternates: Barb Giller, Adhra Young

Absent:

Excused: Charlie Flower, Linda Zupnick

Non-Voting Present: Matt Klingler, Spencer Martin, Karen Bokor, Ellen Bowden, Mayor Kessler,

1. **Verify a quorum and appoint alternates as needed**

Barb Giller and Adhra Young have been appointed as voting alternate members.

1. **Approval of Minutes of August 21, 2024 – Mrs. Quintenz**

Jim Wilson made a motion to Approve – ‘the minutes of August 21, 2024 as

written and sent.’

Motion seconded by Sheila Straub Vote 7- 0 - passed.

For: Sheila Straub, Susan Quintenz, Barb Giller, Adhra Young

Celeste Williams, Mary McMunn, Jim Wilson,

Against:

Abstain:

Absent: Linda Zupnick, Charlie Flower

**D. Additions to the agenda – Mrs. Quintenz**

Add to the agenda under ‘New Business: Type of tree protection elements that are used around the trees’

1. **Review of Landscape Applications: Jim Wilson, Vice Chair and Karen Bokor, Staff Consultant**

1. TPGC-24-6 – Review of landscape at 81 North Drexel as referred from ARB and BZAP - Nate Sampson, Architect, Behal, Sampson & Dietz

TPGR-24-6 81 N. Drexel Ave is coming before the Tree Commission at the request of the Architectural Review Board (BZAP-21-47 dated 11-11-21) and City Council (City Council Appeal No. 22-1 dated 9-13-22). The Decision and Record of Actions allowed the pool, pool house and fence in the front yard subject to review and approval by the Tree and Public Gardens Commission.

Karen Bokor presented the staff report, which had been prepared by Elena Andrews. The report indicated that overall, the landscape plan provides a robust planting plan that maintains some of the mature trees between the pool house and property line. Sheets L-7.01 and L-7.05 are the relevant landscape plans to review. The remaining sheets of the proposed landscape plan are not included in this staff review.

The (3) existing trees adjacent to the pool house are noted to be saved and protected but no tree protection fencing is called out. The foundations of the wall, columns and base of the terrace fall within the drip line of (2) of the trees. It is recommended that a continuous line of tree protection fencing be provided as far away from the trunks as possible that runs west to east from the property line to the new pool fence and parallel to the pool house. Its placement should allow adequate space for the digging of the foundations and pool house construction. This will hopefully limit root damage and prevent equipment and material storage in their drip lines or near their trunks.

The west and southern property lines will be well screened with a variety of evergreen material that will be planted at larger than typical sizes which will have an immediate impact. Care has been taken to provide (2) different installation sizes of the American Holly (12-14’ and 14-16’), Norway Spruce (12-14’ and 16-18’) and Green Giant Arborvitae (12-14’ and 14-16’) which will provide a more natural effect.

A formal evergreen hedge of Hicks Yew will screen the metal fence along the property line and a hornbeam hedge will screen the pool fence from the rest of the front yard, effectively making the fences disappear.

An appropriate selection of Azalea, Rhododendron, Boxwood, Fothergilla, Hydrangea and Viburnum will provide a variety of texture, color, and height to the perimeter beds. The perennials chosen to infill the perimeter beds as well as the formal beds defined by boxwood near the pool and pool house are appropriate to the site and its conditions.

Staff recommends approval of the landscape plan as presented with the following conditions: 1) The City trees along Drexel Ave be protected per the City of Bexley Standards; 2) During the construction of the pool and pool house, the existing trees adjacent to the pool house be protected by fencing that runs from the property line to the pool fence line, parallel to the pool house, and meets the City of Bexley Standards.

Kathryn Herman presented the plan on behalf of the applicantand described the intent of the plan. Ms. Herman confirmed that the required tree protection for the three (3) City trees along Drexel Ave will be kept in place for the duration of construction. Per the plans, there will be significant removal of existing plant material as well as installation of new and protection of the street trees from vehicles and material storage is necessary. She also indicated that the project will be irrigated to ensure the health of the new plantings.

Tom and Leanne Hadley 90 N Columbia- The neighbor to the west of the applicant. Speaking against the plan. The landscape comes within (5) five feet of the property line. There is room for only (1) one plant, requesting more screening. The property owners are also concerned with draining.

Members of the commission addressed questions to the applicant.

Jim Wilson made a motion to Approve– ‘‘the landscape plan at 81 N Drexel with conditions that the installation of the landscape must occur within one calendar year from the date of approval by the Commission. For landscape associated with new construction projects, installation must occur within one calendar year from the issuance of a temporary occupancy permit. The landscape plan is approved as presented with the following conditions: 1. The City Trees along Drexel have Tree Protection per the City of Bexley standards or better; 2. The existing trees adjacent to the pool house have Tree Protection consistent with City of Bexley Standards during the construction. 3. Irrigation and drainage plan be presented to the Building Department as part of the permitting process. Mr. Wilson then moved to amend the motion to add two additional conditions: 4. Planting occur within the next viable planting season after the pool has been completed. 5. Any plant material that fails will be required to be replaced.

Motion, as amended, seconded by Sheila Straub Vote 6 - 0 - passed.

For: Sheila Straub, Susan Quintenz, Barb Giller, Adhra Young

Celeste Williams, Mary McMunn, Jim Wilson,

Against:

Abstain:

Absent: Linda Zupnick, Charlie Flower

1. **Announcements/Small Victories: Mrs. Quintenz**

A. Honoring the Bexley Fairy Village Summer Ambassadors – Ava Perfect and Maddy Shainker, Mayor Kessler and Celeste Williams

B. 2024 Bexley Bloomers: What’s New – Mary McMunn

C. Bexley Community Gardens Fundraiser – October 16, 2024 – Mary McMunn

D. 2024 Bexley Landmark Trees Golf Cart Tour, October 11, 2024 – Sheila Straub

E. October 16, 2024 – Early Start for Tree Commission members that day –

3:00 for one hour of reviewing recommended street tree selections

1. **Staff Reports:**

**A. Spencer Martin: Bexley Urban Forestry Arborist**

1. Arbor Day Tree Giveaway Project

Thirty (30) trees were planted during the give-away. A few residents decline the tree upon delivery.

2. Mulch Volcano elimination program – any difference?

The pamphlets are getting handed out. Residents who purchased mulch received information mulch volcano. Staff will pass them out when they see mulch volcanoes.

3. State of the Urban Forest: Summer 2024

The Urban Forest is dry. The side effect of the drought might show up in the spring. It has been a struggle to keep the plant material watered.

1. South Community Garden Tree plantings
2. 2024 Fall Planting – 100 Trees plus replacement by City of Street Trees removed in 2023

Planting trees in drought soil could add stress to newly planted trees. Tree sites for Parkview twenty-eight (28) new sites for potential trees and on Broad thirty-five (35) new sites for new trees. The number could change subject to underground utilities.

**B. Ben Kessler, Mayor, City of Bexley**

1. Gant Chart of both City and Tree Commission Projects

Design processes will start for Roosevelt medians, College Ave gateway, Commonwealth unification design a 2-phase unification, Commonwealth folies are complete. Grant Archer and Mayor Kessler found (66) sixty-six new spots for trees to be planted. The locations had been found between Schneider Park east to S Remington.

a. Stanbery Pillars and plantings in ROW

b. Drexel Circle walls rebuilt

2. Mayor/Grant Golf Cart Tour of South Bexley – locating tree vacancies

Golf cart tour will be on Oct 11, 2024. The tour will start in the north end at the Senior center.

3. Land Use Strategy Public Meeting

The Commission is narrowing in on a draft set of recommendations, and hosted a Public Workshop on September 16 to vet some of the core ideas with members of the public. The City also just received a draft real estate market analysis which will help inform final recommendations. We anticipate bringing a draft strategy to City Council in early 2025: bexley.org/landuse

1. Montrose plantings

The tree lawn in front of Montrose Elementary school. The east and west side of the school, the tree lawn is narrower and could use a tree that would be thrive better in a narrower location.

4. Dovetailing or not Tree Commission priorities with Bexley Beautification Fund Advisors priorities

4. Cassady and Fifth Updates focusing on Delmar intersection

The City of Columbus is moving forward with the Cassady project and ideas for the Cassady intersection will begin. Discussions and a design concept will begin soon.

5. Commonwealth Connector design

Brian Kent Jones will start to draft up design concepts for the area. There will be a 2-part unification design process.

6. Other

1. **Old Business:**
2. Infilling all tree vacancies in Bexley within three to five years? What will our plan look like? Mrs. Quintenz

The tree vacancies will be added to tree plotter. The trees on Broad and Parkview will be added.

Suggestion: Major throughfares first and second years followed by residential street third through fifth years.

The goal is to start planting trees are slightly delayed due to the fact there was no rain.

1. Planting and Tree Maintenance Study Group – Jim Wilson

The group met a couple times, and will continue to meet one more time before the October meeting. Tree species and sub-species are the goal of the meetings and will be the topic of discussion before the Tree Commission meeting in October.

October meeting – how will we organize the review?

The Tree Commission will meet 1-hour early to discuss Planting and Tree Maintenance plan.

C. Goals for the Arboretum – Additional Species and Education

1. **New Business**
   1. 2024 Trees for Bexley Fundraising focus – Ellen Bowden

Ellen Bowden provided an update for the 2024 Trees for Bexley fall Fundraising; she would like to see in the fundraiser to focus on trees along Fair Ave. (4) four- trees need to be removed/replaced. Suggestion this road will be about three (3) year project. Design process for the medians to be re-done as well and suggested.

Jim Wilson made a motion to Approve – ‘The 2024 Trees for Bexley request to fund a multi- year planting project for Fair Ave.’

Motion seconded by Sheila Straub Vote 7 - 0 - passed.

For: Sheila Straub, Susan Quintenz, Barb Giller, Adhra Young

Celeste Williams, Mary McMunn, Jim Wilson,

Against:

Abstain:

Absent: Linda Zupnick, Charlie Flower

1. **Adjourn**

Next meeting is Wednesday, October 16, 2024 – 3:00 to 4:00 – Street Tree Species review

4:00 to 6:00 Regular meeting