

Minutes

Bexley Tree and Public Gardens Commission
Wednesday, October 15, 2025 – 4:00 to 6:00 PM
Bexley City Hall Council Chambers, Bexley, OH 43209

1. Convening the Meeting:

A. Call to Order/Call the Roll – Jim Wilson, Chair

Roll Call:

Voting Members Present: Jim Wilson, Mary McMunn, Linda Zupnick, Shelia Straub,
Susan Quintenz, Celeste Williams,

Alternates: Barbara Giller

Absent:

Excused: Charlie Flower, Adhra Young

Non-Voting Present: Grant Archer, Matt Klingler

B. Verify a quorum and appoint alternates as needed

C. Approval of Minutes of August 20, 2025– Mr. Wilson

Barbara Giller was seated as a voting member of the Commission for the meeting.

Mary McMunn made a motion to Approve – ‘To approve the minutes of September 16, 2025, as sent and written.’

Motion seconded by Susan Quintenz Vote 7 - 0 - passed.

For Sheila Straub, Susan Quintenz, Linda Zupnick, Celeste Williams, Jim Wilson, Mary
McMunn, Adhra Young

Against:

Abstain:

Absent: Charlie Flowers

D. Additions to the agenda – Mr. Wilson

2. Small victories and celebrations

A. Trees for Bexley Letters – Ellen Bowden and Susan Quintenz

B. 2024 Bexley Landmark Trees Golf Cart Tour, October 17, 2025 – Sheila

Straub

3. Residents Comments:

4. Landscape Applications:

A. TPGC 25-5: 124 Stanbery Ave – Mark Schieber

The resident has requested a landscape design to create a courtyard space in the front yard that is a private memorial garden for their daughter. They want the sculpture to be displayed among tiered gardens, providing seasonal color and interest and an ambiance in spirit of the sculpture. The courtyard is to be enclosed and screened from Stanbery Ave to provide privacy between the street and the courtyard. The privacy plantings for the courtyard are located within the city Right of Way, in line with and to the inside of the canopy of the existing mature trees that are planted in the City's Right of Way.

A revised front walkway entrance is also desired so that when cars are parked in the driveway, visitors may comfortably access the front door.

The proposed landscape plan makes good use of existing trees and shrubs. Preservation of much of the existing plant material, in addition to the newly proposed plant material, will mean a net increase in canopy coverage of the property.

The proposed plant material consists of site and space appropriate plant material (with 2 exceptions, see below - A, B).

The selections of trees, shrubs, and perennial plant material will provide a good variety of heights, textures, and forms throughout the proposed planting areas.

A) Of particular concern is the proximity of the privacy plantings proposed for the west side of the landscape plan, specifically the 'Techny' Arborvitae. The project description states that the privacy plantings are to be in line with the existing city ROW trees. The landscape plan currently shows the privacy plantings slightly west of and closer to the sidewalk than the existing ROW trees. The ROW trees, a London plane tree to the north and Sugar/Black maple further south and closer to the driveway, have trunks located approx. 5' from the east edge of the sidewalk. 'Techny' Arborvitae can reach a mature width of 6-7', with some sources listing a potential for 6-10' in width. While on site, I accessed the client's and south neighbor's driveway aprons to gauge line of sight visibility when exiting the driveways and looking north for oncoming traffic. The proposed Arborvitae plantings, if located according to current landscape plan specifications and/or project description locations, would likely reach or slightly encroach into the sidewalk space in maturity, significantly reducing the line of sight when looking north and exiting these two driveways. This would likely also present a maintenance issue for the city as the trees encroach on the sidewalk space. It is recommended that these trees be planted/centered no closer than 8' from the east edge of the sidewalk. This would place them slightly east of the trunks of the existing 2 ROW trees.

This will likely require an adjustment to the layout and quantities of the plant material adjacent to the north and south borders of the “circle” lawn space.

- B) B) Also of concern is the Liriope, specified for mass planting as a groundcover along the west side of the landscape plan (and along the south, but of no concern there). In observing properties along Stanbery Ave. to the north and south, the precedent set for the ROW portions of the front yards is one of maintained lawn space/turfgrass. This provides a clean and easily maintained interface between the front yard and the sidewalk. It is recommended that the portion of the front yard immediately adjacent to the sidewalk be designed and maintained as turfgrass, with no landscape plant material extending west of the existing 2 ROW trees (maintain a border of turfgrass running north/south and adjacent to the sidewalk, preferably 5' in width but no less than 3').

Due to the landscape plan's close proximity of plantings to the existing 2 ROW trees, standard tree protection around each tree, extending to a minimum of 10' from the trunk, is not possible. Therefore, proper steps should be specified and taken to ensure protection of the ROW trees' root zones. This should include but is not limited to minimizing grade changes/increases within the critical root zones (CRZ), not to exceed more than 25% of the CRZ, as well as contingency locations of plant material if in conflict with major portions of the root systems within the CRZ. (Ex. Roots 2" dia. and larger that are in conflict with planting hole sites should not be cut). Recommend coordination with the city arborist to establish specifications and to determine acceptable impact around the existing 2 ROW trees.

Recommend approval of landscape plan with the following revisions:

Increase the space between city sidewalk and privacy plantings along west side of landscape plan, adjacent to sidewalk, with minimum recommended setback from edge of sidewalk of 8'. Should also include revised layout/quantities of plant material around the north and south perimeters of the proposed lawn area, as needed to maintain proper spacing of plant material.- Include a border of turfgrass along the east side of sidewalk, preferably 5' in width but no less than 3' in width, as described above. This should also include revisions to plant material layout and quantities as needed to maintain proper spacing.

Establish and include tree preservation specifications with the city arborist for best practices regarding the existing 2 ROW trees located at the front of the property.

Mary McMunn made a motion to table – ‘To table the landscape plan for 124 Stanbery Ave.’

Motion seconded by Susan Quintenz Vote 7 - 0 - passed.

For Sheila Straub, Susan Quintenz, Linda Zupnick, Celeste Williams, Jim Wilson, Mary McMunn,
Barbara Giller

Against:

Abstain:

Absent: Charlie Flowers, Adhra Young

B. Bexley Public Library Plan Update – Ben Heckman and Elena Andrews

Jim Wilson recused himself from reviewing this project. Susan Quintenz chaired this review.

The Bexley Public Library, Congregation Torat Emet and the City of Bexley will evaluate if an irrigation system is required. During the development of the construction documents, the Bexley Public Library Board has requested that at least a price for an irrigation system be obtained. The Commission recommends re-considering the Service Berry and River Birch plant material. Both are messy and trying to maintain and keep the area clean could be difficult.

Final material choices will occur during the construction documents phase. Initial designs call for bluestone pavers like other City installations and stone walls that match the stone veneer of the Bexley Public Library. Lighting for both aesthetic appearance and safety is a priority for the project. Final lighting selections will occur during the construction document phase. Note that the Bexley Public Library and Congregation Torat Emet will work together on lighting placement as well as additional security cameras to ensure that there is not a conflict. The Bexley Public Library Board as well as the Executive Committee from Congregation Torat Emet have approved the conceptual design with the understanding that some items may change during the final development of the design. The applicant is seeking approval from the Tree and Public Gardens Commission to proceed with the construction documents of the project. Any major changes in layout or plant material that occur during the design finalization will be reviewed and approved at a minimum by the Bexley Public Library Board and the Executive Committee from Congregation Torat Emet. It is recommended that minor changes to landscape material be approved by staff, but major changes will need to be approved by the Tree and Public Gardens Commission.

A motion was made by Sheila Straub “to approve the application of the Bexley Public Library’s request to proceed with construction drawings for the front of the library including walls, reading garden, hardscape and plant materials with the understanding that major changes would be returned to the Tree and Public Gardens Commission for approval.”

Motion seconded by Linda Zupnick. Vote 6-0. Passed

For Sheila Straub, Susan Quintenz, Linda Zupnick, Celeste Williams Mary McMunn, Barb Giller

Recused: Jim Wilson

5. Old Business:

A. Framework for evaluating/reviewing landscape applications: – Matt Klingler, Director of Building and Planning reviewed the framework for reviewing applications.

B. Education and Enforcing Mulch Ordinance – Matt Klingler reviewed the results of inspection of newly planted city trees for mulch volcanos.

C. Update on Commercial Guidelines Working Group – Susan Quintenz

Susan Quintenz presented updates on the Commercial Guidelines and questions the group will be addressing. Feedback from the Commission was also requested.

6. New Business:

A. Bexley Land Use Strategy Report – Megan Meyer, Director of Administration and Development

Megan Meyers presented the Bexley Land Use Strategy Report. City Council will act on the report soon.

7. Staff reports: Grant Archer, Urban Forester reviewed Fall tree plantings, the Fair Avenue project, and Stump grinding, indicating that crews are currently working on stump grinding throughout the city.

8. Adjourn

9. Next meeting is Wednesday, November 19, 2025.