**Meeting Minutes**

**Bexley Tree and Public Gardens Commission**

**Wednesday, May 20, 2020   
04:00 – 06:00 p.m. via Zoom**

These minutes are intended to be interactive minutes, referencing video and audio recordings hosted at www.bexley.org.  
To view and listen to the context behind the decisions taken at this meeting, please visit www.bexley.org/meetings.

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

Alternate Ms. Mollie O’Donnell will act as voting until Ms. Linda Zunpick arrives.

**Roll Call:**

**Voting Members Present:** Susan Quintenz; Celeste Williams, Jim Wilson; Larry Helman; Barb Giller; and Ellen Bowden; Mollie O’Donnell

**Absent:**

**Excused:** Dave Wakeman; Linda Zupnick; and Sheila Straub

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

**Others Present:** Council member Richard Sharp; Elena Andrews; Grant Archer; and Jordan Cavallaro

1. Approval of Minutes of April 29, 2020 - Mrs. Quintenz \*

[DRAFT 4-29-2020](http://bexley.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=1132&doc_id=ca54c38a-951d-11ea-a2af-0050569183fa)

Celeste Williams made a motion to Approve – ‘the minutes of April 29, 2020 as written.’ Motion seconded by Larry Helman.

**Vote 7-0 – passed**.

For: Susan Quintenz; Celeste Williams, Jim Wilson; Larry Helman; Barb Giller; Ellen Bowden; and Mollie O’Donnell

Against: None.

Absent: Dave Wakeman; Linda Zupnick; and Sheila Straub

1. Announcements/Small Victories/Residents’ Comments:
2. Bexley In Bloom Fundraising update – Barb Giller

Ms. Barb Giller provided an update regarding the Bexley in Bloom fundraising. So far, $9,400.00 has been raised thanks to 86 donors. Bexley in Bloom will continue to collect donations thru December.

**Roll Call:**

**Voting Members Present:** Susan Quintenz; Celeste Williams, Jim Wilson; Larry Helman; Linda Zupnick; Barb Giller; and Ellen Bowden;

**Absent:**

**Excused:** Dave Wakeman; and Sheila Straub

**Non-Voting Members Present:** Mollie O’Donnell

1. Charter Review Visit – Susan Quintenz and Elena Andrews

Mr. Jim Wilson provided an update about the discussion the Charter Review committee had regarding the Tree and Public Garden alternate members who are no longer residents of Bexley. Ms. Elena Andrews and Chair Susan Quintenz were both present to provided their opinions and feedback. Mr. Jim Wilson welcomes any feedback from Commission members regarding the producers of any Boards and Commission the Charter Review Committee will be evaluating.

1. Other

The Pansy’s at Drexel Circle, which were planted early March, have been removed. The Pansy’s lasted about 2 months, whereas, the Daffodils lasted about 10 days. The goal for next year is to plant more and try and plant a flower with a bigger bloom. Yard Barbers have been working on planting alternative plant material in the area.

1. **Landscape Applications to be reviewed:**
2. None
3. **Mayor’s Report: Ben Kessler, Mayor City of Bexley**
4. (1) Plantings in the Right of Way \*

Chair Quintenz provided a quick update about how other cities throughout Columbus handle plantings in the right-of-way. Some cities require a permit, while others do not allow plantings in the right-of way.

b. Service Department staffing changes: how does that effect installations?

Mrr. Grant Archer provided an update regarding the Service Department staffing changes. The City has decided to lay off staff allowing employees to work no more than 24 hours a week. The service department will be routing staff with half the crew working Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday morning. The other half of the staff will work Wednesday afternoon, Thursday and Friday.

Installations and upcoming projects will continue to proceed, but as at a much slower pace. Mowing will be on a 2-week rotation schedule. Flower baskets are still being discussed whether if they will be hung or not. The hope is to be back to full staff August 1, 2020.

A discussion was held regarding line of sight issues, hazardous pruning, staffing schedules, and the current layoff structure in regards to city revenue.

1. **Staff Report**: Elena Andrews, consulting Landscape Designer
2. Protection protocol for trees and brick curbs/gutters in ROW

Ms. Elena Andrews provided an update about the Tree Protection Plan and how the Building Department would also like to include in the plan protocols for the right-of-way. During past construction projects, the city found that crews use the right-of-ways as an area for materials and vehicle traffic. This causes damage not only to the root systems, but also to the street, curbs, and sidewalks. Once those changes have been made Ms. Elena Andrews will bring the Plan back before the Tree Commission to review and vote on.

1. Review of prior commercial, residential and city landscape installations

Once the weather lets up, Ms. Andrews will start to review landscape plans.

1. Bexley Square Planting

The landscape for Bexley Square has been installed.

1. **City Forester Report – Grant Archer, Arborist**
2. Fall Tree plantings – more than just replacing take downs

Mr. Grant Archer is currently looking for locations to add to the ‘fall plant list.’ Volunteers from the Tree Commission are asked to walk the city to see if there are areas that need a tree. Once the volunteers are gathered, a meeting will be set-up so Mr. Archer can inform them on spaces to look for. If members come across an empty location with a white stake in the ground, that area could be a future 5G cell site and a tree cannot be planted in the area.

1. Sweet Gum Removal

The homeowner at 2710 Brentwood is requesting the Sweet Gum Tree on the southwest side of the property to be removed. The resident also requesting a tree not be planted in its place. The existing Sweet Gum is healthy. The street tree for Roosevelt Ave is a Tulip Poplar.

Celeste Williams made a motion to Table– ‘the removal of the Sweet Gum Tree located at 2710 Brentwood and not replant a new tree.’ Motion seconded by Linda Zupnick.

**Vote 7-0 – passed**.

For: Susan Quintenz; Celeste Williams, Jim Wilson; Larry Helman; Barb Giller; Ellen Bowden; and Linda Zupnick

Against: None.

Absent: Dave Wakeman; and Sheila Straub

Abstain: Mollie O’Donnell

1. South Community Gardens

Mr. Grant Archer informed the Tree Commission that the South Community Garden did not flood. Most of the planting beds are in and the gravel around the beds have been laid. The goal is to be done with the project within the next two-weeks. A slight shift in the design layout has been made to accommodate the planting beds.

1. Cleaning up from the latest storm(s)

Over Mother’s Day weekend, during the big storm, the city had lost (5) five city trees in total. Four (4) of the five (5) trees that were lost were by residential trees falling onto city trees.

1. Maintenance of gateway hardscape throughout City

Mr. Grant Archer had informed the Tree Commission the city is not signing any new contracts and the maintenance of the gateways will be maintained by the city.

1. **Old Business:**
2. Installation of median at Broad and St. Charles – what next?

No discussion was held.

1. Canopy Study

No discussion was held.

1. **New Business:**
2. Arboretum – Brainstorm: goals for the Bexley Arboretum

The city has a web page dedicated to the arboretum. Ms. Mollie O’ Donnell has volunteered to read the over the website and provided edits and comments to the site. A meeting will be set-up with city staff, Chair Quintenz, and Ms. O’Donnell on how to further proceed with the project and the best way to edit the website. Currently, there is 132 different plant species, throughout the city.

A discussion was held about the different ideas the Tree Commission can do to make the web page better and how members can be more involved in making the arboretum even more

1. Roosevelt medians – Mrs. Quintenz

Chair Quintenz is thinking more could be done to the medians with very little cost to the city. She then felt that this project needed to pulled back due to the current staffing issues.

1. Ordinances: (1) Heritage Trees

Chair Quintenz provided an update about the Hertiage Tree Ordinances. It was decided that the Heritage Tree Ordinance would be better if it was just a program within the arboretum rather than an Ordinance.

1. Other
2. **Staff Reports:**
3. Richard Sharp – City Council Liaison

Council member Richard Sharp provided an update about the 5g cell tower. There are approximately 18 possible cell towers locations in South Bexley. So far, no permits for cell towers have been submitted. The city proposed guidelines for 5g cell towers are also posted to the website. One approach is to try and prohibit a cell tower to be placed under a mature tree canopy. Due to federal regulations, the city is very limited in denying a location for the cell towers. Preferred locations for the cell towers is in the street right-of-way and not in the alleys.

ADJOURN

Next Commission Meeting is Wednesday June 17, 2020 via Zoom

\*\*\* voting items.