

The City of Lake Worth Tree Board
City Hall Conference Room
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2023

Call to order: 6:08

Members Present: G. Powell, D. Brown and G. Timor

Members Absent: D. Kerner

Staff Present: David McGrew, City Horticulturist/Board Advisor

Due to the lack of a quorum the regular meeting was converted to a workshop meeting.

Agenda additions, deletions, reordering: None

Approval of minutes: Tabled to future meeting due to lack of quorum

Public Attendance: Elizabeth J. and David K. and Monica Bilotti.

Elizabeth and David meet Monica and a South Palm Park Neighborhood Association meeting and are interested in protecting trees and the planting of native species.

Monica continues to support the South Palmway median project and she wanted to hear the Board's position on artificial turf. Hoping to get a vote from the Board to move forward with the project. She informed the Board that she got a commitment from a local nursery to donate two trees for the project and that the Neighborhood Association has funds available for the project. The estimated cost of the project \$4,000. The initial project is for one block as a trial to see how the community receives the new planting style.

D. Brown asked who from the City would approve the project.

The advisor D. McGrew told the Board that Public Works would be involved in the project.

The Board then discussed the approval process for the project.

The advisor informed the Board that in order for the project to move forward there needed to be a written proposal and plan to present to staff and the Board for review and approval. G. Timor will work with Monica to put together the project proposal for the board to review.

Reports: none

New Business:

A. Artificial turf, rock, and mulch discussion

The board reviewed and discussed an email from G. Timor relating to artificial turf. The advisor told the board that they needed to provide a position on artificial turf, rock, mulch and groundcover. The advisor gave the board a brief history on the artificial turf/groundcover code compliance violations and explained current landscape code sections. The board then discussed what qualified as groundcover and inorganic mulches such as rock or stone. The advisor informed the board that rubber mulches are expressly prohibited in the current ordinance. The advisor asked the board how they felt about the Existing

groundcover requirements? Increase or decrease the amount of groundcover required? Allow rock? How much?

The advisor then read the code section that requires 23.6-1 (c) (1) (e) - *All other lot areas not covered by driveways or structures shall be planted with living ground cover or other approved landscape materials* and code section 23.6-1- *Groundcovers. Living groundcovers and native grasses used in lieu of turf or sod, in whole or part, shall be planted at such a spacing to present a finished appearance and reasonably reasonable complete coverage within six (6) months based on the expected mature spread. Groundcovers that have an expected mature spread of twenty-four (24) inches or less must be planted twelve (12) inches apart. If the expected mature spread is greater than twenty-four inches the groundcovers must be planted eighteen (18) inches apart. Groundcovers shall not be planted in straight rows: the plantings must be staggered to ensure even coverage. All groundcover areas must be kept free from weeds.*

The advisor explained that these were the existing code sections that excluded artificial turf and required living groundcover.

The board then discussed the groundcover requirements and suggested that a list of approved groundcovers be compiled. The board agreed by consensus that the existing 50% groundcover requirement for mulched yards should stay in the landscape code.

The advisor explained to the Board the Code Compliance process for groundcover violations.

The advisor then told the board the history of the proposed Ordinance 2020-15 Exhibit G which was not approved and informed the board the areas where artificial turf would have been allowed if the ordinance if it was approved. The advisor then informed the Board the remaining requirements of the proposed ordinance language which the Board discussed in detail.

The Board discussed having a workshop or special meeting when the Chair D. Kerner returns.

B. Specifications and training follow up on meeting with the City manager

G. Powell gave the Board an update on the landscape specifications and staff training meeting with the City Manager Carmen Davis. The Board members in attendance, D. Kerner and G. Powell recommended to the City Manager that Ground Maintenance staff members, two Tree Board members and the advisor receive training on proper training techniques. G. Powell reported that the City Manager said that she would speak to Public Services about the training.

The Mayor, Betty Resch stopped in to thank G. Powell and D. Brown for adding plants to the Fannie and Samuel James monument at the Post Office.

Old Business- Tabled to a future meeting

A. Landscape webpage update

B. Tree Board Community Outreach

Adjourned: 8:14 PM