

TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND TREE COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES Monday, January 27, 2020

A regular meeting of the Town of Sullivan's Island Tree Commission was held on the above date at 5:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 2056 Middle Street. All requirements of the Freedom of Information Act have been satisfied. Present were Commission members Mary English, Donovan Glassburn and Nat Robb.

Members of the public present: No members of the public were present.

Staff members present: Joe Henderson, Director of Planning/Zoning Administrator and Jessica Gress, Licensing and Permit Technician.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Robb called the meeting to order and stated that the press and public were duly notified pursuant to State Law and a quorum of Commission Members were present. There were no known members of media present.
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mr. Glassburn made a motion to approve the June 24, 2019 Tree Commission Meeting minutes. Ms. English seconded this motion. All were in favor. None opposed. Motion passed unanimously.
- III. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION:**

Tree Commission Guidelines for Tree Removal: Joe Henderson proposed that the Commission review of draft guidelines for reviewing requests for Category 1 tree removal. Establishment of guidelines is authorized in Article 17, Section 21-161 of the Zoning Ordinance related to General Powers and Responsibilities.

Mr. Robb stated that the creation of the new draft guidelines is to inform the public as to what to expect from the Tree Commission in order to protect and preserve the natural beauty of Sullivan's Island. Ms. English believes that once the new guidelines are finalized, they should be made available to future property owners, the public and realtors so they have an understanding of what is required related to trees to inform them before purchasing property on Sullivan's Island. Mr. Henderson stated that there is a great deal of information on the Town's website regarding tree maintenance and maintaining healthy trees, however, there could be more clarity regarding the Commission's review criteria for removal of trees. Because of the lack of procedural guidance, the Commission has recommended creation of the subject guidelines.

Mr. Henderson also pointed out that the Tree Commission has never created a set of rules of procedure that outlines the process of conducting business. He referred to Section 21-60 D. 2. In the Zoning Ordinance which states, "The Commission shall adopt rules for the conduct of business subject to the review of the Town Attorney." Mr. Henderson advocated that the Commission members consider establishing these rules, and as a part of that document, incorporate the guidelines for reviewing tree removal applications. Mr. Robb asked the Commission members to review the draft guidelines and make any comments or changes they feel is necessary. Mr. Glassburn asked if specific guidelines can be added in regards to drainage. Mr. Henderson responded by stating that the Commission members may review plans for tree planting throughout the site and consider location of stormwater utilities as well as other site utilities like overhead powerlines.

Mr. Henderson reviewed the draft guidelines with the Commission Members. The commissioners unanimously agreed that staff should create draft rules of procedure in accordance with 21-60 D. 2 subject to review by the Town Attorney (Exhibit one).

Staff agreed to produce a draft for the next meeting.

IV. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL:

Mr. Henderson stated that each year the Commission must vote for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. He recommended taking this action.


Ms. English made a motion to vote Mr. Robb as Chairman. Mr. Glassburn seconded this motion. All were in favor. None opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Robb made a motion to vote Ms. English as Vice-Chairman. Mr. Glassburn seconded this motion. All were in favor. None opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

V. ADJOURN: Mr. Glassburn made a motion to adjourn at 5:45 p.m. Ms. English seconded this motion. All were in favor. None opposed. Motion passed unanimously.



Nathaniel Robb, Chairman



Date



Mary English, Vice-Chairman



Date

TREE COMMISSION TREE REMOVAL GUIDELINES (DRAFT 12-3-2019)

What factors should we consider to make consistent decisions about tree removals?

Tree Size:

- **Size:** Trees 16" dbh are protected. Trees 25" dbh are specimen trees so they hold higher protection value.
- **Species:** Magnolia, Live oak, Laurel oak, pecan and red cedar hold a higher protection value to Sullivan's Island. ***Pines, Hackberries, non-natives hold a lesser value.

Location:

- **Tree proximity to the buildable area or required setbacks.** If a tree is located in the center of the lot, and no feasible options exist for redesign of the home, extra consideration might be given for tree removal. Trees located in building setbacks receive less consideration.
- **Lot size:** very small lots, 15,000 sq. ft. or under, might be afforded more flexibility over larger lots. (15,000 or over)

Tree Density:

- **Tree density:** Applicants might be given more or less flexibility depending upon the amount of canopy existing on the site. A property with 80% canopy cover might be required less mitigation, than the same request for a lot that has no trees. The applicant must demonstrate this tree density during the meeting with pictures or aerial photography.

Planting and Mitigation Plan:

- **Mitigation Plan:** Applicants presenting a mitigation plan for producing more potential canopy and trees from the SI Approved Tree List are more likely to receive approval to remove a tree.
- Trees that *may be endangered* by the planned construction may be considered for removal with a robust Planting Plan.

Hazard Trees:

- Removed at staff level in accordance with the ZO.
- Have unhealthy trees recently been removed?