

City of Apalachicola Tree Committee
August 17, 2017, 3 P.M.
Battery Park Community Center

Meeting Summary

Present: Anita Grove, member; Dennis Winterringer, member; Augusta West, Main Street; and Jim Bachrach, Main Street.

1. New business - Florida Department of Transportation highway beautification grant (August West and Jim Bachrach).

At the Tree Committee's request, Augusta West and Jim Bachrach attended and discussed the \$200,000 grant that Main Street has obtained to beautify the U.S. Highway 98 rights-of-ways with vegetation plantings.

Planting areas include: east entrance to city (east end of bridge), downtown (at three-way stop sign), Chestnut Street Cemetery, new library and old Chapman school, and west entrance to city.

Future maintenance of the planted areas can't come out of the grant money. There will probably be an effort to get volunteer groups to maintain each of the planting areas.

Experienced landscape designers Sam Hand and Ed Duke, both of Florida A&M University, will prepare a plan by as early as September 2017.

Plants will primarily be hardy, low-maintenance natives.

Main Street will hold a public meeting to obtain input on the proposed plan.

Planting may occur as early as fall 2017 to spring 2018 time period.

To avoid unsafe, obstructed views at intersections, the Florida Department of Transportation has rather strict requirements on where plantings can be made. Jim Bachrach will provide the Tree Committee with a link to the requirements.

2. Old business.

a. Number of city tree removal permit applications processed in the last 7 years.

In response to the Committee's request, Code Enforcement Officer Wilbur Bellew provided the following information on the number of tree removal permit applications processed in the last 7 years.

Year	Location of removed trees	
	Citizen's property	City property
2011	73	21
2012	79	26
2013	103	29
2014	97	31
2015	74	18
2016	90	28
2017 year-to-date (January – July)	42	11

The numbers are higher than the Committee expected. Many trees are being cut down in the city.

b. Plans for Arbor Day celebration.

One of the Arbor Day Foundation's standards for a city to continue to be a Tree City USA is to annually hold a tree celebration.

The 2017 celebration will occur at the Farmer's Market at Scipio Creek on Saturday, October 14. Plans are as follows.

- The mayor will read a proclamation.
- Farmer's Market coordinator Holly Brown will let vendors know about the celebration so that they may do things related to trees.
 - Ms. Brown suggested that the Committee consider making a call to artists for the display of tree artwork such as photography, paintings, sculpture, jewelry, and drawings. A designated area could be set up for this material. Anita Grove will talk further to Ms. Brown about this possible effort.
- The Committee will have a booth with information on trees; how to register patriarch trees; University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Services, Florida Friendly Landscaping information; and maybe free wildflower seeds or saplings.
- The Committee may start a project to record and document patriarch and other large trees (e.g., pines) in the city. Anita Grove will talk to Robin Vroegop, former Committee member, about this effort. The Committee could recruit members to take pictures of the trees. The location and photos of the trees could be documented in the city's geographic information system. If the Committee is able to produce a map showing the locations of patriarch trees by the time of the celebration, it will display it in its booth.
- The City and Main Street will contribute money for the purchase of a tree (probably a lived oak). The location for planting the tree needs to be decided.

c. Firewise program.

Anita Grove is interested in developing a fire-wise program to promote removal of thick vegetation on city- and privately-owned lots that pose a fire danger to houses and other structures.

3. Next meeting (Thursday, September 21).

- a. Start review of existing ordinance 2011-01 and draft ordinance 2015-02, which the City Commission never adopted, to identify revisions and additions.
- b. Prior to the meeting, ask Code Enforcement Officer to provide procedures and guidelines that Duke Energy is supposed to follow in trimming trees in power line corridors.
- c. As needed, follow-up on highway beautification program.