

Committee on Trees, Parks, and Environment Annual Report, CY 2022

The Committee on Trees, Parks, and Environment (“The Committee”) is instructed by the Town Code, Section 16-102, to assist Council and Mayor with preparation or update of an Annual Town Tree Plan regarding care, preservation, pruning, etc. of trees on public land and right of ways. Below are listed the committee’s regular and annual activities, as well as special initiatives undertaken in 2022, followed by our priority goals for 2023 and metrics for 2021.

Mission and Organization

The Committee’s primary function is to educate University Park residents on the value and benefits that trees, plants, and well-tended environments provide.

At the close of 2022, the Committee was comprised of ten members and Council Liaison Laurie Morrissey (Ward 3). Chris Aubry has served as Chair since 2013.

Since May, 2013, the Committee has conducted regular, monthly meetings on the second Wednesday of each month, 7:00-8:30 PM, formerly at Town Hall. Beginning in April 2020 and continuous through 2022, meetings were held on same time and date, but via Zoom. From April of CY22, meetings were held in person at ADA compliant Hyattsville branch of the PG County Library. All meetings are advertised in the town’s newsletter; the public is encouraged to attend. The January meeting, which serves as the Committee’s planning meeting for the upcoming year, is approximately 2-3 hours in duration. This too is open to the public.

Regularly Occurring Activities

- On most weeks, a TPE member will post a tree-centric educational piece to the town’s listserv, readily identified by the subject line *UNIVERSITY PARK IS “TREMENDOUS”*
- Approximately ten months every year, the Committee sponsors a two-hour activity in which volunteers remove ivy from the trunks of public trees. The event, known as the “Ivy League,” is advertised in the newsletter and via the town’s ListServ. Incentives have been offered for participation.
- Most issues of the newsletter include an article focusing on the care and maintenance of trees or tree advocacy.

Bi-Annual Activities

- The Chair and other members meet with Director of Public Works twice a year, typically in spring and late summer, to strategize logistics for plantings, discuss ways to improve their interactions, and update each other on developments.

Annual/Ongoing Initiatives

- Since 2013, the Committee has selected sites and provided specific recommendations for concentrated plantings of street trees, replacing the previous model of responding to individual homeowners’ requests, in an effort to increase efficiencies in maintenance. This annual initiative is a tri-lateral partnership between the Committee, Public Works, and for one community planting, the volunteer residents.
- The Committee’s Ward Stewards program (launched 2017) assigns members to specific wards to monitor and record trees that are in distress or dead. The reports are consolidated and provided to Director DPW.
- Committee members are committed to attending UPES’s annual Arbor Day Ceremony. (*Tabled in 2022 due to COVID*)

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- The Committee encourages residents to participate in the Annual Stream Cleanup.
- The Committee’s reflector at TreeComm@UPMD.org is utilized by residents to communicate questions, concerns, and suggestions to the Committee.

New Initiatives undertaken/achieved in 2022

- Collaborated with Sustainability Committee, combining TPE’s Community Tree Planting with SC’s Weed and Seed event – TPE selected and led volunteers in planting and caging 19 shrubs and five trees on the margins of the Pollinator Meadow.
- Committee developed a tree ordinance for University Park which was passed by Mayor and Council in June, as incorporated as modifications to Town Code Amending Chapter 16 Tree Maintenance (Sponsored by Councilmember Morrissey.)
- Revised the Approved Lists for both Shade and Understory trees eligible for the Tree Reimbursement Program, to include species more appropriate for global climate change.
- Developed list of invasive, inappropriate plants for UP residents.
- Subsequently, guidance, forms, and responsible parties were identified and posted to the town’s website. Provided in-person and online tree and environment related consultations.

Specific Goals for 2023

- Advertising/Enforcement of the town-wide tree ordinance.
- Continuation of regular programming, i.e. annual tree planting (NE quadrant of Ward 6), monthly Ivy League, newsletter articles, *etc.*
- Educational Activities, which will include
 - Interfacing with Sustainability Committee on Pollinator Meadow activities
 - continued promotion and expansion of Shade Tree Reimbursement Program.
- Procuring LIDAR survey for 2017 and 2022 either through UMD or UVM.
- Building/strengthening alliances with mission-similar entities, including UP’s Green Team, Anacostia Watershed Society, and University of Maryland Extension.
- Sustain regular monitoring and reporting of street tree health through Ward Stewards program. Further explore development of an “Adopt a Tree” program where homeowner agrees to refill alligator bag.

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TPE CY 2022 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	LOCATION	DATE(S)	VOLUNTEERS/ ATTENDEES	2022 HOURS	RESULTS
Survey, Annual Contractor Planting	All Wards	7/2 & 7/31	3	18	39 street trees selected for planting by UP's Contractor
Survey, Ward Stewards	All Wards	By 11/30/22	8	32	Town wide Inventory of distressed/dead trees updated. Log sheets collated; provided to DPW.
Annual Tree Planting	Pollinator Meadow	10/22/22	13	65	Revised/updated site plan. Five trees and 19 shrubs planted on periphery of the Pollinator Meadow.
Ivy League	Throughout UP	2 nd Saturdays	10, many regularly	50	Removed ivy from ~ 50+ trees on public land. Weeded milkweed bed along Wells Run
UP IS "TREEMENDOUS"	ListServ	Most Mondays	10	40	Building coalition of tree enthusiasts – much response and crosstalk.
			<i>NON-ADMIN TOTAL</i>	205	
Administration (Chair)	Desk/Computer	Weekly	1-3	90	Position papers, research, correspondence, outreach, minutes, agenda, reports, etc.
Meeting Attendance	ZOOM	2 nd Wednesdays	10	140	Cohesion, Goal setting, achievement
			<i>ADMIN TOTAL</i>	230	
			<i>GRAND TOTAL</i>	435	

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Five trees and 16 shrubs planted by committee/volunteers.**
- **28 trees were planted by residents utilizing the town's Tree Reimbursement funding. (near record-breaking)**
- **Town-wide inventory of distressed/dead trees updated.**
- **205 volunteer hours (Exclusive of meetings/administrative hours)**
- **Provided in-person and online tree and environment related consultations.**

