

Landscape Committee Minutes
Saturday, March 11, 2006
Submitted by: Kathy Doherty, chm.

The committee met to discuss tree replacement, the results of the February 11 walk-around, drainage issues and the desirability of an overall landscape plan and landscape guidelines.

Attending: Kathy Doherty, Bob Donaldson, Marie Murray, Terry Zawacki and Mark Kaye

Old Business:

1. Tree Replacement

Bob Donaldson brought the city's approved tree list, attributes of the trees and photographs. Tollgate is required to replace the four trees cut down with four new trees. It can add other trees of any variety as it wishes. The committee made the following decisions:

- 101: should have a small tree as it had before. A fringe tree is the preferred choice, depending on availability and price
- 117: the area was crowded before and looks nice now that the sick dogwood has been cut down; we agreed not to plant a replacement tree here
- 125-127: a medium-size tree should go here. Options are American yellowwood, river birch and serviceberry. We agreed to see what a landscape consultant recommends
- 131: a weeping cherry was here and the homeowners would like another, although it is not an approved tree. If we put an approved tree elsewhere, a new weeping cherry could go here. One option is to put a screen tree from the city's approved list at the back corner of 124 (where a tree was lost years ago). This would enable us to plant a fifth tree – when the budget permits – from the unapproved list.

2. February Walk-Around (this is the record of the walk-around with Committee comments and edits in *italics*)

Front beds: we probably won't invest in new plantings here, preferring to work on homeowners' properties first. We will maintain and clear out as needed. *The inkberries here are not thriving and will be replanted elsewhere or discarded.*

102: The front foundation plants need pruning. We will ask Flores to do this the next time they are out. *Done*

103-105: Tony D'Erme wants to fill in a hedge at the head of his parking pad and Sherry Beyer wants to amend her landscaping (we may move some of her plants to fill in Tony's hedge). We will ask these property owners to check the rubber drains from downspout to

street before we do any amendments. This request will be on the list after assurances the draining is intact. The boxwoods from 121 may be moved to 101 as that homeowner (121) is planning to submit a front planting design to the committee. The rhododendrons from 127 may be moved to 105 (see below)

- 109-111: There is a lot of wash from rain down between these two homes toward a neighboring driveway at the back (outside Tollgate). We are recommending that we move some earth to make a raised berm along the Tollgate property line and plant the berm with small shrubs to hold it in place – hopefully to end the mud runoff onto the driveway. A work party will build the berm and we'll add shrubs to the list of potential purchases. We will see what advice the landscape consultant has before any final decisions are made. A native grass might be another option to the one above.
- 118: We will ask Flores to prune the azaleas.
- 118-122: we will suggest a planting plan or purchase of a bench for this large bed and include it on the potential purchase list.
- 121: Ed Bromikowski wants to change his front plantings and will submit a request to the landscaping committee. Part of this plan will include trimming his azaleas, which are becoming overgrown. He expects to purchase and install new plants himself. He also will check his drains to the street. As noted above, the boxwoods here may be moved to 103
- 123: Eight boxwoods along the walk to Matt and Rebecca Kahn's house are dead – Flores says it is because water isn't draining properly from the downspouts. The landscape committee will remove these plants and – only after the Kahn's have their drains checked – will replace them. We probably will purchase small hollies that look like boxwoods – they are much less expensive than boxwoods. The dead and dying boxwoods have been removed; replacement plants will be selected. Matt Kahn is checking his drainage to the street. It's also possible some of the remaining boxwoods could be moved to 103
- 124: The side planting bed at Chuck and Marie Murray's house is only moderately attended to by Flores. Kathy will ask Flores to alternate work, so that it begins at the end of the street working toward the entrance every other visit, thus giving all properties equal attention. Done

127: The rhododendrons in Terry Parson's front planting are scrappy. The committee will move these (if we can find a suitable spot) and plant low-growing shrubs to replace them. We believe sunlight is the problem for the rhododendrons. We may move these to 105 where there is more sun and choose replacement shrubs for this front bed

133: We will ask Flores to prune the azaleas. Will be done

NOTE: *We will need a work party organized to move the plants and put in replacements as mentioned above. We will wait until after the landscape consultant has visited the property to do this.*

3. Landscape Budget

Bob Donaldson reviewed this year's budget:

- Stump grinding to be paid with \$1,400 that was earmarked in the 2005 budget
- \$21,000 for Flores
- \$1,200 for deep-root fertilization of trees
- \$2,500 for shrubs and other plantings
- \$4,500 for new trees
- \$3,700 for tree pruning
- \$1,000 for tree removal (we don't expect to have too much in 2006)

New Business:

1. Landscape Consultant

Bob Donaldson is talking to Merrifield Garden Center about having a consultant visit the property to walk around with the Committee to look at large beds and foundation plantings, as well as to make suggestions about drainage issues between 109 and 111. We would ask Merrifield for a 10-year planting plan. In return, the Committee would offer to purchase trees from Merrifield for a specific number of years. The Committee feels good about this because Merrifield has been very willing to replace new trees that aren't thriving and have given us good tree stock over the years.

2. Drainage in General

It is the homeowners' responsibility to ensure their downspouts and drainage runs to the street are not clogged. This effort will secure the foundations of the home and the health of landscaping in the front. The association has no responsibility and no budget to do this for homeowners, but is not going to plant new shrubs anywhere that boggy soil seems to be a problem. Where we are sure, we will ask the homeowners to snake their drain to the street; where unsure, we will distribute a general letter asking homeowners to do this.

Prior to any such communication from the Committee, however, Marie Murray, president of the homeowners association, will write a letter to each homeowner

explaining that the recent dues increase has not resulted in a windfall for the association and reminding them that some homeowner duties remain their own responsibility.

3. Landscape Guidelines

The Committee believes it will be beneficial to have a set of planting guidelines (much as the Architecture Committee is drawing up general guidelines for exterior paint, doors, etc.). The Committee decided it could begin work on this once the landscape consultant has visited the property. Terry Zawacki suggested we create a file on each home so that this Committee and future ones could know what has been done on each property over the years and more equitably spread the landscape attention among all 29 homes. Kathy and Terry will begin this project.

Submitted March 28, 2006