

Minutes of the Landscape Committee Wednesday, May 23, 2012

Attending: Bob Donaldson, Tom Smolinski, Joe Romer, Garry Sauner (representing Gayle), and Marie Murray

Tree Report: Bob Donaldson reviewed the results of an examination of Tollgate's Trees by Tom Allen, the arborist with the Greenery. Trees at #118, 106-108, and 101 were found to have bores and will need treatment. Other trees were identified for pruning, and include: a tree between 109-111, a tree at the rear of 107 and a Cherry tree at 101. The same Cherry Tree at 101 has signs of termites in the base, and indication of some dead wood presence. This tree will be watched. The relatively new Princeton Elm at #125 may need some pruning for proper development; this will be discussed further with the Arborist. At the time of the tree pruning, the group from the Greenery will also prune two large holly bushes in the bed that faces Broad Street at #101. These bushes are overgrown and will need some pruning attention this year and next to get them to a more attractive shape.

A tree in the courtyard of #106 is dead and will need to be removed. Bob has provided that homeowner with an estimate for the tree removal, since it is not on Tollgate common property.

Magnolia Tree: The homeowner at #108 has requested that the Magnolia tree between his property and #106 be removed. The Committee discussed the request and then, using the "Guidelines for Discretionary Replacement of Trees, gave rankings for the six factors that are considered in arriving at a decision as whether or not a tree should be removed. The guidelines are published on the Tollgate web site and include the following: (1) Homeowner's rationale, (2) Proximity, (3) Health and Life Expectancy, (4) Enhancement of Home, (5) Enhancement of Street, and (6) Opinions of Nearest Neighbors. Each Committee member was asked to assign a value of 1-5 for each factor, with 1 being a good argument for removal and a score of 5 meaning it is not a good argument for removal. The scores for each factor were then added to arrive at an average "score" for each factor, and these scores were used to obtain an overall score for the removal of the tree. The scoring results were as follows:

Homeowner's rationale: 2
Proximity: 2.7
Health and Life Expectancy: 2.5
Enhancement of Home: 1
Enhancement of Street: 1
Opinions of Nearest Neighbors: 3.2*

*Committee members gave their rankings to this factor based on what they believed from previous discussions about this tree. Only the homeowners at 108 and 111 have provided recent opinions. The Committee will approach the residents of 106, 109, 113 and 115 to get their opinions and this may change the score for this one factor.

At this time, the "score" when all six factors are considered is a 2.1. The Committee will revisit this decision once neighbor input has been obtained, and the Committee will make the final decision concerning the removal of this tree. It should be noted that there was close agreement among all

Committee members for the scoring of each factor, and the Committee was in complete agreement as to how best to proceed.

Other Business: The Photinia at the end of the street is showing some kind of damage. The Arborist could not definitively identify the cause. Marie requested that the contractor who does the spraying at Tollgate return and retreat the Photinia. To date, two additional treatments have been given to the Photinia. A second chemical treatment was also done to some shrubs and the lawns.

Marie has completed the planned hand pruning at #127, 111 and 124.

The homeowners at #102 have requested that work be done to the plantings in the front of their home. They have requested that the small beds that flank their sidewalk as it joins their parking pad be removed and the area be returned to grass. The Committee discussed this request and approved the removal. The homeowners also requested that the ailing Laurel along their front foundation be removed and the laurel under their bay window be transplanted to the spot vacated by the first laurel. The Committee approved this request. Marie will work with the Melhems to select some new plantings to go under the bay window, possibly the “rebound” azaleas that have been planted in other places within Tollgate. The small holly bushes and heathers removed from the front area will be transplanted to other locations within Tollgate. Marie will ask the Ramiro group if they are able to do this removal and transplant work.

Additional topics of discussion: The azaleas in front of 104 did not bloom and may be in need of replacement. The bushes will be watched and the small holly bushes from 102 may be used in this area.

Maire also spoke to the homeowner at #117 and they do not want a new shrub planted along their front walk to replace a bush that died. A dead bush on the side of #111 was removed, and the Committee will decide if another attempt will be made to plant a bush to hide the transformer in that area.

Marie has contacted the homeowners at #121 to follow-up on their decisions regarding new plantings for their front yard area. The Committee will determine how to proceed with this work once homeowner input is received.

The homeowners at #127 have a potted Japanese Maple that they are willing to “donate” to Tollgate for transplant. Bob will identify the species of the tree to determine where it might best be planted. One possibility is in the front of #101.

Future Actions: Committee members will talk to the neighbors living closest to the Magnolia tree between 106-108 for their input, and then share this information with the Committee. The Committee will then make the final decision on the request for the tree’s removal.

Marie will work with the homeowners at 102 and Ramiro to get underway with the requested changes to the plantings around their front property.

Bob will discuss with the Arborist the Elm at #125, to determine if pruning is necessary at this time. Bob will look at the Japanese Maple at #127 to determine if it is suitable for transplant.

Marie will continue a dialogue with the homeowners at #121 concerning plans for new plantings.