

Minutes of the Public Improvements Committee of Stow City Council Meeting held on Thursday, September 11, 2014, at 6:01 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Pribonic, D'Antonio, Costello & Adaska

Other Council Members Present: Lowdermilk, Riehl & Rasor

City Officials Present: Mayor Drew, Law Director Zibritosky, Finance Director Baranek, Director of Budget & Management Earle, Service Director Wren, Director of Planning & Development Kurtz, Assistant City Engineer Rayman, Fire Chief Stone, Lieutenant Titus, Parks & Recreation Director Nahrstedt, Manager of Information Systems Germano & Clerk of Council Emahiser

Press Representatives: Stow Sentry

Call to Order

Mr. Pribonic called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION:

Mr. D'Antonio moved and Mr. Adaska seconded to approve the Minutes of the Public Improvements Committee Meeting of August 14, 2014 as circulated.

Yes Votes: Pribonic, D'Antonio, Costello & Adaska

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

Business Items

Glenrich Circle Ash Tree Removal Update

Mr. Pribonic stated that the City's Arborist, Sue Mottl was present. They were actually going to cover more than just Glenrich Circle. They were going to discuss Emerald Ash Borer city-wide.

Ms. Mottl stated she had been before Council many, many times since 2006. Tonight, she had decided to go ahead and bring in a Regional Urban Forester from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

He has been heavily involved in this since 2003. He has been watching how it has spread and what other communities have done in relation to the Emerald Ash Borer.

She introduced Alan Siewert, of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, who was going to do a presentation.

Mr. Siewert said he was the Regional Urban Forester for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. He worked with 60-80 cities a year in Northeast Ohio.

When this important issue of Emerald Ash Borer had come along, he started developing this thought process or factors to consider. When he presented it in Northeast Ohio, it was very well received to the point where he had been all over the Northeast United States from South Dakota to New Jersey giving this talk and discussing this issue.

There was a lot involved with Emerald Ash Borer's history and makeup. He was going to skip that. Tonight, for brevity, he was going to talk about some factors that influence the decision as to whether to treat municipal ash trees for Emerald Ash Borer. They were talking about not public trees, but municipal trees – those owned by the public.

They were also talking about treating them for long-term maintenance - using the chemicals available to control the Emerald Ash Borer for a perpetual maintenance of this tree. There were some other variations of that that they wouldn't get into.

There were basically five factors that he thought you should consider when you are making this decision.

The first one we really need to understand is that the decision-making process for public ash trees is different than that for private ash trees. We need to go back to my four-faces of a tree decision.

As a little bit of a background, for every tree decision, there are four different faces. The first I call arboricultural, which is the science and the economics of it. Here we can look at if this is the proper tree to plant on the site and is it best to maximize the goals of the owner (whether it is shade or beauty or whatever)? These are scientific decisions. Will the tree take extra money to maintain and keep up?

The beauty of the arboricultural decision is that it can be defended to a high degree with science and math. His favorite quote was "math is not an opinion". We've got thousands of years of math to show us the answer to that.

However, that is not the only decision that is used when making a tree decision. The second decision is personal taste. As we know, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. What one person finds attractive, another person finds ugly. There is no right or wrong.

He didn't know if any of them liked Crimson King Norway Maples (the purple ones). However, he hated them. He wasn't saying that if you liked them, you were wrong. It was just that that's not his personal taste. He thought trees should be green in the summer. That was just him. Are you wrong to like Crimson King Norway Maples? No. It was personal taste.

Anytime you go to an art opening, you can see that, because one person will stand in front of an exhibit and say this is the greatest thing ever. However, the next person walks up and says it's ugly. Personal taste. They used that when they make tree decision.

The other one they used a lot, the third one, was emotional connection. We all have a unique history to a species of tree or an individual tree. It could be good or bad.

You may hate this Cottonwood because you sneeze all summer long. You may actually love Burrow because it was a dominant tree where Ms. Mottl and him grew up in Southeast Wisconsin.

That was his favorite tree. However, they had this emotional connection to it. It didn't mean it was a great tree to plant in all spots, it was just his favorite tree because of an emotional connection.

One of the things about that emotional and personal taste connection was that it can't be argued or defended. I can't say no your favorite tree is wrong because I like this one. You are absolutely right if you are emotionally connected or because of personal taste you love that tree.

When we use these three, they are all used when they are talking about private tree decisions (homeowner trees). The reason they can use those is that with a private tree, typically they are looking at two people - a husband and wife living together who have similar personal tastes and similar emotional connections to trees, so it is perfectly fine. There is one household income that that money is used to spend on this tree decision. It is perfectly acceptable for privately owned trees.

When we move to public trees though, you've got 30,000 owners of each tree – every resident in Stow who pays taxes has an ownership of that tree. In that, you have a wide range of personal tastes and emotions. The question is who gets to be right?

When he did this talk in New Jersey with 500 people in the room, some guy in the back yelled out the Mayor does. Maybe it isn't the Mayor, but who gets to be right? The answer is nobody.

Mr. Siewert asked if anyone ever thought why blacktop was black? We can certainly paint it scarlet and gray and put big zeros on it with marijuana leaves on them. However, for every person who wants that on the blacktop on their street, there is another guy across-the-street who thinks it should be mason blue with big Ms on it. They knew that was completely wrong too, because it should be big cardinal and white with forward facing Ws on it or, as God intended, green and gold with big Gs on it.

Those were all emotional and personal taste decisions, but yet it was going to cost us extra to paint the blacktop. What was the goal of blacktop? It was to provide an all-weather, drivable surface to get our residents to and from their homes. What was the most cost-effective way to do that? Blacktop. What was the most cost-effective color of blacktop? Black. That's why it was black – because it meets the goals and needs.

If you, at your house, want to pave your driveway scarlet and gray and put the Ohio State logo on it, go ahead. God bless you. It's your money. You spend it as you see fit. However, when we talk about the public sector, if we are really going to be good stewards of the communities' money, and that is what your job is and what you are here to do, be most cost effective to get the job done, then personal taste and emotional decisions can't be used in this decision.

Every decision we have to make, we have to use the scientific one in which economics, the management of that, needs to be done. When we are talking about trees, deciding how to do that, we need to use our arboricultural one.

Unfortunately, the fourth face of this decision comes when we use emotional and personal taste decisions on publically-owned trees and our emotions and personal taste are forced on our community. I want this tree. That's when these political decisions are made.

Political decisions are incredibly expensive. Any urban forest that utilizes that public opinion or the emotions and personal taste in political decisions, seldom, if ever, has a sustainable urban forest and yet they shell out a lot of money for very little results. It quickly falls apart.

Sound, professional management of urban forest means that we need to look at the scientific and arboricultural decisions. Even though we know they are there for the private owner, we have to keep that out of the public realm.

The second factor we need to consider is, and this came up very early on in discussions when we discovered we did have chemicals available to control Emerald Ash Borer, how do we compare economics?

Quickly, the chemical companies came out and said that you could treat a tree for about 18-24 years compared to what the cost of removal was. That was fine for privately owned trees, because the average homeowner before the housing bubbled

5-10 year ago was 7 years. Afterwards, he didn't know what it was. He hadn't heard the new studies. However, we are a society that does not expect to be in our homes forever. We don't expect to pass it on to our children, so we intend to sell it. Therefore, it was appropriate to use a cost benefit looking at the cost of removal versus treating.

Many homeowners had called him up and asked if they should do that? He said you bet. One lady called him and said they had been in their home for 30 years, they had ash trees and they were getting ready to sell it. She asked what should she do? He told her to treat it right now, because it was part of the resale value.

To break even, if we use the 24 number, we need to sell our home before 24 years are up. Otherwise, we didn't save any money. They were just kicking the can down-the-road.

When you look at public trees, the same number and the same options, he asked if we are intending to sell the City of Stow move to Arizona? He stated no. They weren't selling parkland. They weren't selling property. It was something they had forever. So, really comparing removal and treating cost was not appropriate in the municipal realm.

I will tell you right now, all ash trees in Stow are going to die. He was going to guarantee them that. In fact, every single tree in Stow is going to die. Everyone in this room is going to die – hopefully not today. No one gets thru life alive.

At some point, every tree in Stow will die, because they are a living organism. Somebody will have to cut it down or if not, they will have to pick it up off of someone or something. So, comparing removal costs, removal costs will always be there. So, comparing it with treatment is not appropriate for the municipal realm.

The third thing we need to look at is the cost benefit of this. How do we compare the cost of treatment for what we get back? If we look at the value of trees, we can look at the ecological services they provide – carbon sequestration, energy savings thru air conditioning and reduced air conditioning and heating, the air pollution they collect and the other values that they give us.

He pointed out a graph on the screen. As the tree gets bigger, those ecological services get bigger until they hit a stabilizing period, then they start to decline and, at that point, we need to cut them down and the value drops off. That was pretty simple.

What we can do, and in our urban forest year-after-year we can see that we do this, if we remove a tree before it is ready to, we remove a tree because we are putting in a sewer line or a gas line comes in and they have to get rid of a tree or a homeowner wants to reposition his driveway and we cut down a tree prematurely, what we lose is the area in yellow.

If we replant it right away, we do start getting some of the value back in the next tree that we've got. If it was a relatively large tree that we removed, we were starting to get those big services being provided, so there was a fair amount of loss in that one area. Small trees, if they remove those and replace them, we do get value, but it is not a lot.

If we look at how much, if they take the red line and subtract that from the top line, we get a graph that looks like this. I apologize for my graphs, this is the best I can do drawing freehand on this program.

What happens is we get a graph that looks like this. Now, if we superimpose the cost of treatment, that's the benefit. What's the cost? That's the treatment with different sizes. We get everything above that dotted line as profit and if it is below that dotted line, we are losing money with our treatments. There's our breakeven point. A tree will grow for a period of time, then we will have broke even.

Small trees though look like that. We never find a point at which their cost benefit to treat small trees. So, if we are going to treat trees, we need to treat old trees.

We can apply this, because the U.S. Forest Service in the last 15 years had done a tremendous amount of work actually being able to calculate those ecological services that we get from trees. There is a process called I-Tree. Ms. Mottl can certainly share that with you. It looks very similar to the graph that we presented.

If we look at ash trees and what they give us, if we compare that to our replacement trees, in this case he had picked up pin oak and red maple, what we find is that we can graph this and get a cost benefit.

Ms. Mottl had sent him the numbers for your trees. This is what you reported. You have 449 trees of different sizes and classes. The column there is the ES value. Those are the ecological services that we get each year from these different individual tree. We multiply them by the number of trees in that size class. There is a total. So, you get about \$19,777.00 in ecological services from the ash you have on this list.

To treat those ash trees, you are going to spend about \$18,900.00. So, you are going to make a profit, and you are slightly above that dotted line with your entire population, of \$877.00 in ecological services or about 4.4%. You are going to have to find almost \$20,000 a year in order to save about \$800.00 in ecological services.

If you notice the first two (up to 6" in diameter), those aren't even worth saving. You lose money. It costs you more to treat them than you get in ecological services.

This was an important factor to consider when you are spending your money. Is this a good investment?

Factor 4 plays into that because the cost of treatment must be calculated accurately. This goes back to some of the sale pitches. We have this product. You just have one of the guys in your crew apply it. No problem.

First of all, these chemicals need to be applied by a certified pesticide applicator. If you have somebody on staff to do that fine. However, he didn't have a single city he worked with that had more people than they know what to do with. In fact, in 2009, the average city service staff was about half of what it was in 2003. With the economic crisis, they cut those people and retired people weren't replaced, so now in most of the cities he was working with they were doing twice as much work with half the staff.

Who do you have sitting around looking for work? He didn't know of any city. He didn't know if Ms. Mottl had anybody. Her guys were probably jumping. What are you going to have to remove from your service list right now when you assign them a new task of treating these trees? You have to calculate all that cost in to get a feel for what it is going to cost to treat.

You can't just do it a couple of times. Maybe your Dog Catcher can do that too. He was sure he had nothing better to do. So, maybe you don't chase dogs. Maybe you take something else off. He asked how long was the Mayor going to accept this lack of service before the constituents start yelling at her because you've chosen to go with treating ash trees?

That's why you would need to hire that work done reasonably or you need to understand that you have to hire that person on staff to do it. There is no free lunch. You need to understand that cost.

Current estimates of the cost of treating an ash tree is about \$7.00/diameter inch per year to insure survival. That includes about \$5.00 to treat the tree. However, the cities that are treating are also finding a lot of dead wood is still in the tree because the chemical doesn't go all the way thru and they have to increase their pruning so the branches don't fall and hit people or cause damage. So, there was \$2.00/year/diameter inch to prune those trees. So, it costs about \$7.00/diameter inch/year.

In 2011, the Tree City USA communities in Ohio, including Stow, reported that they spent about \$10.15 per person on each tree per year. That averages about \$30-\$40 per tree per year. The average diameter of the street trees in Ohio is about 10", so they were talking about \$3.00-\$4.00 per diameter inch on all other maintenance of all urban forests.

So, now they have to add that to the cost of treatment to our ash trees. What they were looking at was all trees took about \$3.00-\$4.00 per diameter inch to maintain and ash trees are going to go up to \$10.00-\$11.00 per diameter inch to maintain. So, double or triple the amount you pay to maintain these ash trees is what you are going to have to spend on this portion of the population.

The other part of the population still needs to be maintained. You can't forget about that when you are busy treating and pruning these trees. This is add-on. It was additional money that you need to come up with if you are going to treat your ash trees.

Finally, that treatment needs to be sustainable for at least 20 years, probably longer, because when the Emerald Ash Borer moves out of this area and heads east, south and west, it travels very well on cars, trucks, and other things traveling as tiny adults. It moves real easily.

It will move out, but it will move back just as fast as it moves out. Therefore, you need to be treating every year. What he tells homeowners is that you need to treat until either the tree or you die, whichever comes first. It is a never-ending process.

So, if you decide you are going to treat for a couple of years to see how it goes, you are basically pushing that rock up the hill. The minute you stop treating, say you do it for five years or so and things are looking pretty good, and decide not to treat, every single removal that you postponed by treating is going to have to be done. That rock is going to roll back down over your hill and you are going to be right back to where you are today treating.

Remember, for 20 years, they were talking about possibly six different mayoral administrations and possibly eleven different City Council administrations and they all have to agree that this is an appropriate use of funds. Now, when it is hot on the burner, they will agree pretty easily. In twenty years, maybe it's not that big a problem.

Maybe, they don't hear about it. Grants will dry up. They will move east and west. He didn't know about here, he was sure it didn't happen in Stow, but most mayors that he dealt with were elected because they were different and they disagreed with the incumbent. So, if the incumbent was here saying we need to treat, that was a platform for the opposition to come in and say we don't need to spend this money.

Can you sustain this for 20 years? These were the important issues to talk about. It was very emotional. People are tied to their trees. I understand that. However, the reason why the Forest Service in the State of Ohio does not give grant money to treat and they have had grant programs in the past to remove ash trees was because if you treat, you are simply kicking the removal can down the road a year or two.

By removing it and replacing it with a tree that is going to be in the \$4.00-\$5.00 range to take care of instead of the \$11.00-\$12.00 range, you have taken on that responsibility and you don't have that problem.

Shaker Heights, when they first discovered it, said they were going to cut down 20% of their ash trees every year and replace them for the next five years. Six years later, Emerald Ash Borer showed up and they didn't care. They had it covered.

These are the issues that you need to consider. This is what I'm here to talk about. He asked what questions people had?

Mr. Lowdermilk stated that several years ago, he believed the arborist department had requested approximately \$40,000 to treat trees. He asked if Mr. Siewert was involved with that? He asked Mr. Siewert if he had ever recommended that a city treat trees? Mr. Siewert stated not to preserve the trees in perpetuity – until they died of natural causes.

He was working with Lakewood right now. They were using treatment to slow the removal over a ten-year process – to spread out the economic costs. It will add money in the long-run, but it will allow them to take them out over ten years. That was the only time he had ever recommended the use of treatment on public trees.

Private trees of homeowners who are emotionally connected to that tree, have the financial wherewithal and were willing to make that investment, go ahead, but not to treat in perpetuity. He was not familiar with any request.

Mr. Lowdermilk asked, knowing that all of us are going to die, how treatment on private property was successful in extending the life of the tree? Mr. Siewert stated it varies, depending on the product, the condition of the tree when you started treating and the quality of the...trees growing in.

However, over in Lorain County, where they have had the infestation a lot longer, there were still treated trees that are looking very good. The homeowner has had them properly pruned every year and they have been maintained. You can maintain them thru this infestation provided that you are willing to spend the money and make the effort.

Mr. Lowdermilk asked Mr. Siewert if he was aware of any communities that have partnered with their residents where the residents wanted to keep the trees to allow them to pay for the treatment of the tree on public property? Mr. Siewert stated yes. In fact, Ms. Mottl would be a better person to discuss that. He believed the City Arborist, in the City's Management Plan, had that opportunity.

Ms. Mottl stated our current Management Plan that was approved back in 2010 actually has that in there. If the resident wants to currently treat their tree, they can, but they just need to let her or her department know that so when they were going down the street removing the ash trees, they knew they had to leave that one alone. So far, since that plan was approved in 2010, nobody has come forward.

Mr. Lowdermilk asked if the \$10.00 per person per year to maintain the trees was an average cost? He asked if that would include the City of Stow as part of that number? Mr. Siewert stated yes.

That was the 240 some odd Tree Cities in Ohio, including the City of Stow. Each year you report the total money you spent on it. That was where those numbers came from. It also includes Arbor Day and other expenditures, but this was for pruning, removal and planting. That was pretty reasonable.

Mr. Lowdermilk stated it wasn't unlikely that we are spending close to \$340,000 per year maintaining trees then.

Mr. D'Antonio asked if the Management Plan was for the City to manage the trees for the residents? Mr. Wren stated Ordinance No. 2010-103 was when City Council adopted the Management Plan. It was sectioned out. There were street trees, an introduction, park trees and trees on private property. So, it addresses all those different areas.

As Ms. Mottl had said, the resident does have the option to stop the City from cutting down the tree so he can treat it. At that point though, if the treatment is not working and the tree becomes a hazard, the City has to step in.

Mr. D'Antonio asked if the City would rely on the resident to do the treatment? Mr. Wren stated 100%. Mr. D'Antonio asked if the City would do it for them and charge them? Mr. Wren stated no.

Mr. Pribonic asked if a resident wanted to treat a tree but a life-expectancy was done, if the City would still come out and cut the tree down free-of-charge? Mr. Wren stated if there is a hazardous street tree, we come out and take that tree out free-of-charge relatively speaking.

Mr. Pribonic stated so it wouldn't matter if they held onto that tree longer. It wasn't going to penalize them in anyway. Mr. Wren stated no. Our only concern would obviously be, and given the very small number of requests we have received thus far, he was sure Ms. Mottl could track where the residents said they wanted to keep their ash trees. We will certainly drive by, take a look and hope that it is maintaining and healthy. However, if it becomes a hazard, that was when the City will have to take action.

Mr. Pribonic asked if somebody wanted to treat his tree, if he would have to provide the City with documentation? Did they have to show they were doing it? Was there anything set-up? What happens if somebody said he was going to treat his treat, but didn't?

Ms. Mottl stated when they were looking at it when they were doing the Management Plan in 2010, they felt it would be very obvious if the resident said he wanted to treat it if he was treating it or not.

On Crown Pointe, where they removed some trees last year and replanted them with the grant, the rest of the trees are infested. Last year, they looked good during the summer. However, as soon as the leaves went down, you could see all the wood-

pecker damage. This year, the trees were 50%-75% dead. So, it will be obvious if they are treating it or not.

Mr. Wren stated we do not have anything in the adopted plan that addresses that.

Mr. Lowdermilk stated other than making sure Council is informed of what is going on, he was kind of at a loss as to why there is an issue here with the residents. We have a plan that says the residents have the ability and can treat their trees as long as they bear that cost. If it becomes a hazardous tree, the City is going to take it down. He didn't understand why the residents had to come to Council to beg them to let them do something that we have a process for them to do.

Mr. Wren stated the reason they did this presentation was Mr. Adaska had requested a discussion of it because of the concerns of people on Glenrich Circle. However, this had been clearly stated in Ordinance No. 2010-103 – the process that they go thru.

Mr. Lowdermilk stated he was getting the feeling that the residents either weren't made aware of this or were led to believe that this was not an option. He had as much a concern if they had a plan in-place that the residents were not being informed about. If they have this right, he was as bothered by that as he was about not allowing them to do some of this stuff. He wanted that answered too at some point.

Mr. Adaska stated two weeks ago, we had talked about this in a Planning Committee Meeting because he had been approached by a few residents on Glenrich Circle. They had a concern because at least one of the residents had a conversation with Ms. Mottl. He thought they had been exchanging email.

The resident had asked if she could try to save her tree on the tree lawn – not have it cut-down automatically just because it was an ash tree and was going to die at some point. She wanted the opportunity to treat the tree. As far as she was concerned, it wasn't about dollars, it was about the beauty of the tree.

He asked how you quantified that? He asked how that was added into the formula and say that the beauty of the trees on the public street are not important to the residents. Even though they were on the public right-of-way, there still was a point that they were trying to make. If they were willing to treat the trees, they wanted to be able to do that. He thought they would speak to that when Mr. Pribonic allowed them to speak.

He also thought that the City needed to do a better job of informing the residents when they were going to go to a street and cut down their trees. He thought it was 3-4 weeks ago that Ms. Mottl's crew or a subcontractor went to a neighborhood and cut down forty-some trees in one day. The people who worked for a living came home and found all their trees that were in the tree lawn missing.

He thought they needed to do a better job of informing people. He knew it was costly. He knew sometimes it was difficult, because when you tell a resident he is going to lose a tree, all of a sudden he gets all flustered and wants to contact his representatives which slows down the process. He understood all that. However, he felt it was important, because some of these people paid for those trees on that street. They didn't consider them to be owned by 4,000 people in the City. They considered those trees in the tree lawn their trees.

Mr. Siewert wanted to address Mr. Adaska's question concerning aesthetic beauty. In the ecological services, there is an accountability for the aesthetics. It was one of the five variables that is calculated by the Forest Service when we generate those numbers. It wasn't just a carbon sequestration. That was taken into account. However, there was a line there of where do you go from a true number that can be defended to that emotional personal case?

Just like there were a lot of good memories with his old Ford Ranger, they weren't going to give him \$5,000 for that rust bucket. He got \$250. That was the true value. Therefore, he thought they needed to be realistic with that.

Yes, he understood there was an ownership to and a part of it. That was why the paying for treatment was fine, because they were paying for it. However, he dealt with a lot of communities. When the homeowner comes out and says he wants something done, and you give him the option that you don't usually do this, but if you want it done, you can pay for it, here's the bill, the conversation changes. We want a lot of things done when it is free, but what is really the value to us? Those were issues that plagued urban forestry and was something that they needed to deal with.

Ms. Mottl would need to address the communications point. However, really, those city infrastructures and managing City infrastructure costs effectively means that they need to have a plan.

However, the aesthetic value was calculated in the number that they looked at.

Mr. Pribonic knew that the City did have a process in place and they knew a type of tree that is affected. However, moving forward with this process, he asked how far ahead do they look at something and say that there is going to have to be something done?

Ms. Mottl stated when she gets out of the office and goes out she could pretty much tell you what streets right now are invested. Almost every tree in the City, she was pretty confident, was 100% infested to some degree. Some were 75% infested. Some might only be one or two years.

People have to keep in mind that when they found the infestation out at the camp grounds, they had little larva underneath the trunk which had been there for two years already. You cannot see that. I do not have x-ray vision. So, when you start seeing the

damage up in the tree crown and the trunk, you have already had two years of damage. That larva goes inside the tree and disrupts the food and water flow up and down the tree. So, the damage has already been done at that point.

Mr. Pribonic asked in looking specifically at the Emerald Ash Borer with the ash trees, how far ahead are we looking saying that this street will be targeted in two years, a year or whatever? What is the process you are looking at?

Ms. Mottl stated right now she could give them a list of streets that have to be done this winter because there is 50%-75% done. Mr. Razor's neighborhood, she was sorry, was one of them. She had also received a lot of phone calls in June. Camden, Crown Pointe, Eagle, Mallard, Mellissa Rae, Renee Lynn, all of those were affected.

We had communicated, had things in the paper and had open houses in the last 5-6 years. However, at the open houses, they had one person come. They had put it in the paper. She had done a series of articles.

Those need to go. The residents are saying that they have a lot of dead branches on those trees. From a cost standpoint, she didn't have the crew to go thru and prune out the dead. If she was going to go in, they were going to have to take the whole tree out.

Mr. Pribonic asked as far as treating the tree and pruning it, who bears that cost? Say that somebody wants to keep his tree, he wants to treat it, etc. Who would bear the cost with the initial pruning of the tree? Mr. Wren asked if Mr. Pribonic was talking about the ash trees? Mr. Pribonic stated he was. Mr. Wren stated the resident.

He wanted to address one item regarding communications. We did have a meeting about that internally. Those trees that will be addressed this winter will have notifications go out in mid-October. They had handled that internally and didn't expect to run into that in the future.

Mr. Pribonic asked if there was something in that notification saying that you do have an option? Mr. Wren stated yes. They would have something notifying those residents that they will be out this winter to cut their trees down. They cannot give specific weeks, but they will be out during the winter months to take them down. If they choose to try to save or treat that tree, Ms. Mottl's contact information will be in there for the residents to contact so they can identify that tree and not take it.

It also came up at the last meeting they had about some trees on a street look health while others don't. They have asked that our crew go in and take the ones that look unhealthy. However, from a logistical standpoint, that is not the way that we would operate. We have to go in and if nobody wants to save a tree on that street, they will take them all. If three residents do, we will leave those trees. The other ones that are infected will have to come out all at once.

Mr. Pribonic asked specifically what was the proper time to treat a tree, during the fall, spring, summer or winter, or does it matter? Mr. Siewert stated the tree has to be in full leaf and functioning in order to take the material up. So, typically, they start in April or May doing that and then thru the summer.

However, he would like to make a clarification here because there are two important issues to remember. Ms. Mottl had alluded to it already. By the time we see the infestation appearing in the tree, that infestation has been going on anywhere from 2-4 years and the population is built.

Population dynamics of this pest are you don't see it until the population builds to the point where it hits an explosion, a j-curve, a tipping point. So, a tree will look fine one year. It will go into the fall with maybe a little leaf color early. However, the next year, it won't leaf out because it has hit that tipping point and it goes.

To the point of treating, once you recognize that that tree is declining and has dead-wood in it, treatment is very ineffective. You can spend a lot of money and still lose the tree because it already has been so heavily infested.

As Ms. Mottl had said, the damage is done by the larva that feed in the vascular tissue - that tissue that carries water up and food down. It girdles and destroys that. That is why it sprouts from the base, because the roots haven't been killed yet, the top has been killed. So, once you are to the point where you are looking at the tree and saying that's a problem, treatment is really not an option anymore. Treatment needed to have started 3-5 years earlier.

His recommendation is where Stow is right now with a very high building population, it is going to get worse next year, treating is really probably throwing good money after bad because that material that is injected into the base needs to be moved thru the tree by those vascular bundles that have already been killed and cut-off, so the mechanism that gets that chemical that protects the tree up into the canopy, that pipeline, has already been severed, therefore, you can't get that material up and the tree just continues to die.

His recommendation to homeowners is you hire a certified Arborist with a pesticides applicators license and the first step is that you evaluate the tree. Is it in infestation? Is it not infested or lightly infested where the material will still move thru the tree? Also, is the tree structurally sound – it doesn't have v-crotches or other things that will cause it to fail.

If it is a sound tree and it is not infested, yes, then there is a chance that we can preserve it. Coming in after the fact when you notice the tree is dying, it was really too late for that.

Those two factors need to be considered. Once the branch is dead, there is no way we can get it back. Once the tree has been compromised, he didn't know what state they were in so he would have to refer to Ms. Mottl how bad the trees are? His guess was if they have already identified the street needing to be taken out this winter, that is because the infestation is so heavy it is obvious and treatment is probably not a good option anymore.

Mr. Pribonic stated he was going to open the meeting up to the audience. They would try to answer some of peoples' questions.

Jane Gsellman
4032 Glenrich Circle

Mrs. Gsellman stated they were here at the last meeting. She wanted to clear a few things up for Mr. Lowdermilk.

The reason we came was because of my email communication with Ms. Mottl. It wasn't that we were all dying to save our trees and we didn't think we could. Ms. Mottl had made it very clear that we could treat our trees if we wanted to. We knew that. I am going to treat my tree. I don't know that that's what the majority of my neighbors wish to do.

The reason we all were so concerned was because in the communication with Ms. Mottl we were told that all ash trees would be cut-down and they would not be replaced. So, our concern coming here and raising our concerns to Mr. Adaska was we are going to be left with no trees.

We asked if you guys aren't going to plant trees for us, to let us plant a tree in our tree lawn. We were told no, you can't do anything in your tree lawn. That's against City ordinance. So, our final answer, after several communications that she had had, was we are taking your tree, we will not replace it, you cannot replace it.

That was why we brought this issue up. We were told we were leaving you treeless. Then, our only option was to treat it, because you weren't going to treat it, you were going to cut it down, you weren't going to replace it and you weren't going to let us replace it. That is our concern. We don't want a treeless street.

Mayor Drew thanked Mrs. Gsellman for her clarification. She appreciated that. She did think that that was where some miscommunication occurred.

We did decide earlier this spring after some other incidents of street trees being replaced and residents and Mr. Lowdermilk had brought it to their attention that residents in Ward 3 in certain instances were unhappy that the street trees were replaced. Therefore, we had been put in a position where we have certain members of Council bringing

forward residents' concerns asking why they put a tree back on and other members of Council bringing forward residents' concerns asking for another tree put back on.

They needed to take a moratorium to figure out the best way to assess what is the residents' preference, what is the best thing for our other infrastructure, including sidewalks, waterlines and things like that, and not have a one size fits all policy (we are going to do trees all the time no matter if people want them or not or we are not going to do trees).

I do think there was some miscommunication and I apologize for that. However, it certainly wasn't their intention to say we are never planting another tree on the streets in the City of Stow, but rather to figure it out.

Some residents are upset when they get a tree; some residents are upset when they don't. How are we going to handle that effectively and make sure that we honor both the needs of the community at-large and the individual residents? I apologize for miscommunication that may have come from my administration on that, but that is actually where we are at.

Mrs. Gsellman stated she had seen a slide that listed different trees and sizes. She could certainly understand removing small trees. What was the point? However, she asked if we are looking at any of the larger trees in the community that had a lot of value, not just sentimental or aesthetic value, but are providing shade and benefits? She asked if they were looking at saving any of those large trees that are still healthy? Ms. Mottl stated with the current Management Plan.

Silvana Sensus
4049 Glenrich Circle

Mrs. Sensus stated she just wanted clarification. The City was saying you may or may not replant a tree. She was confused on what that means for their street then.

If the tree needs cut down, it needs cut down. I'm fine with that. My issue, as is with Jane and when our neighbors all met a few weeks ago, is that we didn't want to be without a tree.

Mayor Drew stated understood. To answer Mrs. Sensus question in the shortest way possible, yes, we need to develop a process as I said that takes into account other infrastructure, a cost benefit analysis and the preferences of the homeowner there.

As I said, we have had some Council Members bring forth complaints when we do replace street trees and other Council Members bring forth complaints when we won't. Obviously, a one size fits all policy of every time a street tree is cut down we are automatically going to replace it isn't working, nor would a policy of we are never going to replace a street tree be appropriate. So, flushing out how we are going to do that in

the best most respectful manner with the homeowner, looking at the risk that may be associated with other infrastructure as well as developing a plan for if we have to come cut down your ash tree, what's a reasonable time frame and how can we get that tree replanted if we are going to do it, all of those things need to be assessed.

It just became apparent that we had clearly conflicting views from our elected officials as well as residents and we need to figure out a way to be more mindful of what may be very differing opinions, neither which are wrong, but are different.

Mrs. Sensius didn't think anyone else on the street had any intention of treating the ash trees.

Mayor Drew appreciated the clarification that they did make it clear that treatment was an option if private homeowners wished to do that. Certainly, the City would not hide that from someone. We certainly are happy to have someone entertain that if they want to, but we also want people to know the realistic risks and costs associated with that if they undertake that project. She thanked her.

Nancy Kroft
1783 Ritchie Road

Mrs. Kroft didn't live in a neighborhood where they had the privilege of having some trees provided to them on a 50%/50% basis. That would be nice because they get a lot of deer damage there. However, the amount of money that Urban Forestry has to use for new trees is provided by City Council. Therefore, it was up to you guys.

Mr. Lowdermilk stated he was not a big fan of planting trees and replanting trees in the tree lawn for the various reasons that the Mayor had stated with the damage they can cause and the added expense they can cause the City and the residents in sewer repairs, sidewalks repairs and those types of things. However, he was an advocate for the City working with those residents who want to plant a tree in their front yard if they want a tree.

He thought that was the program we need to look at. Then, they weren't burdening our service department with pruning, treating and watering. It was the resident's tree. If the resident has that much interest in getting a tree and putting it in his front yard, he thought it was more likely he was going to work to take care of it and maintain it. That was part of his reasoning.

He had residents that don't want trees and some that do. However, he thought the City's program, rather than planting in the tree lawn, should be focused about how do we help those residents who are looking or desire to have a tree in front of their house, whether it's showing them how to plant it or helping them decide what tree to buy or, maybe, we can buy trees in bulk and resell them to the residents or something of that sort. He thought that was probably a better way to go because you've taken ownership

of it and he thought it was more likely that the resident was going to work to take care of that tree.

Mr. Pribonic asked Ms. Mottl to respond to that. He asked why it was important to have tree lawn trees? He asked how this had come about? What Tree City means? What bearing a tree has on the value and the value of a tree? He was asking for the basics.

Mrs. Mottl stated back in November of 2013, they had a contractor, Davey Resource Group, come thru and do an aerial view. The City was 41% canopy cover. They do have a lot of street trees. Street trees do help as long as you plant the right plant in the right place.

There are some residents for some reason who do not want the tree behind the sidewalk. They don't want the tree in the backyard. They kind of like it that there is a tree lawn tree and that the City maintains it. There are people that want the tree, but do not want the maintenance aspect of it. She could go down streets and show you where that was happening right now.

Mr. Lowdermilk stated there were a lot of things he would love to have if he didn't have to maintain them. Ms. Mottl stated she knew that. He was seeing that but street trees do add a lot, as Mr. Siewert had said with the carbon sequestration and heat island effect. Stow currently has 41% tree canopy cover. That includes street trees and everything in backyards.

We do have some people on our Shade Tree Commission. One lives at the top of a hill. He had 40 ash trees and was down to 20. He had complained about all the erosion that had happened this year, it had really changed the complexity.

Street trees are important for that and for shade. If you get the right tree in the right spot, they actually prolong the life of the blacktop over the years, because it keeps the sun from beating on it and the frost heave and all that. So, street trees are important. However, also are trees on private property.

Mr. Pribonic stated he wanted to put Ms. Rayman on the spot one time. They had talked about this. He thought it was funny how things kind of go full circle, even with storm water management and so forth. They had talked about that a couple of weeks ago – what a tree actually does. He asked Ms. Rayman to explain that real quickly.

Ms. Rayman stated a tree actually is a storm water management device because of the amount of gallons it absorbs of surface water. It will absorb the water and it will transpire into the atmosphere. That water is water we do not have to treat in our municipal system and we don't have to size it into our pipes, which decreases our infrastructure costs.

So, she was all for planting a tree. However, like Mr. Lowdermilk had said, there are issues as far as where they are and, like Ms. Mottl had said, the types of trees were very important. She thought it was a very good asset. It was relatively easy as long as everybody has the information and education. She felt it was a very good way to go as far as storm water management.

Mr. Pribonic thanked the residents who attended this meeting this evening. He knew there were some concerns. He hoped they had answered many of their questions. Ms. Mottl was always available along with Mr. Wren. If people had any further questions, they should feel free to contact either him or them. They would be happy to help them.

Storm Water/Sanitary Sewer Issues

Mr. Pribonic stated they were still keeping this item first and foremost in front of Council.

Amend Code – Section 927.07 – Stormwater Management Utility Schedule of Fees & Charges

Mrs. Zibritosky was currently looking at amending Section 927.07. Therefore, he would hold that item this evening.

Amend Code – Section 927.12 – Stormwater Inflow & Infiltration Elimination Program

Mr. Pribonic stated if it was the wishes of the Public Improvement Committee to forward this on to Council tonight, he would accept a motion.

MOTION:

Mr. D'Antonio moved and Mr. Adaska seconded to assign a number to the sample legislation amending Section 927.12, Stormwater Inflow & Infiltration Elimination Program, and send it on to Council.

Mr. Adaska stated as Council could see outside, the weather is changing. Just like our street department and engineering staff would like Council to appropriate funds for them so they could get at some of the stormwater issues they would be working on yet this fall before the weather changes, the same thing goes for this legislation.

He thought it was important legislation. It was not a do all piece of legislation, but it was a good resource for the residents and the City. He would like to see it moved forward.

Yes Votes: Pribonic, D'Antonio, Costello & Adaska

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

Adjournment

MOTION:

Mr. Adaska moved and Mr. D'Antonio seconded to adjourn.

Yes Votes: Pribonic, D'Antonio, Costello & Adaska

No Votes: None. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Bonnie J. Emahiser
Clerk of Council

John Pribonic
Chairman