

March 18, 2009

Present:

Commissioners Joanne Clark, Michael Brady, Robert Snyder, Donna Hunt and Philip Dinkel, Administrative Clerk Sabrenia Yohn, Secretary Dorothy Olley, and twenty members of the public.

Call to Order:

President Clark called to order the March 18, 2009 meeting of the Commissioners of St. Michaels at 6:05 p.m. in the meeting room of the Edgar M. Bosley, Jr. Municipal Building, 300 Mill Street. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Announcement of Closed Session:

President Clark announced that the Commissioners had met in closed session at 5:00 p.m. pursuant to Maryland Code, State Government Article § 10-508, (a) to discuss administrative matters.

Discussion Item:

Trees and Sidewalks on West Chestnut Street.

President Clark opened the discussion of trees on West Chestnut Street. She explained that the Town's Director of Public Works, Jeffrey Richardson, had met with Norman Brady of Bartlett Tree Service and identified four trees as being most affected by Bacterial Leaf Scorch (BLS) and appear to be dying. These trees are all Pin-Oaks and are located at 412 South Talbot Street, 115 West Chestnut Street, 116 West Chestnut Street and 117 West Chestnut Street. The tree at 412 South Talbot Street is dead and needs to be removed. The other three trees will be monitored and removed as necessary. There are presently sites where trees had been removed in prior years that can be replanted with new trees. Three sites at which four trees could be planted to replace the removed trees are 100 West Chestnut Street, 102 West Chestnut Street and 107 West Chestnut Street. President Clark said that she, Town staff and Mr. Richardson had also met with Jane Hopkinson of West Chestnut Street to review and choose appropriate replacement trees from the Streetscape Task Force tree species list. It was determined that suitable replacements would be hybrid elms, chosen for their similarity to the existing trees, but with deeper root systems and better resistance to disease. Mr. Richardson said that trees on West Chestnut Street had been fertilized, crown pruned and treated with Cambistat in 2008 and would be monitored through the coming season to determine how well they are responding to the maintenance performed. President Clark said that depending on how the trees do through the summer, the Town was budgeting for approximately 9 to 10 trees for West Chestnut Street in the coming fiscal year. A number of residents had questions for the Commissioners, Jane Hopkinson, and Jeff Richardson about tree choices and timing. Mr. Richardson noted that the best planting time would be fall for the replacement trees. Some residents said they were willing to work with the Town's maintenance timetable to assist with the watering to ensure the trees' survival. President Clark said residents would be informed of the planting schedule and tree selections prior to the commencement of the work and the areas to receive new trees would be visibly staked.

As there were no additional questions regarding trees, President Clark opened a discussion on the replacement of sidewalks on West Chestnut Street, noting that a major issue for the Town was cost. President Clark said the Commissioners had received estimates for replacement of sidewalks with brick, as specified in the Town's recently adopted Ordinance 391, and that there

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was a broad range on the pricing. The Commissioners and residents discussed going out for bids to get additional estimates. As a short-term solution, one resident suggested the possibility of using brick only on those sections of sidewalk that had been removed around tree roots and where there is currently aggregate. Residents commented that the aggregate was muddy, tracked into the houses, and some residents were walking in the street to avoid the aggregate sections. Another resident asked about replacing the concrete sidewalks with concrete which was followed by a discussion regarding the adverse affects to the trees in using concrete. Mark Nestlehutt of West Chestnut Street asked about the timetable for completion of the sidewalks. President Clark assured residents that based on their concerns the Commissioners would make the sidewalks a priority and would begin the process of obtaining bids on both complete and partial replacement of the sidewalks in the next month or so. President Clark also said that depending on the bid amounts and the Town's budget, there may be a need to share the costs of replacement with residents. In any event, President Clark reiterated that residents would be notified of future discussions on the sidewalks.

Comments from the Public:

Frank Hopkinson of West Chestnut Street commented that the streetlights on the street were leaning and asked if anything could be done to correct them. Laurence Pratt of Mulberry Street said that he was opposed to the use of concrete for sidewalks and that flexibility in the bidding process would serve the Town well. Roy Myers of East Chestnut Street suggested the possibility of the Town obtaining a supplemental bond for funding the sidewalk replacement.

As there were no additional questions or comments, President Clark thanked the residents for attending the meeting.

Adjournment:

President Clark adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy C. Olley
Assistant Town Clerk