



**Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee
Monthly Meeting Minutes
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411
February 16, 2006 – 9:30 - 11:30 am.**

Attendees:

Asleson, Marty	City of Lino Lakes	Mueller, Don	MN DNR Metro Forestry
Bacon, Bruce	City of Ramsey	Newberger, Lara	City of Plymouth
Brown, Kirk	Tree Trust	Nicholson, Stephen	Kunde Company Inc.
Cordes, Jeff	City of Eden Prairie	Nozal, Gail	Tree Trust
Eiber, Tom	MN DNR Forestry	Olson, Glen	Kunde Company Inc.
Hacker, Jan	Resource Analytics	Payne, Tim	City of Lino Lakes
Hanson, Dave	University of Minnesota	Pekarek, Ken	MN DNR Forestry
Hermann, James	Minneapolis Parks & Rec. Bd.	Simons, Ken	Heritage Shade Tree Cons.
Hoekstra, Jesse		Stennes, Mark	S&S Tree & Hort. Spec.
Holman, Ken	MN DNR Metro Forestry	Sundmark, Dave	St. Paul Parks & Rec.
Max, Michael	EnvionMentor Systems	Widin, Katharine	Plant Health Assoc. Inc.
Monear, Janette	Tree Trust		

BUSINESS SECTION:

Call to Order, Introductions, Nomination of New Members & Review and Approval of Previous Minutes.

Simons called the meeting to order at 9:40am.

Motion by Holman, second by Cordes to approve the minutes from the 1/19/06 meeting as presented.
Motion carried.

Committee and Partner Reports

Janette Monear led off the meeting with a discussion about the importance of national and state initiatives that support urban and community forestry and of Tree Trust's policy and advocacy activities at the national level. The Alliance for Community Trees (ACT) is a national network for nonprofit organizations dedicated to improving communities through tree planting, preservation, care and education. Tree Trust is a founding member of ACT and works with them on policy/funding issues like the Farm Bill where U&CF funding is supported. The Farm Bill is very important as it is the allocation by Congress to support state programs, research and urban forest health monitoring. In 2007 it will be funded at \$26.5 million, down \$1 million from 2006. Holman stated that MN funding from allocations from the farm bill to the states is down 17% this year and that most states are down 20%. The Sustainable Urban Forests Coalition has recommended \$50 million for the Urban and Community Forestry Program, \$6 million for Urban Forest Research and \$2 million for Urban Forest

Health Monitoring in the FY2007 Farm Bill The Sustainable Urban Forests Coalition is a national coalition to advance a unified urban forest agenda for our nation's communities.

Tree Trust is also working with ACT and the U.S. Council of Mayors to establish an Urban & Community Forestry committee They are identifying champions and advocates of urban forestry within membership of this organization to promote trees in urban areas with mayors throughout the country. Mayor Rybak has expressed interest in this initiative. Monear, a TreeLink Board member represents TreeLink on the Sustainable Urban Forestry Council The Sustainable Urban Forests Coalition is a national coalition to advance a unified urban forest agenda for our nation's communities. Monear also discussed TreeLink, which was formed in 1996, to create a national urban forestry information and communications hub. TreeLink, ACT, Sustainable Urban Forestry Coalition, US Council of Mayors and the Farm Bill support state activities sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly. These initiatives are important to know about and support when possible.

On a state and local level, Tree Trust is working with the City of Minneapolis and MPRB (workshops) to plant 1,000 trees in Minneapolis on private lands. Tree Trust is also working on the following projects:

- Kentucky Tree Board training – working with Paul Ries, Oregon, Tree Trust will provide a statewide tree board training and prepared a survey for Kentucky board assessment.
- Mississippi River Business Forum – to better understand the issues and challenges and possible solutions that business face along the Mississippi River Tree Trust, American Iron and the University of Minnesota have organized a luncheon to get input and look at strategies to “green” the business locations.
- USDA Forest Service Invasive Species Stakeholders Workshop – organized and facilitated a day long meeting to assess the USDA Charter for Exotic Invasive Species Research and Development in Northern Research station.
- Minnesota Environmental Briefing Book –as a member of the Minnesota Environmental Partnership, a group of more than 89 statewide environmental groups, wrote an article to support the \$30m legislative bonding bill for the Protect Our Waters Legislative Briefing book.
- Minnesota ReLeaf – working in partnership with the Minnesota DNR Tree Trust will create a “toolkit” to assess community forestry programs for growth and provide technical assistance and promote the importance of urban forestry to communities. Monear stated that we need to create a greater awareness and need for U&CF to cities throughout Minnesota and promote the role of urban forestry positions and/or contracts to help create sustainable tree programs.

Monear concluded by announcing Gail Nozal's resignation from Tree Trust to devote more time to her family. Nozal will continue to serve as Minnesota's ISA Certification Liaison. Members assembled gave Nozal a round of applause for all her hard work on behalf of Tree Trust and the MnSTAC.

Simons reported on activities of the Board of Directors stating that future presentations will be more ecologically/environmentally oriented due to the fact that urban foresters are becoming more multi-task oriented. He also invited all to attend the March 6 strategic planning session to be held from 7:30 am to noon at the Kunde Co. offices, 2489 Rice St., #160, Roseville, MN. Simons also asked for member feedback on meeting 1/4ly rather than monthly. About half of members present indicated a preference for meeting 1/4ly.

Holman reviewed a number of things including two issues of the MN Conservation Volunteer which contained urban forestry articles, an announcement for the 5th annual “Protect Our Water” citizens' day at the capitol sponsored by the Minnesota Environmental Partnership, an announcement for the “Green Industry Day on the Hill” sponsored by MNLA, information concerning District Energy's wood

burning power plant, an invasive species calendar, and the results of a City Forestry Volunteer Survey.

Forum Presentation

“Firewise Minnesota: learn not to burn for your house”

Simons introduced Tom Eiber, the Firewise Program Leader for Minnesota. Eiber in turn introduced Ken Pekarek who also works in the Firewise Program. Firewise Minnesota is a wildfire risk mitigation program and is supported by FEMA. Seventy five percent of Firewise money goes out directly to communities. Firewise activities are comprehensive involving such things as mapping projects with schools, installation of dry hydrants, community wildfire protection plans, fire number signage, access improvements, and thinnings. Eiber showed those present a map indicating where projects had been funded from 2001-2006. The Firewise program engages the community and local partners to accomplish its objectives.

Eiber pointed out that homes are lost from showers of fire brands from crown fires or continuous fuel ladders, such as tall grass and debris, from woods to the home. The zone surrounding a structure is critical (30 foot minimum). The key to reducing home ignitions is a combination of wildland fuel reduction, fuel reduction near the home, and structural change to the home/immediate area.

Four factors determine fire risk:

- Access – long narrow driveways, small turnarounds, and steep hills increase risk.
- Site – pine & other evergreens within 30 feet and ladder fuels increase risk.
- Structure – open soffits, wood siding, cedar roof, close flammables, and unenclosed decks increase risk.
- Fire Use Practices – open burning, recreational fire use, and indoor fireplaces without spark arresters increase risk.

Firewise is educationally and locally oriented (Over 4,000 students reached so far). The program includes events, a web site, promotional materials, publications, and lesson plans/teacher training (50 training sessions so far). Particularly popular are three mobile PC labs complete with laptop computers, a color printer, digital projector, digital aerial photography, topographic maps, highway maps and GPS units that are loaned to schools to undertake Firewise assessments of their communities. These are 70% booked for 2006. Under these projects, remote sensing and GIS is used to rate individual homes fire risk (hundred's of thousands of homes have been done in MN). From the aerial photo interpretation, a map can be created showing the home risk ratings and high risk areas. Then local partners can target specific neighborhoods for house to house visits (40,000 homes have received ground assessments in MN). The key to making the program most effective is that individual communities decide what they need.

The presentation concluded with a discussion of a project the City of Ramsey had undertaken last year.

The next meeting will be on March 16, 2006 and will involve participation in the “Green Industry Day on the Hill”. Max moved, second by Holman to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:40am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan J. Hacker