

Staff Responses to Council Questions

January 20, 2015

8. First Reading

A. Resolution: 942 Maple Avenue Structure Relocation

*In reading through our forestry plan, I spent some time at one of the referenced links (<http://www.na.fs.fed.us/urban/index.shtm>) From Village Municipal Code Chapter 24.1, “*It is further intended to balance the property rights of individual property owners with those of the overall health, safety and welfare interests of the Village. Trees enhance and preserve the air quality of the Village through the filtering effect of trees on air pollutants, reduce noise within the Village through the baffle and barrier effect of trees on the spread of noise, reduce topsoil erosion through the soil retention effect of tree roots, reduce energy consumption through the wind break and shade effects, provide nesting areas for birds and other wildlife which in turn assist in the control of insects, reduce storm water runoff and the costs associated therewith, replenish ground water supplies and protect and increase property values.*”*

**Do we have any data to support the various benefits mentioned? * If so, I would appreciate having it sent to me.*

Yes, the USDA Forest Service published a report quantifying the benefits of urban trees. It is available here:

<http://na.fs.fed.us/urban/treespayusback/vol1/Midwest%20Community%20Tree%20Guide%20final.pdf>.

It seems we should be able to quantify (in relation to table 2.2 and chapter 8) the negative impact on our neighborhood from moving the house by (perhaps we would get assistance from the referenced Illinois Arbor Association).

**Thus I'd like to have an estimate of the following costs*:*

Collectively, the 21 non-ash parkway trees impacted by the house move provide the following benefits based on calculations using the formulas at <http://www.treebenefits.com/calculator/>. Ash trees were not included due to the likelihood of EAB and subsequent removals in the next 1-3 years.

- * Carbon Reduction Savings
10,059 pounds of carbon/year
- * Property Value Impact
\$831/year total for all properties
- * Storm Water Runoff Reduction
22,262 gallons/year

*Section 24.7 states that when folks damage or injure parkway trees, they are subject to fines in accordance with **“The value or partial value of the tree lost shall be as determined by the Village Forester using the most current edition of the Guide for Plant Appraisal prepared by the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers, and edited, published and copyrighted by the International Society of Arboriculture. Various factors used in the tree value calculations for northern Illinois shall be obtained from the most current edition of the Species Ratings and Appraisal Factors for Illinois prepared by the Illinois Arborist Association”**

**. Assuming any changes to the Maple Avenue trees would be considered injury, then using the methodology herein (and the penalties provided for in 24.8), *I'd like an estimate of what we would "fine" someone if the current 942 move were to effect the trees as we currently believe* (including the per offense interpreted as per tree – 24.8). Also, *I'd like to know what the replacement requirements would be* (based on 24.8, it would appear that they are not 1:1).*

In a case such as this, the Village does not assess a fine. A fine is not assessed when a tree is removed or pruned with the approval of the Village. Fines are most often assessed when a tree is struck with a car or a piece of equipment.

However, pursuant to Section 24.3 (b), the Village charges a tree removal permit fee based upon the appraised value of each tree to be removed. Staff established a monetary value for the 20 trees that will be removed or temporarily removed/replanted using a formula that considers the tree species and size. That amount, calculated to be \$12,160, would be available for the Village to use and ensure replacements. With an average cost of \$520 each for 3" caliper trees there would be sufficient funding for 23 trees; however, the actual number of replacement trees planted will depend on the number of suitable locations based on tree spacing, conflicts within the parkways, and acceptance by residents.

Would it also be correct to say, that the proposed plan for tree removal/pruning/trimming is in direct conflict with our number one stated Forestry plan goal (figure 1.1) of promoting a full street corridor?

Yes

*This is (obviously) a unique situation – typically, we're asked to do all we can to protect any trees from disturbance, much less removal. Our community made 40 years of investment in promoting the protection of and enhancement of our tree population – trees are a huge priority in the culture of Downers Grove. *Thus, I'd like us to solicit input from someone or some group without a "horse in this race" *– perhaps local treasure the Morton Arboretum, Illinois Arbor Association or maybe the US Forestry Service. Their opinion of the effect on the remaining trees is of particular interest to me;*

- ** Risk to the future health of the modified trees*
- ** Likelihood and likely time frame for re-growth to the current state*
- ** Time frame for new trees to mature to the extent of those being removed*

Input from someone with the knowledge, experience and insurance for such appraisal work would need considerable lead time, payment and the opportunity to review each tree. Staff from the Morton Arboretum has been forwarding calls they have received back to the Village and others in the forestry industry would likely refrain from taking a position other than to support trees.

There is a risk to the future health of certain trees, particularly the larger trees with the pruning that is needed and some trees will not regrow the branches that would be removed.

The Village's parkway trees grow an average of ½" caliper per year. The number of years for a 3" caliper tree to reach a size of 11" is approximately 16 years.

*Related to Chapter 5 of our Forestry Manual, *would the pruning /trimming proposed comply with the standards referenced in Society of Arboriculture /ANSI standards considered best practices? *In particular;*

** Maintain the crown shape and symmetry typical of the species*

No

** Improve the appearance of the tree*

No

** Encourage upward growth*

No

Additionally, is the spring the best or industry recommended time to be doing such pruning/trimming?

Most trees can be pruned year-round with the exception of trees susceptible to diseases which can be spread to fresh pruning cuts like Dutch Elm Disease and Oak Wilt which are a problem in the summer months.

What is the total Village investment of either cash or foregone revenue and what is the process by which these would be disposed?

** Marquis on Maple permits and fees*

The estimated building permit fee for the Marquis on Maple is \$140,000, exclusive of any out-of-pocket expenses and bonds that will be collected.

** Permits and fees related to the potential new site of the Edwards House*

The demolition fee (building and engineering) that could be waived for a single family residential property is \$620. The applicant would still be responsible for all bonds and out-of-pocket Village expenses.

** Edwards House rehabilitation permits and fees*

The estimated building permit fee that could be waived for the rehabilitation of the Edwards House is \$1,650. The applicant would still be responsible for all bonds and out-of-pocket Village expenses. The application fee for historic landmark designation is \$400.

** Tree removal/pruning/planting costs*

These costs would be paid by the party seeking to relocate the house. They would be available for the Village to use and ensure replacements. Staff will be responsible for the replanting.

**Could we estimate the additional Village costs (beyond the permit fees and trees? * Including things such as additional staff time attributed to the move, monitoring the pruning/trimming/cutting, etc.*

Staff estimates approximately 80 hours of additional staff time related to this project. The pruning and trimming will be completed by the permit holder.

Can or will we be requiring a bond of some sort related to the near term viability of modified trees?

The Village could require Mr. Tillotson to submit a bond or other security to guarantee the future health and viability of the trees to be pruned.

ATTACHMENTS

Online Comments are attached.



rRemarks Data for January 20, 2015 Village Council Meeting

Agenda Section	Agenda Item	Comment	Commenter
Public Comments	Comments of a General Nature	It is obvious that those proposing the relocation of the property at 942 Maple Ave have no regard for either this historical area or Villlage aesthetics, in general. I vehemently oppose this destruction of village Character along Maple Avenue.	Tim Drexler 5230 Blodgett Ave.
First Reading	First Reading A. INF 2014-6006	<p>1. Lets see, you are going to give up the building permit fees for both properties, cut down more trees than Mr. T did so a old house can be gutted, moved, and almost totally rebuilt inside and out. Why not just build a new house that looks like it?</p> <p>. 2. What benefit do I get as a taxpayer if the Village gives up hundres of thousands of dollars in permit fees to give a HANDOUT to a private party when buying and moving a house?</p> <p>3. The Village wants to continue in the Suburban Tree Consotrium by cutting down 24 large trees to move a private party's house. Makes no sense to me.</p>	Wayne Enerson 4805 Cross Street
Active Agenda	Active Agenda A. RES 2015-6043	I object to the wording -- OBSOLETE POLICE STATION - that Mr. Hose has suggested for the referendum question. Has the entire world judged it to be obsolete? Should be REPLACE POLICE STATION. He is loading the question with bias.	Wayne Enerson 4805 Cross Street
4. Public Comments	Comments of a General Nature	I do not think the Council is acting as a good steward of the taxpayers money if they want to spend \$100,000 on two gateway signs. Will they be GOLD plated and rotate? Does the Village want to compete with the signs in Las Vagas?	Wayne Enerson 4805 Cross Street