

Tree Protection Board Minutes

Monday, April 11, 2022

Members Present:

Peter Wallace
Kenny Sott
Danny Burbage

Staff Present:

Becca Zimmerman, Planner II
Bill Salisbury, Arborist
Pamela Wike, Planner I

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am. Mr. Sott asked for consideration of the March 8, 2022 meeting minutes. Mr. Wallace made a motion for approval of the minutes as presented, and Mr. Burbage made the second. The motion carried.

Old Business

New Business

1. 136 Linwood Ln. – Removal of one Pine tree

There was no applicant present. Mr. Salisbury explained what the applicant would like to do. Mr. Salisbury discussed the proposed garage and pine tree in the back yard. Mr. Salisbury stated they already removed two water oaks due to rot and they have a big pine in the back yard that is healthy. They need to place the garage within 10' of the pine tree. We usually take trees out within 10' of new construction, but not always. There was discussion of moving the proposed garage away from the pine tree, but that would affect the turn around area. Mr. Sott talked to the property owner and agrees moving the garage closer to the house would affect turn around area and apron for parking and is not conducive to this project. Mr. Salisbury asked Ms. Zimmerman if anything is going on at the vacant property behind this one. Ms. Zimmerman stated they received BAR (Board of Architectural Review) approval to build a house at 151 Gadsden, but they have concerns about flooding and the new garage. Ms. Zimmerman said the Engineering Dept. is watching both of these lots closely, since there is already flooding issues on the vacant lot behind. Mr. Salisbury discussed drainage and where the water naturally goes. Mr. Wallace mentioned there was also Stormwater work and discussed the drainage further. Mr. Sott requested the permit status for the garage. Ms. Zimmerman stated she has not signed off on it yet because it was going before the Tree Protection Board, but from a Planning perspective they are meeting the requirements. Mr. Sott asked if there was anything stopping it from moving forward at this point. Ms. Zimmerman stated only if Engineering has an issue. She also stated she believes they have plenty of trees to meet the required mitigation. Mr. Salisbury said the property owner would plant back if necessary. Mr. Wallace discussed the review process involving Engineering. Mr. Sott made a motion to approve the removal of one pine tree for a

garage. Mr. Burbage seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Wallace would like to see mitigation be included. Mr. Sott stated this is not a requirement for this project. Ms. Zimmerman discussed lot sizes and mitigation requirements included in our UDO. Ms. Zimmerman stated they would have to maintain 122" and she will make sure they meet the requirement before signing off on the permit and if the required inches are not met, they will have to mitigate. The Board and Ms. Zimmerman continued the mitigation discussion.

2. Brighton Court off Brighton Park Blvd. – Removal of 53 Pine trees, four Oak trees, and two Other trees

Mr. Durante a Civil Engineer with Empire Engineering described the project in Nexton as an office park with two buildings, parking lot, and a detention pond. He stated the Nexton Design Review Board has approved the layout pending an approved landscaping plan. Mr. Durante explained they will be replanting trees and there is a 20' buffer in the front, 10' buffer on the back and sides. Mr. Sott asked what are the white and orange flagged trees. Mr. Durante explained the white flagged trees are 8" or bigger and the orange flagged trees are 16" or bigger. Mr. Wallace commented that all the big X's are trees 16" or bigger. Mr. Durante confirmed that was correct. Mr. Sott asked if the number of parking spaces was a requirement or can some be removed to save some trees. Mr. Durante stated the owner wanted as much parking as possible, but there is some opportunity to save some trees by maybe removing a space or two or by moving the driveway cuts at Brighton Park Blvd. to the left closer to the building to save a couple trees. Mr. Durante continued his discussion of where to possibly save trees. Mr. Sott asked for a drawing that shows the tree removal better along the driveway. The Board and Mr. Durante continued to discuss options of saving trees by the driveway. Mr. Wallace questioned the orange marked trees. Mr. Durante said those are on a different property and we will not cut anything not on our property. Mr. Wallace asked about an underground sewer drain pipe on the drawing. Mr. Durante said those are storm drainage. Mr. Sott questioned how far one tree was from the building foundation in the front and if it can be saved. Mr. Durante discussed the existing grade is 79 and the building is up to 80 or 81 and that tree would have to go. Mr. Sott then questioned one tree in the back around a parking island and if it can be saved. Mr. Durante agreed that the grade works out and they can make the island wider and lose a couple parking spaces. Mr. Wallace commented on the canal and filling it in. Mr. Durante confirmed that. Mr. Wallace then discussed tree removal using Nexton guidelines, which are ½" for every 1" in diameter. Mr. Wallace then discussed details of this particular lot and if mitigation was applied to this owner. Mr. Durante said we will replant where we can and the owner is willing to pay for required mitigation. Mr. Wallace asked if that money will be paid to the Town of Summerville. Mr. Durante said the goal is to replant and the rest of it will be paid to the town. Mr. Wallace made a motion to approve. Mr. Burbage seconded the motion. Mr. Sott said it is contingent on saving of the two trees, one by the driveway and the other one by the parking lot island in the rear. Mr. Durante confirmed they will save those two trees. The motion carried unanimously.

3. 440 Old Trolley Rd. – Removal of four Pine trees

Mr. Tupper with Tupco Inc. described the project as removing three pines to improve other trees nearby and one other pine to prevent debris from dropping on the building. Mr. Tupper said the

Project Manager is out of town. Mr. Sott asked for confirmation on the reasons for removal, and Mr. Tupper elaborated more on why removal is necessary, stating the trees would be healthier with removal. Mr. Salisbury referenced a “snake” tree. Mr. Sott confirmed with Mr. Salisbury that the “snake” tree is 8” DBH or more. Mr. Burbage discussed the site visit and said he found no reason to remove the trees except maybe the “snake” tree, but his initial thought was none should be removed. Mr. Wallace discussed crowding and thinning things out and have a single tree grow better. Mr. Wallace then said the trees are not challenging anything currently, but they could in the future. Mr. Tupper said the request is more for maintenance and to improve the other two trees. Mr. Tupper asked if mitigation could be done in the front with canopy trees to help improve the property. Mr. Salisbury asked if there is a power line in the front. Mr. Tupper said it is not really a power line. Mr. Tupper and Mr. Salisbury discussed the pole further. Mr. Tupper, the Board, and Mr. Salisbury discussed the trees further. Mr. Sott said a question for the Board members is one of the options in the UDO is to improve other trees on a site by removing others, if we feel that is an option here. Mr. Tupper and the Board discussed exactly which trees were being requested for removal. After review, four trees were identified for removal. Mr. Tupper explained they had two requests. One would be to remove one tree to make this tree bigger, and the other would be to remove the other three to make another one bigger. Mr. Burbage discussed the pine grouping and if they would fill out. He continued by saying he could see removing the crooked tree. Looking at the taper of one of the trees looks good and stable. Mr. Tupper confirmed that statement. Mr. Tupper and the Board continued their discussion. Mr. Sott and the Board confirmed that the “snake” tree was identified as tree #3. Mr. Salisbury mentioned one of the trees is close to the sidewalk. Mr. Sott said the tree is not currently damaging the sidewalk. Mr. Wallace informed Mr. Tupper to come back to the Board if the tree starts damaging anything. Mr. Sott made a motion to approve the removal of tree #3 and if a Certified Arborist sees anything to let Mr. Salisbury know then he can approve the other trees. Mr. Burbage seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Tupper confirmed that the tree approved is the crooked tree.

4. 516 Salterton St. – Removal of one Pine tree

Mr. Kline, the property owner was present and informed the Board the pine tree removal was for a workshop. Mr. Kline met with Mr. Salisbury at the site and he now understands the reason and process of tree removal here in Summerville. Mr. Kline then mentioned the trees being removed at Berlin G. Myers and 78 and said he was then confused as to the process. Mr. Salisbury discussed the grade change at Berlin G. Myers and 78. Mr. Wallace expressed his sympathy with Mr. Kline and thanked him for his willingness to discuss how tree removal works in the town. Mr. Sott mentioned the Board uses the UDO for review and with what Mr. Kline is looking to do, the garage or what he is trying to do, will not be impacted by the tree, at this point. Mr. Wallace made a motion to deny the one pine tree as the tree is far enough away from the workshop. Mr. Burbage seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

5. 352 Prestwick Ct. – Removal of three Pine trees and 11 Sweet Gum trees

There was no applicant present. Mr. Sott asked Mr. Salisbury to explain what the applicant wanted to do. Mr. Salisbury discussed the tree removals (#1-3) in the front yard first as being a

cluster that is breaking up the driveway and sidewalk, but was unsure which tree was doing it. The small driveway cracks could be stress fractures. Mr. Salisbury then discussed the root issue in the front yard and the remaining trees. Mr. Sott discussed a void that they had seen on one of the trees during the Board's site visit. Mr. Salisbury then discussed the trees in the back yard and that there are a lot of gumballs and foundation problems and cracks, but all the gum trees are healthy. The Board continued their discussion, including the size of the trees in the back yard and that some do not meet the 8" DBH requirement. Mr. Wallace said in the front yard, there were issues with pines #2 and #3. He stated #1 should be saved. Mr. Wallace then stated #5 should be removed and keep #4. Mr. Sott and Mr. Burbage agreed. Mr. Sott said to remove trees #7, 10, 11, and 12 in the back yard because they do not require a tree permit for removal. Mr. Wallace then discussed trees #11, 13, 14 and said to remove trees #11 and #14 and keep #13. He continued by saying #6 could be kept and #9. Mr. Sott said #8 should be removed. Ms. Zimmerman confirmed which tree was #8. The Board and Mr. Salisbury continued the discussion of the trees in the back yard, including root pruning, and confirming which tree was #8 and which was #9. Mr. Wallace made a motion to deny trees #1, 4, 6, 9, and 13. Mr. Burbage seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

6. 400 Makemie Way – Removal of 50 Pine trees, 35 Oak trees, and 43 Other trees

There was no applicant present. Mr. Sott confirmed this was a church property and asked if all the trees were where the ball fields are going. Mr. Salisbury explained it is already cleared where the buildings are going. Mr. Sott asked if we have gotten any drawings for the ball fields or amenities. Mr. Wallace asked if we have received a building permit. Ms. Zimmerman confirmed we have not. Mr. Sott made a motion to table this until we receive a site plan showing the ball fields and any amenities. Mr. Wallace seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

7. 108 Colleton Ave. – Removal of one Pine tree

Mr. Myers the property owner was present and informed the Board he would like to remove the one pine tree because it is old, if it falls, it will fall on the house, and if someone purchases the vacant lot behind this lot, the tree will almost be impossible to take out. Mr. Myers also noted there was a hole in the tree and it is a grand tree. He continued his discussion of why he was asking for the tree removal. Mr. Sott said the issue they are having is that you cannot see the hole from the ground. Mr. Myers stated he tried to get a lift truck out there, but they are out of business. He continued his discussion of the tree and the hole. Mr. Burbage said they looked at the spot with binoculars and they could not tell if it was a cavity or not. Mr. Burbage stated the tree does not have much canopy left, but does not see a reason the tree would fail. He continued his discussion of the tree and possible mitigation. Mr. Myers stated mitigation would not be a problem. Mr. Wallace discussed the age of the tree and its contribution to the future. The Board, Mr. Salisbury, and Ms. Zimmerman discussed mitigation options further. Mr. Wallace made a motion to approve the removal of one pine tree with mitigation. Mr. Sott stated Mr. Salisbury can determine mitigation. Mr. Sott seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Burbage discussed what species to plant in regards to mitigation and that it be a species that helps environmentally like stormwater.

8. 815 S. Main St. – Removal of one Pine tree

A representative for the property was present and informed the Board they requested the tree removal of one pine tree next to the old gym due to the roots affecting the foundation of the building. The representative showed the Board additional photographs. Discussion with the applicant and Board continued. The representative stated the roots are not currently causing any issues. Mr. Sott requested a canopy photograph. Ms. Zimmerman stated there is no canopy photograph in the file. The Board members commented the tree had a massive canopy. The representative and the Board continued their discussion of the tree and foundation work. Mr. Sott mentioned root pruning as an option instead of tree removal. Mr. Wallace mentioned installing a barrier in the future and discussed the trees diameter as 31" DBH. Mr. Sott agreed that root pruning and installing a barrier would benefit the tree and the building. He continued by stating the tree is healthy and has a great canopy. The representative mentioned the tree had some possible hurricane damage. Mr. Wallace stated root pruning and installing a barrier should be done. Mr. Burbage recommended Biobarrier or a thin concrete barrier. Mr. Salisbury showed an additional photograph. The Board continued their discussion of the root system. Mr. Wallace asked the representative if the playground will be an impervious surface and will it be up against the tree. The representative said it will be 20-30' from it. Mr. Sott questioned why the tree is up for removal since there is okay access. The representative and Board continued their discussion. Mr. Wallace made a motion to deny the one pine tree and suggested using a root barrier. Mr. Sott also suggested root pruning. Mr. Burbage seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

9. 1405 Congressional Blvd. – Removal of one Pine tree

Ms. Keil, the property owner, was present and informed the Board she would like to remove the one pine tree because it is close to the house, is scared limbs will fall on the house, pine needles fall on the roof of the house, and the roots are on the foundation. Ms. Keil showed the Board an additional photograph of the root by the foundation and continued discussion on the roots by the house. Mr. Wallace said they saw the root, but can not tell where the root is going and mentioned that currently, it is not going under the house. Ms. Keil and the Board continued the root discussion. Mr. Sott requested to see the canopy photograph and mentioned majority of the limbs are away from the house. Mr. Burbage agreed. Mr. Sott requested the diameter of the tree. Mr. Salisbury was unsure and mentioned the distance to the house. Mr. Wallace said the tree was 7.5' from the house. Mr. Sott, by looking at the photograph, said the tree is 18-20" in diameter. The Board continued their discussion on the root system. Mr. Burbage discussed the tree species, health, and strong root system. Ms. Keil asked the Board how deep the excavation would have to be and who does that. Mr. Burbage informed Ms. Keil that she should hire a competent Arboriculture company and they could tell within 18". Ms. Keil asked about the criteria for tree removal in Summerville. There was a discussion from the Board regarding tree removal regulations. Ms. Zimmerman continued the discussion of our ordinance for existing trees. The Board and Ms. Keil continued the tree removal and ordinance discussion. Ms. Keil asked the Board about trimming regulations. Mr. Salisbury said no more than 20% can be cut. Mr. Salisbury, Ms. Keil, and the Board continued the trimming discussion. Ms. Keil said she

will accept whatever the Board says. Mr. Salisbury, Ms. Keil, and the Board continued the trimming/pruning discussion. Mr. Wallace made a motion to deny the one pine tree and recommended getting an Arborist to look at the roots. Mr. Burbage seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn:

Mr. Sott welcomed Mr. Burbage to the Board. Ms. Zimmerman introduced herself to the Board and described her job description and introduced Ms. Wike to the Board. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:43 AM on a motion by Mr. Sott and a second by Mr. Burbage. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: _____

Bill Salisbury

Arborist/Natural Resource Planner



Approved: Mr. Sott, Chair _____ ; or,

Ms. Campbell, Vice Chair _____.