

**CITY OF REDLANDS**  
**STREET TREE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**April 23, 2015**

**1. Call to Order at 5:35 pm – Attendance**

Present: Don Buchanan, Chair  
Chris Sedmack  
Janet Ward  
Linda Richards  
Roy Mannickarottu

City Council: Mr. Paul Barich  
QOL Staff: Erik Reeves

Redlands Community  
Foundation liaison: Absent

**2. Public Comments** – Introduction of all Street Tree Committee Members, QOL Staff plus visitors Mario Saucedo, Community Advocate and Kristina Hernandez from The Redlands Facts.

a. Mario Saucedo, Community Advocate, voiced his concerns about City Street Tree trimming which occurred on the north side due to the “Paving Project” where one side of several oak trees was trimmed and the other sides were not. Mario was concerned that the oak trees might be unstable and questioned why these trees were trimmed this way. Erik Reeves, Quality of Life (QOL), said that this was a MUED project, but QOL was assisting with this issue. There is currently no one on staff to do tree work, except in an emergency situation. QOL was notified by the “Paving Project” that these Holly Oaks needed to be trimmed immediately for clearance for their dump trucks. Reeves got a city crew together and they did the trimming on emergency basis at end of work day and into evening since paving was to start the next morning. Reeves said these Holly Oaks will be fully trimmed when the city has additional funds from the new budget in July 2015. Further, 800 trees in the area need trimming, and 200 have already been trimmed. 1200 trees are due to be trimmed during the next parkway tree trimming schedule.

b. Mario Saucedo commented that on Clock/Aaron St. on the east end of Redlands, the City parkway trees were trimmed and the tree debris was left in the parkways and the homeowners cleaned it up. Reeves commented that this homeowner assistance was appreciated as crews finished trimming after normal work day when it was dark, and the paving was scheduled the next morning before crews were available to clean up.

**3. Approval of Minutes** – Approval of Minutes for February 26, 2015 required correction. Correction on #6a, Janet Ward met with Char Burgess and the Redlands Community Foundation has money, but will not be planting new trees

due to the California drought. Ward contacted Danny Payne, treasurer from the Redlands Community Foundation to set up a fund/method for Redlands citizens to donate money for the purpose of trimming city street trees in order to get a tax write-off. Linda Richards motioned, Don Buchanan seconded. Minutes passed unanimously (Don Buchanan, Chair, Chris Sedmack, Janet Ward, Linda Richards, Roy Mannickarottu).

#### **4. Status Reports**

- a. *Bi-Monthly review of any new City parkway street trees in proposed developments (QOL)* – Erik Reeves reported no new plantings or planned developments. DRC working on new developments, but nothing to report yet. The project on the North Side/San Bernardino Avenue - nothing to report. A warehouse is going up on Almond Ave using the standard street tree palette of St Mary's Magnolias and Palm Trees.
- b. *Bi-Monthly Street Tree Overview (QOL) – Update on City parkway trees trimmed, removed, or planted* – Erik Reeves reported that few trees were trimmed, no new ones planted, as City budgeted monies have expired for trimming and due to the drought we are not doing any major planting this year. City removed a Pepper Tree on San Jacinto/Highland Ave which was dead in the center. 11 dead Crape Myrtles removed on Colton Avenue. No budget for trimming until new budget.

#### **5. New Business – Discussion and possible recommendation regarding Palm Trees impacted by utility lines.**

- a. Janet Ward reported that contact information on two landscape companies was given to Erik Reeves as possible buyers of endangered Redlands Palm Trees under Edison lines - an Irvine Company and a San Fernando Valley Company as possible sources to buy endangered Palm Trees in the City parkways on Highland and Palm Avenues. Palm Trees on Cypress/San Mateo are due to be undergrounded by Edison in the near future.
- Chris Sedmack asked for further clarification on the report Erik Reeves gave at the February 26, 2015 STC meeting. That meeting ran over two hours and there were facts which were unclear to the STC members. Erik Reeves had reported that in August 2014, the City removed twenty six 90ft tall, possibly over 100 year old Palm Trees at the end of Nevada Street by the Waste Water Plant. Problems with the palm fronds had been reported for years and on that day, Edison called Erik Reeves who happened to be out of town on training, saying that these Palm Trees had to be removed right away. Erik Reeves informed his boss Tim Sullivan and the decision was made to remove these trees. These Palm trees were iconic trees in the East Valley Corridor, and Janet Ward stated that according to the Street Tree Policy and Protection Guidelines Manual definition, they were Landmark Trees, section 10.6. Mario Saucedo commented that the citizens of Redlands, along with the Northside citizens, were outraged that these Palm Trees were cut down without

anyone knowing, nor any action being taking to underground the wires, moving palms, trimming these palms, etc., considering the City had known these were a problem for years. Saucedo stated that the Waste Power Plant should have had back-up generators to prevent the power from going off. He further stated that the most disturbing issue was that no one was saying anything about these Palm trees being removed until it was brought up before City Council by Saucedo and there was no process to mitigate the damage, to replace and remove these palms behind the curb line. The near-by new Citrus Plaza shopping center addition moved some 90 year old Palm trees and most of them have survived and are doing well. A lot should have been done to save these iconic Palm trees. The community felt badly that the city did this. He further stated that the public needs to be told about tree issues and the city needs to be transparent with the public when this type of devastation is going to happen. These trees should have been reported to City Council by Fred Cardenas. Chris Sedmack commented on the loss to the city of this valuable resource and that she had called WCA and the replacement cost for this type and age of palm tree was at \$1500-\$2500. Possibly less. If these trees were still in place, the trees would be valued at considerably more. Janet Ward stated that in the Street Tree Policy and Protection Guidelines Manual under section 10.6, this policy has already been approved by City Council. Erik Reeves to trim the remaining 12 Palm Trees every 6-8 months. Reeves has asked the SCE Edison Representative to be at the next STC meeting. Saucedo suggested the STC and City Council look at all options for saving our trees. Janet Ward motioned to follow the City Council approved Street Tree Policy and Protection Guidelines Manual under, specifically, section 10.6. Chris Sedmack seconded, motion passed unanimously (Don Buchanan, Chair, Chris Sedmack, Janet Ward, Linda Richards, Roy Mannickarottu).

- b. *Discussion of non-standard trimming practices on street tree parkways and private property* – Linda Richards discussed poor tree trimming practices on street tree parkways, private property, and utility properties (Mowbrays) and how the poor practices were affecting trees and the quality of life in the city. She passed around examples of over trimming, topping and improper trimming practices on street tree parkways and private property. Janet Ward mentioned section 2.2 of the Redlands Municipal Code does not give the STC the authority to protect trees on private property and also section 12.20.020, of the Redlands Municipal code which states, “This policy also applies to private trees so far as a private tree directly affects or damages public property, public safety, or public trees.” Linda stated that there is a possible solution in that Pasadena does not have this problem. Pasadena has passed ordinances and established a \$100.00 fine for every improper tree trimming for residents and commercial owners, which is written in their city tree ordinances. Richards suggests proposing code changes for commercial properties or parking lots and potentially other private owners, using Pasadena as an example. Linda Richards and Janet Ward were asked by Chair Don Buchanan to research proposal for STC review for City Council

concerning improper tree trimming of City street trees, parking lots and other commercial tree trimming on commercial private properties. Possible recommendations – fine tree trimmers if caught in the process of bad trimming practices, use ANSI 300A standards, and ensure utilities use certified power line trimmers.

## **6. Old Business**

- a. *Discussion pertaining to STC PowerPoint Presentation* – Erik Reeves passed out a hard copy of the STC PowerPoint Presentation being edited, and due to the extended length of this meeting, Chair Don Buchanan requested a Table of this agenda item until the next meeting.
- b. *Discussion and possible recommendation regarding Arbor Day activity* - Don Buchanan contacted all City Council members through Tricia Swope and we expect Mayor Paul Foster and a few other council members to attend the City’s Arbor Day celebration at the Redlands Heritage Park on Friday April 24 at 5:00 pm at the NW corner of the park at Nevada/Orange St. We plan to plant two drought tolerant trees: a California Sycamore and a thornless Palo Verde in respect to Governor Brown’s concern with the 4<sup>th</sup> year of drought conditions.
- c. *Discussion and possible recommendation regarding street tree drought challenges, drought tolerant species on approved street tree palette and vacant tree wells/dead street trees* – Janet Ward commented on the Tree Gator wells which Sweden uses for watering their trees. Homeowners could buy them. Chris Sedmack asked if WCA was still watering the newly planted Street Trees and Erik Reeves said yes. Item continued. Linda Richards commented on the city’s mature trees, along with the young trees; require extra water during the drought, as discussed in previous STC meetings. Richards is to do article in the Redlands Daily Facts on this topic.
- d. *Discussion and possible recommendation pertaining to a utility bill informational insert* – Tim Sullivan already sent utility bill insert to be included in the 3-19 to 5-7 utility bills on “Watering Trees During Drought.”

## **6. Possible Agenda items for Next Meeting –**

- a. SC Edison attend STC meeting on using Ally Arms to save trees, undergrounding power lines. Erik said Mowbrays will be asked to join Edison at the June STC meeting.
- b. Review of updated 2015 Street Tree Committee Power Point.
- c. Utility Bill – Work on new STC insert. Possible stressing our city trees being the 3rd most valuable asset to the city.
- d. Discussion of WCA approved Street Tree Palette recommendations.
- e. City Parkway policy on what hardscape/plants can be planted in city parkways.

- f. Each new STC and CC member liaison needs copy of CC Approved The Street Tree Policy and Protection Guidelines Manual. Tim Sullivan to provide.
- g. Discussion and possible action regarding 2015 Goals and 2015 STC Accomplishments to date.
- h. Discussion and possible action of the Street Tree Committee's involvement with the Honorary Tree Program.

**7. Adjournment at 7:05 pm to next regularly scheduled meeting, June 25, 2015.**

Submitted by Chris Sedmack, Secretary