

**Shade Tree and Beautification Commission Minutes
Commission Meeting**

January 27, 2026



CALL TO ORDER

Present	Absent	Excused
Fourth Ward LeNan Hager Sarah Wagner Russ Mentzer James Brown Emil Diener	Safety Service Director Tanner Salyers Engineer Brian Ball Jon May	

Rachel Wilson- Clerk
 Quentin Platt- Engineering Department
 Randy Pursel- Parks Department

MINUTES APPROVAL

Shade Tree and Beautification - Commission Meeting - November 25, 2025

Mr. Mentzer moved to approve the minutes from the November 2025 Shade Tree and Beautification meeting. Ms Wagner seconded the motion. AIF motion approved.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Brown said the City is still working on the budget so he has no financial updates. Mr. Brown expects to be funded similarly to last year.

OLD BUSINESS

TCP

Mr. Brown asked Mr. Wade how the planting of the TCP trees has been going. Mr. Wade said that the weather has made it difficult to plant trees because the ground is frozen.

West End

Mr. Brown said that he has all the documents ready to go for the West End. He has not made any phone calls yet.

Mansfield Ave

Mr. Brown said that he has all the documents ready to go for Mansfield Ave. He has not made any phone calls yet.

Clintonville

Mr. Brown said that he has all the documents ready to go for Clintonville. He has not made any

phone calls yet.

Invasive Removal

Mr. Brown said that Mr. Mikesell is working on the Invasive Specie List, but he was not able to attend the meeting, so he can't give an update on the Invasive Program. Mr. Brown said that the Committee still plans to remove at least 80 pear trees in the community along with the invasive removals in the parks.

NEW BUSINESS

Industrial Park

Ariel Foundation Park Meadows

There is an America 250 meeting on February 3, 2026 that Ms. Hager will attend and mention the idea of planting a tree. Mr. Brown said that he would like to plant the trees in the meadows at Ariel Foundation Park. Ralston Memorial makes the concrete markers that the Commission has used for Memorial trees. They have a 6x14x12 granite marker that they can make for \$250.

YMCA

Mr. Brown said that there were some trees planted last year at the YMCA. Mr. Brown said that the Commission will not be able to do much at the YMCA this year because the YMCA does not have extra funds available.

Mr. Brown said that there are some trees on Mulberry Street that are tearing up the sidewalk that will need to be taken out in the next few years. Mr. Brown said that he would like to get some trees planted on Mulberry Street, so the street won't be barren when those trees need to be taken out.

Cougar Drive

Mr. Brown said that all the trees have been planted on both sides of Cougar Dr.

OTHER

Ms. Hager is on the board of Experience Mount Vernon. Ms. Hager said that they have a Knox County Master Gardener coming to make a presentation to the Aesthetics Committee of Experience Mount Vernon. The Master Gardeners of Knox County have an idea that they would like to pitch because they have some ideas for bushes and flowers that can be planted in the ground. The Master Gardeners would like to help the City have a better plant life downtown.

Mr. Brown asked Mr. Platt to give a summary of the construction projects the City is hoping to start working on in 2026 that will involve the Shade Tree Commission.

Mr. Platt said that the two CDBG projects are West Sugar Street and Burgess and Hamtramck St.

West Sugar Street is the Riverside Park Neighborhood Revitalization Grant through the CDBG Program. The West Sugar Street project will reconstruct the entire street from the far west end at Riverside Park to Adams Street. Currently, it is a 20-foot wide street. The tree lawn is completely used for parking. The current proposal is to construct a 30-foot wide street with curb and gutter so that all the parking happens on the street. This will leave an 8-foot wide tree lawn and there will be an opportunity to plant a lot of trees on West Sugar Street.

The next project is on Burgess and Hamtramck Street. This project will not provide a lot of opportunities for planting trees, but there will be some opportunities. The tree lawns that are there, are at most 4 or 4 ½ feet. When it is feasible, the sidewalks will be pushed up to the curb and gutter so that there will be more planting space behind the sidewalk. The trees will still be in the right of way, even though it will look like they are in the front yard.

The State Route 13 Realignment is a multi-year project. This year, there will not be any tree plantings, but tree plantings will be needed in late 2027 or 2028.

South End Pedestrian: This project will add and replace sidewalks on the west side of Martinsburg road. Trees that are not in good condition will be taken down and new trees will be planted.

Memorial Park: This year, the plan is to reconstruct the concession stands. This won't impact any of the existing trees. In July, the fields will be shut down. The existing fields will be torn out and reconstructed. Then everything will be seeded in the fall, so the fields will be able to be reopened the following spring. If there are any trees that can be planted, they will be able to be planted either late this year or early next year.

West Gambier St: On the north side of West Gambier Street at the Freedom Center there will be some utility work being done there, and some sidewalk will need to be ripped out. There will be some cooperation with the tenant who is having the utility work done. A new sidewalk will be put back and there will be three tree pits installed. The trees will be planted to match the south side of the street.

Arch Park Restroom: This project will not remove any trees, but it would be a great opportunity to plant trees in this park.

Veterans Walk of Honor: The Veterans Walk of Honor is being considered to relocate from the square to the newly established American Heritage Park where the CA&C train depot is located. There are a few trees that may need to be taken out of the square. This will be a good time to

plant trees at the CA&C depot.

ADJOURN

Mr. Mentzer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Wager seconded the motion. Meeting Adjourned.