

TREE ADVOCACY COMMITTEE
of the Conservation and Sustainability Commission
November 20, 2025
Regular Meeting Minutes

The Tree Advocacy Committee of the Conservation and Sustainability Commission met for a regular meeting at 6:15 p.m. on Thursday, November 20, 2025, in the Board Room of the Vienna Community Center.

Committee Members present were Chairman Roxanne Paul, Aditi Chandra, Ken Foley, Douglas Noble, Sandy Shinn, and John Shults. Chris Bredehoeft and Lea Giovannello were unable to attend.

Staff members present were Superintendent of Urban Forestry, Horticulture, & Park Maintenance, Jeremy Edwards, and Director of Parks and Recreation, Leslie Herman.

Communications from Citizens and/or Committee Members

Miguel Ordonez (804 DeSale Street SW): Mr. Ordonez shared that he provided public comments at the November 12th meeting of the Planning Commission meeting focusing on the following topics: economic development/eco development, and consideration for three Town properties (Beulah Road future plans, Robinson and Annex site for native plants, and saving/planting as many trees as possible at the Annex site with whatever the development plan). He also mentioned that he will be providing a full technical/copy edit to Town staff.

Meeting Minutes

The following meeting minutes were accepted into the record with revisions noted by Ken Foley and Sandy Shinn:

- CSC TAC – October 16, 2025 – Draft regular meeting minutes.

Regular Business

Item No. 1 - Assessment of Tree Giveaway: What worked, What Didn't

Aditi Chandra and Sandy Shinn shared that things went well Friday afternoon with six kids from Club Phoenix, though there were 150 trees compared to 100 last year which required an additional half hour to complete (1.5 hrs. plus clean up). The kids didn't have time to stay that long. Roxanne Paul noted she had proposed more volunteers, but Club Phoenix staff wanted to stay with 6. The staff member helped clean up.

Set up went smoothly Saturday morning and there was a line at the beginning of 15-20 people. The flowering trees went quickly (serviceberry and redbud). Jeremy Edwards shared the idea of reaching out to churches and swim clubs for their interest in receiving trees not otherwise given away.

Doug Noble provided a summary of the close out. There were seedlings left over primarily white pines and hornbeams and a few of the red oaks which he took home in their buckets then Jeremy Edwards picked up a week or so later. His opinion was that the general public doesn't know what to do with medium size trees without flower or fall color interest, nor do they know what to do with large evergreen trees in their landscape planning.

Everything was picked up about 11:30 a.m. after 45 minutes of nobody stopping; after about 10:30 a.m. people disappeared as the traffic for the Farmer's Market waned. His suggestion for next year is for the event to go no later than 10:30 a.m. At the end he and the DPR staff member (put all the posters and printed materials in Leslie Herman's office to get stored somewhere in the Community Center or Nutley Street. The empty unused buckets were left there too. Roxanne Paul requested printed materials so she could save them for next year.

Doug Noble observed that there would be more traffic if the set up was located more adjacent to the Farmer's Market. As an additional note, the Ayr Hill Garden Club sale was on the same day at the Freeman Store. Perhaps the TAC could coordinate/combine dates/times to increase traffic for both groups, since we are offering different things, but both garden/landscape oriented. Other ideas included adding an "Ask An Expert" for fall gardening advice... even something as much as the garden/landscape elements of the Green Expo.

The group had additional discussion on reviewing tree species for next year's event.

Item No. 2 – Urban Forestry Staffing

Item was postponed since Matt Fuller was unable to attend meeting.

Item No. 3 – Six Month Report Presentation to Town Council

John Shults attended the Council work session for the Committee. Although the Mayor invited us to give presentation, we simply shared our report. The Council asked generally how it was going with the new committee, the tree giveaway, and were excited to see the Urban Forest Management Plan work in 2026 as well as effect of the tree ordinance. He mentioned that while the ordinance helps it won't entirely solve the tree canopy problem and emphasized continuing public and private planting.

Item No. 4 – Pocket Forest Planting Near Water Tower

Seven trees were planted since the last TAC meeting in the pocket forest near the water tower with a plan from Jeremy Edwards (2 white oaks, 2 fringe trees, 1 sweet bay magnolia, and 2 serviceberries). The group had service day volunteers helping with the planting and Sandy Shinn shared that she has commitment from neighbors to water the trees. Councilman Springsteen stopped by to support the project.

Item No. 5 – Proposed Newsletter

Ken Foley shared that he has been approached by people to prepare a TAC newsletter, something to share with the community what the committee has been doing (tree giveaway, links to resources, etc.). There was discussion about frequency, monthly or alternate months.

Item No. 6 – Avril Garland's Temporary Fence Request

Avril Garland has asked about temporary fencing around vulnerable trees at Water Town site for deer protection. Staff has not come to resolution on whether it is allowable and will need the Dept. of Public Works signoff. It was noted that Fairfax uses deer enclosures with 8 ft. metal poles; whatever is chosen needs to be rigid (e.g. Frying Pan Park). Friends of Accotink may potentially have funds available to pay for fencing.

Item No. 7 – Budget Request for Tree Advocacy Committee

Jeremy Edwards confirmed that \$1,000 was put into the Town's next annual budget under board and commissions for the TAC. Roxanne Paul informed the Conservation and Sustainability Commission of the

request. Jeremy Edwards shared that they are working with fleet staff to have aerial lift modified to support tree work.

Item No. 8 – Legislation Requests to Town Council

From prior meeting notes the following legislative requests of Town Council to be prepared and tracked:

- 30 percent canopy requirement in front yard.
- Award for developers for tree canopy improvements.
- Removing ability to veto location for green trees program plantings.
- Focus on preserving mature trees.
- Heritage tree ordinance (following the state code).
- Developers of new homes/commercial do not get veto of a street tree planting.
- Town residents do not have a right to veto a tree planting, but does have input on selection of species and exact location.
- Conversation about enforcing private owner vs. developer removal planting.

Review which items can be addressed at the staff procedural level vs. new legislation to modify the Town Code.

Item No. 9 – Draft Comprehensive Plan Comments

Roxanne Paul sent out proposed comments and received additional comments from Ken Foley and John Shults. These will be submitted individually since the TAC had not attached them to the agenda to be endorsed by a vote of the Committee.

Other Business

- Noted that Ken Foley and Shandy Shinn were reappointed to the TAC. Roxanne Paul is reapplying as a Conservation and Sustainability Commission.
- Jeremy Edwards shared that the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments tree canopy goal is 50 percent for the region.

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Edwards, Superintendent of Urban Forestry, Horticulture, & Park Maintenance
and Douglas E. Noble, Committee Member