

Town of Vienna Tree Advocacy Committee Semi-Annual Report

August 28, 2025

The Town of Vienna's newly formed Tree Advocacy Committee (TAC), under the auspices of the Town's Conservation and Sustainability Commission, met for the first time on Thursday, January 23, 2024. Due to two members of the TAC being from Conservation & Sustainability Commission (CSC), we met one hour before the monthly CSC meeting on the fourth Thursday of the month. At this meeting, the members voted to meet twice a month, rather than the mandated one time per month, in order to get a faster start in learning the responsibilities of the Town's Urban Forestry staff and also to develop goals for our committee. In June, we shifted to meeting once a month, on the third Thursday of each month, so that we would not be constrained to having only a one-hour meeting before the CSC meeting.

In this, our first semi-annual report, we will give a more informal account of our activities and plans, with the intent of a more formal report at our one year mark in January 2026.

What We've Learned

The Town Urban Forestry staff and other TOV staff have been very helpful in bringing our committee up to speed on the programs that they manage.

- Superintendent of Parks Maintenance, Horticulture & Urban Forestry Jeremy Edwards presented at the first meeting. He explained the new Conservation Tree Ordinance, the hierarchy of the Parks and Recreation staff, and funding for the Urban Forestry team. He was present at nearly every meeting, offering his expertise and making helpful suggestions.
- Urban Forester, Tim Koski, gave a presentation on his work pertaining to Development plan review and related inspections. He spoke of how he works with all departments to make sure that the final plan adheres to our new Tree Conservation Ordinance. Tim also scheduled a visit for us to a site under development whose plan he had reviewed during his presentation.
- Public Information Director, Karen Thayer, explained all the different social media and print platforms that the Town utilizes to disseminate information and how we could work with her and the Conservation & Sustainability Committee to inform the community of our work.
- Town Arborist, Matt Fuller, gave three presentations to us on his responsibilities including managing the Town's Green Streets Project (whereby the Town installs

trees within Town Right of Ways), overseeing the Town's tree inventory on public land, managing the Urban Forestry and Horticultural programs, overseeing seasonal flower displays, supervising the right-of-way vegetation management, managing and training staff, and many, many other tasks.

- Town Attorney, Steve Briglia, spoke to us about the rules and regulations for serving on a Town committee, including having all meetings open to the public, not having email threads or informal meetings of more than two members, Dillon rule, and having a quorum present in order to conduct business.
- Deputy Town Clerk, Owen McCarty, took minutes at nearly every meeting and sent them to us for review. He also formatted the agenda our Chair, Roxanne Paul, sent him for each meeting and put it online and helped us add information to the TAC web page.
- Director of Parks & Recreation Leslie Herman was present at nearly every meeting to answer questions and offer support in many different ways.

What We've Accomplished

- With the help of Deputy Town Clerk Owen McCarty, we created a 3-sided display board to explain the formation of our committee, our responsibilities, and the many benefits of trees. The display board was used at multiple events.
- Lea Giovanniello and Sandy Shinn wrote an article on the new tree ordinance for the March Vienna Voice.
- Roxanne Paul wrote an article for the North East Vienna Citizen's Association April newsletter, introducing our committee to the community.
- We manned a table at the Town's April 24 Green Expo and engaged with residents, gave out informational pamphlets and had 12 drawings for free native tree seedlings.
- We had an informational table at the Town's annual Arbor Day Tree Ceremony on April 25 and Chair Roxanne Paul gave a short speech. TAC members helped with planting the 5 saplings.
- On April 26, TAC members volunteered at the annual Arbor Day Tree Planting at Moorefield Park, helping plant approximately 75 native tree seedlings.
- With the help of Deputy Town Clerk Owen McCarty, we wrote text for a TAC web page, with links to helpful information about trees.
- We have formed sub-committees to work on our priorities for the upcoming months.
- Committee member Sandy Shinn created an educational display about removing invasive vines and engaged with residents on the outskirts of the Vienna Farmer's Market.

Actions Over the Next Six Months

- Meet monthly as a committee, while sub-committees will hold working sessions in between monthly meetings
- Oversee Native Tree Giveaway in October
- Some members will attend Casey Trees Urban Tree Summit in September
- Create an annotated outline for an Urban Forest Management Plan, as well as a schedule of milestones for its development
- Create list of priority sites on Town land for planting trees
- Create greater incentives for developers to avoid cutting mature trees
- Create greater engagement with residents on invasive vines
- Outreach to Madison HS students with opportunities to earn volunteer hours planting trees or removing invasive vines
- Seek representation on future meetings with Dominion Energy, NOVA Parks and Town of Vienna
- Develop a resource booklet for Town residents with recommended trees for planting on private property
- Review and comment on the Raftelis Town Staffing study of the Urban Forestry, Horticulture, Park Maintenance Division of Parks and Recreation Department.
- Review the Tree Conservation Code and make recommendations to disincentivize tree preservation violations.

In Conclusion

Thanks to dedicated staff members and our twice per month meetings, we have learned a great deal since our first meeting in January. This has allowed us to identify areas to pursue in working sessions to meet our goals. Each of our sub-committees now has a chairperson and we are enthusiastic about moving forward in our efforts to improve the tree canopy in Vienna, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Respectfully submitted,

Vienna Tree Advocacy Committee

Roxanne Paul, Chair, CSC Representative

John Shults, Co-Chair

Chris Bredehoeft, Member

Aditi Chandra, Senior Student Member

Ken Foley, Member

Lea Giovanniello, CSC Representative

Douglas Noble, Planning Commission Representative

Sandy Shinn, Member

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Matt Fuller, Town Arborist & Staff Liaison to the Tree Advocacy Committee

Jeremy Edwards, Superintendent of Park Maintenance, Horticulture & Urban Forestry

Tim Koski, Urban Forester

Leslie Herman, Director of Parks and Recreation