

Forest Board Report July 2019

The Forest Board monthly work day in June was canceled due to stormy weather. However, several members still volunteered time in service to the neighborhood by replacing easement tree seedlings that did not leaf out this spring and staking other trees. Upcoming volunteer workdays will be focused on maintaining the city parks and modifying tree cages in the parks to prevent deer damage to new trees. Additionally, the Forest Board will be scheduling a walk through of the city parks with the city forester to identify storm damage and assess the overall state of trees in the city parks.

With the recent storms, the Forest Board has received some calls regarding trees in residents' backyards. The mayor has informed the Forest Board that the Board is responsible only for trees in the city parks and in the street easement/right of way. Inquiries about any tree outside of these boundaries are to be directed to the mayor.

The City Forester was able to assess the impact of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) on the city's ash trees over this past year. Of the approximately 110 ash tree on the public right of way, 20% are in good condition (showing little signs of EAB and should live through the next 3-10 years), 20% are in poor condition (showing advanced signs of EAB progression and will likely be condemned this year or next), and the remaining 60% are in fair condition (showing initial signs of EAB and may be condemned within the next 2-3 years). It is estimated that in 4-5 years, only 20 ash trees will remain in the easement of the city.

Additionally, the City Forester worked with Audubon Country Club to identify six ash trees in mild decline in the street easement on Cardinal Drive and an additional 21 open sites for planting large canopy trees in the street easement on the country club side of Cardinal Drive. The forester will continue to work with the Country Club to develop a plan for planting these open sites within the next year and a half. The Forest Board plans to work with the Country Club and provide it with the same services it provides to any Audubon Park resident.

The water line in Oriole Park has been installed and is finished.

Forest Board members are currently working on writing additions that will be incorporated into the webpage that provide homeowners with information to properly maintain and care for their trees. Lastly, the Forest Board is determining the proper analysis of the city's urban tree canopy that needs to be completed this year to make informed decisions when updating the Community Forest Management Plan for 2020.

Michael Blum, Forest Board Chair