



## Columbia Tree and Appearance Commission

### MINUTES

August 18, 2022

Municipal Association Meeting Space

In attendance

Jim Irvin, Vi Hendley, Ian Hamilton, Annie Scott, Sara Holler, Kirstin Dow, Patrick McLean, John Estill, Presley Hogue - commissioner emeritus

A quorum is present. July 22, 2022, minutes were approved.

**Heat Mapping** – The mapping event media coverage is positive. Unfortunately, Dominion will not share its pole map citing grid security. Data will be available to us before it is made public. Questions have been mounting as to what will be done with the data. Conversations appear to revolve around using the data to underground and plant trees. Multiple organizations have expressed interest in hosting the public unveiling of the data however the city will take the lead and welcome like-minded groups to attend. It may be that multiple community meetings will be held through the city to share the data and collect ideas. The list of volunteers who want to be included on an organizational steering committee is growing. Other governmental entities, including Columbia’s Climate Protection Action Committee (CPAC) Richland County, Central Midlands Council of Governments (COG) are actively discussing how to use the data. Some ideas include the Greenway connection to Lake Murray, bike paths, and increasing use of renewables in affordable housing units.

**Undergrounding Efforts** - The content of the draft ordinance, the history of city planning/projects, and the yearly Dominion one million underground matching fund is once again reviewed. Various undergrounding projects are underway such as the Capitol Mall, South Main to Blossom and Assembly Street Medians. Jim will check with Randy Roberts about calculating a ballpark figure for Gervais from Sumter to Harden.

**Political Action** – Multiple ways to establish communication and develop working relationships with members of council was discussed. One option is to invite relevant committees or their representative to attend a meeting. There are two committees addressing a common focus with CTAC, Economic and Community Development, Joe Taylor – chair, Will Brennen and Tina

Herbert, and Environment & Infrastructure, Aditi Bussells – chair, Howard Duvall, and Ed McDowell. Patrick will check in with Joe Taylor. Vi will contact Howard Duvall. In addition to addressing the broad question of undergrounding, we will let them know undergrounding will most likely be front and center once the heat mapping data is released in October.

### **UDO Section 17-5 and 6**

Vi provided a brief review of concerns expressed to City Council regarding the proposed changes to the ordinance. The proposal cleared second reading and has been sent back to planning commission to reinsert requirement for wall and fence buffers. Council plans to encourage building out on existing parking. Doing so will hold the development to current landscaping requirements.

**Webpage, Bylaws/Procedures** – Commissioners will receive an email with pdf copies of minutes, and helpful websites. Drafts of proposed Bylaws and a CTAC Commissioner handbook are in committee.

**Forestry and Landscaping** – Sarah reports the replacement for Caleb should be in place for our September.

**Landscape Planning** – Scott will be joining us again in September.

**Street Lighting** – No feedback has been received. Sarah shares the proposal from Robert Anderson is now in executive session.

### **New Business**

#### **Incentivizing Green Development**

A group including the Congaree Riverkeeper, the Sierra Club and Columbia Green is moving forward with a new approach. The city and county have watershed management plans that are tied to stormwater programs incentivizing green infrastructure through reduction of fees based on how much reduction is seen in stormwater. Kirstin and Sarah will contact the City and County Stormwater staff to perhaps have them provide a briefing on the program.

**Appearance Awards** – Vi will investigate how other commissions and municipalities have managed appearance award programs. First thoughts are Midis on Gervais and Midland s Orthopedics' parking lot at 1919 Taylor Street.