



Norfolk Tree Commission

2022 Annual Report

January 1, 2023

Committee Members 2021- 2022

Allissa Bunner

Steve Dolly

Mike
Ruszkowski

Harriette Frost

Scott Blair

Elizabeth Paiste

Brendan
Romaine

Because onboarding of new commissioners has lacked efficiency in the past, Norfolk Tree Commission focused this year on formally defining structures, timelines, and intentions of the board in hopes of making onboarding and leadership transitions more effective. The board drafted, amended, and approved an official Annual Plan, which reviews said structures and also amends the goals and vision of the board.

During 2022, the Norfolk Tree Commission met with several civic leagues to hear concerns. Of note, Charles from the Park Place Civic League, who came to the board concerned about the high mortality of trees being planted in his community. His concerns were a catalyst for the Commission attending the April 6th City Council Public Budget hearing, where the commission voiced that concern and proposed an addition to the budget for a watering truck.

After fielding concerns from the public about the impending tree removal near Chambers Fields, the Norfolk Tree Commission drafted an official comment on the project. Representatives from the commission then attended the Oceanview Civic League meeting to address and allay fears, make recommendations, and educate the community.

The Norfolk Tree Commission seeks out cooperation with other boards and organizations operating in the city and this year was able to connect with the Norfolk Master Gardeners, The Garden Club of Norfolk, Friends of Norfolk Environment, and Keep Norfolk Beautiful whether through attending and participating in scheduled meetings, or through volunteering for events.

Events for the 2022 year are listed below in chronological order;

- Commissioners assisted Friends of Norfolk Environment with the tree adoption at Jam N Jamz.
- Commissioners helped City Forester lead a Legacy Grove Planting at Oceanview Elementary, sponsored by the Appalachian Trail Club. The event included a litter cleanup with KNB.
- Commissioners helped expand the Legacy Grove at Jeff Robinson Park with the Garden Club of Norfolk's Olmsted Initiative.
- Commissioners heard citizens' concerns about significant tree removal in Lafayette Park. Began planning amendments to the tree ordinance by meeting with a member of the City Planning Commission. The Commission also met with the Project Manager for the bike path expansion.
- Commissioners attended a Crepe Myrtle Pruning event led by the Norfolk Master Gardeners.
- The Norfolk Tree Commission was recognized by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the International Arborist Association. Representatives traveled to Richmond to accept the Gold Leaf Award for the 2021 Arbor Day Festival.
- The Norfolk Tree Commission hosted the annual Arbor Day Festival at Lafayette park, distributing over 400 trees to the citizens of Norfolk
- Commissioner participated in the Green Reader Program at Norview Elementary.
- Commissioners expanded the Legacy Grove at Larchmont Library with a tree planting at a memorial service in honor of Jennifer Gibson.
- The Norfolk Tree Commission drafted and approved an Annual Plan for 2023, formally defining commission structure and timeline.
- Commissioners participated in the second phase of the Olmsted Initiative with the Norfolk Garden Club at Jeff Robertson Park.
- Commissioners attended a tree and bioswale planting at Lindenwood Elementary School.

Sincerely,
Allissa Bunner
Norfolk Tree Commission, Chair