

MISSION OF THE COMMITTEE

To provide a forum for discussion of ideas, concepts, and methods to preserve trees and protect the tree canopy,

To make recommendations to County Council to encourage the preservation and replacement of trees which may be lost in the process of residential and commercial real estate development and to propose minimum standards for Council to consider, and

To provide educational and other useful information about historic and significant specimen trees and tree categories and to encourage people to preserve and nurture trees so classified.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Diane Eldridge

Conservation Planning Consultant

Sandra Hamann

Greenville Council of Garden Clubs

C. Doug Harper

Commercial Developer

David Holmes, Chair

Attorney

Kim Kauffman

Landscape Architect

Tom Keith

Landscape Architect

Dan Rawls

Greenville County Planning Commission

Gordon Seay

Greenville Association of Realtors

Coleman Shouse

Home Builders Association of Greenville

Steven Smith

Forester

Todd Ward

Greenville County Planning Commission staff

Jimmy Forbes

Director of Greenville County Planning Commission, non-voting facilitator

Keeping the GREEN in GREENville

May 8 2006

Greenville County Tree Policy Advisory Committee Hard at Work

The Committee held its seventh regular biweekly meeting on April 27 with the majority of time devoted to hearing from speakers who shared their expertise and perspectives about a possible county tree ordinance. The Committee will continue to hear from experts and citizens for approximately one more month before it begins discussions about specific recommendations for a tree ordinance in Greenville County.

Greenville County Engineer Judy Woertkoetter described the duties of the county's Engineering and Maintenance Department, a division of Public Works. Her division is responsible for the maintenance of more than 1,500 miles of county roads, which includes the removal of trees and other vegetation that present a hazard in the public right-of-way. Unhealthy or damaged trees and limbs that can fall and harm people or property, and any type of vegetation that interferes with

visibility along roadways, must be maintained to keep roadways safe. At the present time, no countywide ordinance requires property owners to clear such



hazards, so her department must address these concerns — a responsibility that is challenging with its limited staff and budget and the lack of landscape-quality trimmers. Other issues related to trees that are addressed by Engineering and Maintenance include damage to roads and sidewalks caused by tree roots. In both cases, Ms. Woertkoetter emphasized that trees should be planted in a manner and location that will reduce or eliminate the potential for hazards in the future.

During the public comment period, landscape architect Barry

Witherspoon expressed his support for a countywide tree ordinance, stating that while some developers do more landscaping than required, most will only plant what is mandated by a local ordinance. He cited the many benefits of trees, including environmental, economic, and aesthetic, as important reasons to protect Greenville County's tree canopy. He described their ability to intercept and soak up rainfall, thereby reducing the amount and velocity of runoff during a rainstorm, as one of the many important services trees provide our communities.

NEXT REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING

May 11 8:00 a.m.

Greenville County Square
Conference Room B

NEXT PUBLIC HEARING

May 11 6:30 p.m.

Bell's Crossing Elementary
804 Scuffletown Road

ATTEND A PUBLIC HEARING AND LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

The second of five public hearings was held at the Greer Campus of Greenville Technical College on April 27. Several speakers cited trees as an important component of Greenville County's overall quality of life, mentioning their contributions to environmental health and to property values, and expressed their support of the Committee's work to protect them. One speaker shared concerns about the impact that an ordinance could have on private property owners and urged the Committee to respect these rights. Jimmy Walters, an urban forester with the S. C. Forestry Commission, was in attendance and explained the difference between the terms "clear-cutting" and "land clearing." *Clear cutting* refers to a forest management technique whereby forests are managed through harvesting and regeneration. *Land clearing* occurs when land uses change, trees are cleared, stumps are pushed up, and land is graded for development.